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**Volunteering in Older Age from
a Lifecourse Perspective:
situating older adults'
volunteering in holistic and
lifelong context**

Edward Hogg

A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of
the requirements of the University of
Northumbria for the degree of Doctor of
Philosophy

Research undertaken in the Department
of Social Sciences and in collaboration
with Age UK England

March 2013

Declaration

I declare that the work contained in this thesis has not been submitted for any other award and that it is all my own work. I also confirm that this work fully acknowledges opinions, ideas and contributions from the work of others. The work was done in collaboration with Age UK England.

Any ethical clearance for the research presented in this thesis has been approved. Approval has been sought and granted by the School Ethics Committee.

Name:

Signature:

Date:

**This thesis is dedicated to my two favourite older volunteers – my Mum
and Dad.**

i. Abstract

This thesis explores how the nature of engagement in formal volunteering by older adults is shaped by experiences across the lifecourse and into older age. It utilises the Total Social Organisation of Labour theoretical approach to situate volunteering within the wider work context, looking at how volunteering is undertaken alongside other work commitments – paid and unpaid – at different times across the lifecourse. This synthesis of TSOL and lifecourse approaches allows this research to take a holistic approach to understanding volunteering by older adults; rather than approached in isolation, the nature of volunteering in older age is considered in context. Analysis of this was undertaken through qualitative semi-structured interviews with 26 older volunteers who engage with voluntary and community organisations in England. This data was used to develop further a heuristic proposed by Davis Smith and Gay (2005), which presents three categories of older volunteer lifecourse; constant, serial and trigger volunteers. In doing so, the differences in lifecourse experiences between individuals in the three categories are explored, and differences examined. This allows for the impulses to engage in formal volunteering in older age to be explored in light of these differences, and this thesis looks at how internal and external impulses to engage in formal volunteering are shaped by previous life experiences. It concludes by arguing that, while all volunteers have unique pathways to engagement and unique reasons for engaging, in understanding the different categories of older volunteer we can better understand how previous life experiences affect the ways in which older adults engage in formal volunteering.

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v. Declaration

I declare the work contained in this thesis has not been submitted for any other award and that it is all my own work. I also confirm that this work fully acknowledges opinions, ideas and contributions from the work of others. This work was done in collaboration with Age UK England.

Any ethical clearance for the research presented in this thesis has been approved, from the School Ethics Committee at Nottingham Trent University and in line with ESRC guidelines.

Name:

Signature:

1. Introduction

1.1. Introduction

Individuals bring with them into older age a lifetime of experiences, the sum of which affects how they enter older age and the nature of their experience during this period of life. This thesis looks at formal volunteering, an activity which individuals may engage in across the lifecourse and in older age. It does so by adopting a feminist approach; older age is situated within a lifecourse context (Hareven and Adams, 1982; Katz and Monk, 1993), while formal volunteering is understood, using a Total Social Organisation of Labour approach, as occurring within a wider context of work-relations (Glucksmann, 1995; 2000; Taylor, 2004). A heuristic building on the framework proposed by Davis Smith and Gay (2005) is developed to explore engagement in formal volunteering in older age, enabling a greater understanding of the diverse ways in which individuals come to be engaged in formal volunteering in older age, in the context of other work roles undertaken across the lifecourse. Building on this earlier work, this thesis presents an original contribution to knowledge by conducting an analysis of how the other commitments individuals have across the lifecourse impact upon the nature of engagement in formal volunteering in older age.

This research and the model of formal volunteering which is proposed here is therefore timely; there are more older adults in England than ever before, and their numbers are set to increase further, so understanding how and why they engage in formal volunteering is extremely relevant. Data from the 2008-2009 Citizenship Survey in England and Wales, based on a sample of 8,768 adults, shows that formal volunteering is a popular activity for older adults; 28% of 50-64 year olds and 30% of 64-75 year olds engage in formal volunteering at least once a month. However, engagement falls to 20% for those aged over 75 (DCLG, 2010a; DCLG, 2010b). England, in common with many Western nations, has an ageing population (Shaw, 2001), which is transforming the ratio of older adults to those in middle age; in 1984, 15% of the United Kingdom population were aged over 65. By 2009, this had risen to 16%, and by 2034 is expected to reach 23% (ONS, 2010).

This chapter sets the context for this thesis. It begins by exploring two key definitions; formal volunteering and older age, and outlines the definitions adopted

in this thesis. It then briefly introduces the theoretical framework on which this thesis rests, outlining the approaches to understanding volunteering across the lifecourse that this work has adopted. Next, it briefly looks at the context in which this research has been conducted; the organisations in which formal volunteering occurs, the public policies which affect formal volunteering and the geographical context in which the formal volunteering studied occurs. The penultimate section of this introductory chapter introduces the aims and research questions which this thesis addresses, and the final introduces the structure that this thesis takes in order to answer these research questions.

1.2.Key Definitions

Before introducing the theoretical framework on which this thesis draws, it is necessary to define two key concepts which underpin this thesis; formal volunteering and older age. Through brief reviews of how previous literature has defined these concepts, this section introduces the definitions of these concepts which have been used in this piece of work.

1.2.1. What is formal volunteering?

Definitions of volunteering vary depending on the particular focus of a study, but there is broad consensus as to what a broad definition of volunteering might look like; tasks undertaken are unpaid (allowing for the payment of expenses), they aim to benefit individuals, groups and communities other than, or in addition to, close relatives and they are undertaken through individuals' own free will (Beneria, 1999; Wardell et al, 2000; Williams, 2003; Davis Smith and Gay, 2005; Hardill and Baines, 2011; Rochester et al, 2012). Within this broad framework, formal volunteering entails all of this diverse activity which occurs within an organisational setting. This includes volunteering done through groups, clubs or organisations in the public, private or voluntary sectors (Fyfe and Milligan, 2003; Williams, 2003; Rochester et al, 2012). It is distinct from informal volunteering, which involves volunteer help given to an individual, family or informal group by an individual, family or informal group, often on an ad hoc basis (Fyfe and Milligan, 2003; Williams, 2003; Smith et al, 2010). Drawing upon these ways of defining formal volunteering, this thesis adopts the following definition of formal volunteering;

A formal volunteer is defined as any individual who gives their time and effort through an organisation, for no financial payment, of their own free will and to provide for those beyond their close family.

1.2.2. What is older age?

Recent UK Research Council research programmes on older adults (Growing Older, 1999-2004 and New Dynamics of Ageing, 2005-2012) have defined older adults as those aged over 50. Consistent with this, research on older volunteers in England (see Davis Smith and Gay, 2005; Hardill and Baines, 2009) have also used 50 as the age at which individuals enter older age. Non-governmental older persons organisations such as Age UK and SAGA also take 50 years old as the point at which an individual becomes 'older', while in terms of public policy, the National Health Service (NHS) state that a person becomes 'older' when he or she ceases paid employment and child-rearing (DofH, 2001). Fixed chronological ages at

which an individual becomes 'older' are useful insofar as they offer parameters within which provision for or the study of older age can be undertaken. However, it needs to be recognised that there is a large heterogeneity of experiences of ageing. Hopkins and Pain (2007) argue that age has been given a fixity which undermines the suggestion of cultural variance and fluidity. Instead, they call for age to be understood relationally, and for lifecourse stages to be seen as socially constructed categories, rather than as independent and fixed periods of life. The lifecourse approach which this thesis adopts is an attempt to answer this call; while the focus here is on older adults' formal volunteering, situating this within a lifecourse context allows for an appreciation of the fluidity of lifecourse transitions. Therefore, while this thesis does refer to previous research in researching only those individuals aged over 50, it does so using a nuanced approach which reflects how ageing as a life-long process is constructed and experienced.

1.3.Theoretical Framework

This thesis draws upon a number of theoretical approaches, each of them rooted in feminist epistemology. As such, they are united in being approaches which advocate a holistic, all-encompassing study of a particular phenomenon. They argue that it is not sufficient to look at something – be it a type of work or a stage of life – in isolation. Instead, they propose looking at the wider context in which something occurs, in order to better understand that which is being studied.

1.3.1. The Total Social Organisation of Labour

The Total Social Organisation of Labour (TSOL) is a theoretical framework proposed by Glucksmann (1995; 2000), which seeks to explain the interconnected nature of different work activities. It builds upon previous feminist work to reject studies of work which focus solely on paid labour, instead proposing study of the ways in which individuals' paid work and tasks of social reproduction are linked. To this Taylor (2004; 2005) adds unpaid work undertaken outside the home and considers how such work fits into the mix of work roles that make up the TSOL. Williams (2011) has developed this further by applying TSOL to the many different forms of community engagement. The focus of TSOL is, as proposed by Glucksmann (1995), on working-age adults at any given cross-section in time. In this thesis, I extend this understanding by looking at how individuals' TSOL configurations change across the lifecourse as other commitments in and beyond the household change, and how these changes impact upon engagement in formal volunteering across the lifecourse and particularly in older age. This temporal element has been absent from many previous pieces of research which utilise the TSOL approach, and by adopting a lifecourse approach I recognise how individual's and household's work configurations change over the lifecourse.

1.3.2. Theories of volunteering

This thesis principally draws upon two heuristics which have been proposed to enable understanding of engagement in formal volunteering. The first is Davis Smith and Gay's (2005) typology of three categories of older volunteer, based on qualitative research in the United Kingdom;

- Constant volunteers are those individuals who have engaged in formal volunteering throughout their adult lives, and continue to do so in older age.
- Serial volunteers are those individuals who have at times in their adult lives engaged in formal volunteering, and at other times have not. They may have re-engaged in volunteering prior to older age, or resume their engagement in older age.

- Trigger volunteers are those individuals whose first experiences of formal volunteering come in older age.

In this thesis, I build upon these categories by considering the wider contexts in which these patterns of engagement occur. By adopting a TSOL approach, this thesis extends this heuristic by looking at differences between these three groups of volunteers in terms of how other commitments impact upon their engagement in formal volunteering. Having established the differences between the three categories of older volunteer in terms of the mix of volunteering and other work roles, this thesis looks at differences in factors influencing engagement between the three categories. To do so, it draws upon a distinction made by Lukka and Locke (2007), based on work with religious volunteers in the United Kingdom, and built upon by Woolvin (2011), drawing on research with informal volunteers in Scotland, between internal and external influencing factors. Internal factors are those which draw upon an individual's own background, interests, skills and beliefs, resulting in a desire to engage in formal volunteering. External factors are situational influences which provide the context in which volunteering decisions are made, the ways in which opportunities to engage in formal volunteering present themselves to volunteers (Lukka and Locke, 2007; Woolvin 2011). This distinction is used to explore how the differences in reasons for engagement vary between the three categories of older volunteer in terms of a range of internal and external factors which emerged through this study as significant to older volunteers.

1.3.3. The lifecourse

The addition of a temporal dimension to TSOL, and the ways in which this affects engagement in formal volunteering, is central to the original contribution to knowledge which this thesis makes. The lifecourse, then, is fundamental to the understanding of the temporal interlinking which impacts on decisions to engage (or dis-engage, or re-engage) over the course of individuals' lives. There has been recognition over the past thirty years that a 'life-cycle' model which assumes that individuals pass through prescribed life stages is flawed (Hareven and Adams, 1982; Katz and Monk, 1993). The term 'lifecourse' was proposed as a rejection of the relatively rigid set of age categorisations associated with life-cycle approaches, instead arguing for an understanding which does not assume a stable social system of similar actors doing similar things at similar times (Hockey and James, 1993; Hunt, 2005). As with TSOL, this reconceptualisation of ageing and life transitions arose from feminist scholarship which argued against rigid understandings and in favour of more fluid, holistic forms of scholarship (Rossi, 1980; Hareven and Adams, 1982; Katz and Monk, 1993). Older age as a particular lifecourse stage, with particular opportunities, has been conceptualised by Laslett (1989) as 'third

age', a period of opportunities, when fit and healthy individuals can pursue their interests through a range of activities. However, the diversity of experience in younger and older age – as recognised by lifecourse theory – means that a nuanced approach must be taken in understanding this stage of life. Fundamentally, it means that experiences in older age cannot be understood in isolation from the lifecourse events which preceded them – this understanding underpins the theoretical approach which this thesis uses.

1.3.4. Bringing theory together

This thesis uses the theories of TSOL and of the lifecourse together to expand upon Davis Smith and Gay's (2005) heuristic and in doing so offer an original contribution to knowledge. The theories complement each other, in that each calls for the wider context to be observed when looking at a particular thing. Thus, a synthesis of the theories allows this thesis to look at how the wide range of different roles an individual has impact upon one another across the lifecourse, and how this impacts upon engagement in formal volunteering across the lifecourse and into older age. Therefore, neither volunteering nor older age are approached in isolation; each is situated within the wider context of relations which affect it.

1.4. Wider Research Context

The research which this thesis presents focusses on the level of the individual, looking at patterns of individual engagement, set within a wider household context. It is important to recognise, though, that these patterns of engagement occur in a wider context. Volunteers are embedded in a range of household and wider contexts, and this influences what, why and how volunteers do (Omoto and Snyder, 2002). This brief section looks first at the organisations in which formal volunteering takes place. It then looks at public policy concerning volunteering in England, before finally looking at the geographical scope of this research.

1.4.1. Voluntary and community organisations

Having defined formal volunteering as those voluntary activities which are undertaken through an organisation of some kind, it is necessary to outline the characteristics of these organisations. While 65% of formal volunteering occurs in organisations operating in the voluntary and community sector, this means that the remaining 35% occurs in the public (23%) and private (11%) sectors (Low et al, 2007). The methodological approach of this thesis has used voluntary and community organisations (VCOs) as its way of accessing formal volunteers. A pragmatic decision was made to recruit participants through organisations who defined themselves as being in the voluntary and community sector, but to consider all of the formal volunteering, across all three sectors, that individuals engaged in. Organisations identified as VCOs can include charities, co-operatives, infrastructure groups and others (Hardill and Baines, 2011). Turner (2001) and Milligan and Fyfe (2005) note that what unites these organisations is that they promote involvement for their volunteers and service users. In particular, in the majority of VCOs, volunteers are vital to the running and governance of the organisation, albeit in an environment of increasing formalisation, especially for some larger organisations (Milligan and Fyfe, 2005). While larger organisations may be increasingly formal, 53% of VCOs have no paid staff and are run entirely on volunteer effort, while a further 24% have fewer than 5 paid staff (Cabinet Office, 2010b). Further to this, some 28% of VCOs operate in just one neighbourhood, with a further 34% operating mainly in one local authority area (Cabinet Office, 2010b). Voluntary organisations, then, represented the best way to recruit participants, some of whom were also engaged in formal volunteering in other sectors.

1.4.2. Policy on volunteering

Formal volunteering and VCOs exist within a wider policy context, and a number of public policy decisions have sought to increase engagement in volunteering. Zimmeck (2012) notes that it was under John Major's Conservative Government

(1992-1997) that public policy on volunteering first became joined up across government departments, with the Make A Difference Campaign (1994-1997) seeking to encourage volunteer involvement. New Labour's Third Way (Giddens, 1997) sought to give responsibility to VCOs, increasing the profile of volunteering but also pressuring organisations to formalise and sign binding agreements with the state in order to attract public monies (Milligan and Fyfe, 2005). Potentially, it has been suggested that this could lead to a bifurcation of voluntary organisations, with large and highly formal organisations attracting state funding while smaller and more informal organisations rely on donations and fund raising (Milligan and Fyfe, 2005). Alongside this, New Labour engaged in a wide range of events, initiatives and programmes with the aim of encouraging volunteering. Experience Corps, launched in 2001, was the only one of these New Labour strategies explicitly aimed to encouraging older adults to engage in volunteering, and Zimmeck (2012) notes that some 250,000 older adults became involved in formal volunteering as a result of this programme. However, the programme was short-lived and by 2004 had been quietly dropped with little explanation (Zimmeck, 2012). The Coalition Government also have a cross-government commitment to volunteering, in the form of the Big Society. Their Giving White Paper (Cabinet Office, 2010a), which looks at the giving of both time and money – view volunteering as a form of giving, and Rochester et al (2012) suggest that some programmes around Big Society are targeting older adults, but to date evidence of this is scarce. The Coalition's approach to volunteering and VCOs is far more 'soft-touch' than New Labour's, and as such direct programmes or initiatives are far scarcer (Rochester et al, 2012). This thesis does not consider the impact of these policies on the extent of volunteering by older adults or on their experiences of engagement, but this brief overview of recent public policy is part of the context in which formal volunteering is undertaken.

1.4.3. Geographical scale

Formal volunteering is largely undertaken outside of the volunteer's home, in public spaces and on occasion in other people's homes. Taylor's (2004; 2005) analysis of volunteering using a TSOL framework makes the clear distinction between unpaid work within the home (domestic labour) and outside of the home (volunteering). Thus, that the formal volunteering explored in this thesis occurs in the public sphere is an important geographical scale to establish. This research was conducted in England, with participants recruited from English-based VCOs, or from the English section of international organisations. While the policy situation in England differs from other parts of the UK – as a result of devolution of non-reserved powers since 1999 – and other Western nations, the context in which

volunteering occurs is broadly similar to that in other liberal welfare democracies, such as Australia, Canada and the United States (Esping-Anderson, 1990). However, the nature of a lifecourse approach means that the geographical location in which an individual lives at the time of interview may only be a part of their geographical background (Brodie et al, 2011). As such, where interviewees were living at the time of interview has not been included in the analysis that this thesis presents; more significant is the local geographies of community and kinship that are described (Lee and Newby, 1983; Hardill and Baines, 2011).

1.5. Research Questions

The theoretical background and the wider context for this thesis as presented above identified a research gap which this research seeks to address, through the answering of the research questions outlined below. They support the adoption of a TSOL approach, valuable because of its ability to capture the diverse forms that work commitments take and to observe how they interrelate. Further, by calling for a lifecourse approach to be taken, this research adds a temporal dimension to TSOL which has previously been absent. This research takes lifecourse approach to studying the wide mix of work commitments which impact upon engagement in formal volunteering. They support the development of a heuristic through which volunteering in older age can be understood, and examination of internal and external impulses to volunteer in the context of this heuristic. The three research questions answered in this thesis are;

- 1. What is the impact of the mix of different work commitments across the lifecourse on individuals' participation in formal voluntary and community activities, and does this change in older age?**

- 2. When older adults reflect on their formal volunteering, what internal impulses do they give for participating, and how do these reflect their experiences across the lifecourse?**

- 3. When older adults reflect on their formal volunteering, what external factors do they give for participating, and how do these reflect their experiences across the lifecourse?**

1.6. Structure of this Thesis

After this introductory chapter, this thesis is divided into seven further chapters. **Chapter 2** is a literature review which introduces and explores the key theoretical concepts underpin this thesis. It first looks at the Total Social Organisation of Labour approach (Glucksmann, 1995; 2000) and how this has been applied to volunteering by Taylor (2004; 2005) and Williams (2011). Next, it looks at theories of volunteering, exploring how impulses to volunteer have been considered by among others Beveridge (1948), Lukka and Locke (2007) and by Hardill et al (2007). The final section of this chapter examines how the lifecourse has come to be used in social science as a tool for understanding how individuals experience transitions across their lives (Hareven and Adams, 1982; Katz and Monk, 1993).

Chapter 3 builds upon these key theoretical concepts to look at how recent empirical research on volunteering has conceptualised the reasons why individuals, particularly older adults, engage in formal volunteering, understood through the lens of the established key theoretical concepts. It first looks at the links between family and volunteering, the links between paid work, skills and volunteering and particularly retirement, the links between communities of place and/or interests and volunteering, finally looking at the other impulses to volunteer that recent research has found significant.

Chapter 4 presents the methodological approach which this thesis has adopted. The methodology draws on the theoretical framework established in **Chapter 2**, explaining how these have underpinned the way in which data has been collected and analysed. It explores how VCOs have been used as gatekeepers to enable access to older formal volunteers, and how a short questionnaire was conducted to establish contact with a range of VCOs and gather some basic data on how older volunteers engage. It then looks at how 26 lifecourse interviews were conducted and transcribed, reflecting on this process. The final section of the methodology looks at how the interviews were analysed, and introduces the 26 older volunteers through brief biographies.

In **Chapter 5** I apply the typology of Davis Smith and Gay to the 26 older volunteers who participated in this study, by using indicative case studies to explore how different types of work commitment have interrelated with formal volunteering across the lifecourse. In doing so, this chapter offers an original contribution to knowledge by adding a temporal dimension to a TSOL-based analysis, looking at how different work commitments interact over the lifecourse. This heuristic is used in the following two analysis chapters to explore the ways in

which different categories of older volunteer differ in terms of reasons for engaging in formal volunteering.

In **Chapter 6** I focus on how internal reasons for volunteering differ in nature and importance between the three categories of volunteer. I look at how (potentially changing) beliefs impact upon volunteer engagement, at how individuals' perceptions of their own skills and experiences encourage them to engage in formal volunteering, at how older volunteers perceive social benefits as being a reason for volunteering, and at a number of other internal reasons for engaging in formal volunteering in older age which were cited by a number of participants.

In **Chapter 7** external reasons for volunteering are highlighted, including how family members and their activities can at certain stages of the lifecourse in particular encourage an individual to engage in formal volunteering. Next, it looks at how communities – of place and of interest – provide networks through which individuals come to be asked to engage in formal volunteering.

Chapter 8 is the concluding chapter of this thesis, and presents concise answers to the three research questions posed in this chapter. It concludes the thesis by looking at the key recommendations for voluntary organisation and local and national government policy arising from this thesis, and identifying the future research directions arising from this research.

2. Theoretical Perspectives

2.1. Introduction

As was noted in the introduction to this thesis the theoretical approach taken by this thesis is founded upon two established theoretical frameworks; the Total Social Organisation of Labour (TSOL) (Glucksmann, 1995; 2000; 2005) and the lifecourse (Hareven and Adams, 1982; Katz and Monk, 1993). These two frameworks each draw upon feminist epistemology to argue for a broad approach to the study of sociological phenomena. TSOL, therefore, argues for a approach to the study of work activities which considers all of the different work roles – public and private, paid and unpaid – that individuals undertake. Similarly, a lifecourse approach argues for a holistic approach to understanding individuals' lives; rather than looking at a snapshot in time, it requires attention to be paid to experiences across an individual's life. Together, I argue, these approaches provide the theoretical framework for understanding volunteering in older age from a holistic perspective; it must be understood in relation to the other work activities an individual engages in and in the context of experiences and events across the lifecourse. These two frameworks are used in this thesis not just as ways of understanding volunteering across the lifecourse and into older age, but also as methodological approaches, as is outlined in **Chapter 4**. As such, this chapter establishes the theoretical framework upon which previous research is considered, it underpins the methodological approach this research adopts and the analysis which this thesis conducts and presents.

This chapter first looks at how the Total Social Organisation of Labour approach presents a holistic approach to work. It next looks in light of this framework at other approaches to volunteering, particularly how Lukka and Locke (2007) and Hardill et al (2007) have conceptualised motivations for engaging in volunteering. The final section of this chapter explores the lifecourse approach, and how it arose as a critique of rigid life-cycle approaches to the study of people's lives. This builds upon the explanation of the TSOL approach by outlining how the approach adopted in this thesis has looked not just at the range of work activities undertaken at one moment in time, but rather at the mix of activities over the lifecourse. In light of

this, this chapter's final section looks at the few previous studies of volunteering which have taken a lifecourse approach.

2.2. A Holistic Approach to Work: Total Social Organisation of Labour

2.2.1. Introduction

This section looks at how volunteering has been conceptualised in the wider context of 'work' tasks. Over the lifecourse, individuals engage in a wide range of different work tasks, taking on different roles and having roles assigned to them. This work takes place in a wide range of contexts and can include widely different tasks, but they are linked by all being productive in some form or another (Hakim, 1996; Taylor, 2004). This section seeks to draw together academic challenges to the imposed dichotomy between work tasks which have been conceptualised as economically productive and those which have been conceptualised as taking place outside of the economic sphere.

To do so, I first look at how this dichotomy between the public world of paid work and the private world of unpaid work, how this came to be and how it has been challenged. Total Social Organisation (TSOL) of Labour is a theoretical approach (Glucksmann, 1995; 2000; 2005), which highlights the interconnected nature of all different types of productive activity. This rejects any hierarchy of work tasks, arguing that all are interdependent on one another, and that to isolate any from the context in which it exists would be a failure to appreciate these interrelationships. The ways in which the different work roles which make up the TSOL are defined and allocated are, like the lifecourse, gendered, and the next sub-section turns to look briefly at how this impacts upon the different work roles that individuals fulfil. Following this, I move on to look at how Taylor's work (2002; 2004; 2005) and that of Williams (2011) have taken the TSOL approach and applied it to volunteering in such a way as to offer a theoretical framework for approaching volunteering which situates it within wider work roles, albeit in existing work only at a single point in time. Finally, this section looks at how older age, and particularly retirement, can be observed from a TSOL perspective as being a period in which individuals have/choose to reconfigure their roles within their family and community.

2.2.2. The public-private dichotomy

A dichotomy between work undertaken in the public realm and work undertaken in the private realm is argued to have originated in the Industrial Revolution (Taylor, 2004). During this period, the public sphere was defined and accepted as being the site of economically productive work, that is to say work which was waged, and typically – although certainly by no means uniquely, given women's roles in a number of industries during this period – conducted by men (Boyd, 1997; Taylor, 2004). The private sphere on the other hand was conceptualised to be work performed in domestic settings, usually by women to whom family and reproductive

activities were assigned (Boyd, 1997; Taylor, 2004). **Figure 2.1**, below, demonstrates this split.

This divide,

"...denotes the ideological division of life into apparently opposing spheres of public and private activities, and public and private responsibility." (Boyd, 1997: 8)

Yet the divide was not natural, and that private activities were disregarded in studies of 'work' (by which read industrial labour) was a constructed distinction (Boyd, 1997; Taylor, 2004). The organisation of academic study has historically reflected this distinction, with the study of economics having been initially concerned with the study only of financially remunerated work, rather than on the wide range of work roles in which individuals are embedded (Taylor, 2004). Similarly, Glucksmann (1995) argues that this led to work being studied only by economists, and therefore to be understood only on a monetary basis. As such, forms of labour that fell outside of the sphere of paid employment, such as voluntary work, caring in the family or community, informal work and black/grey market work, were pushed to the margins or excluded completely.

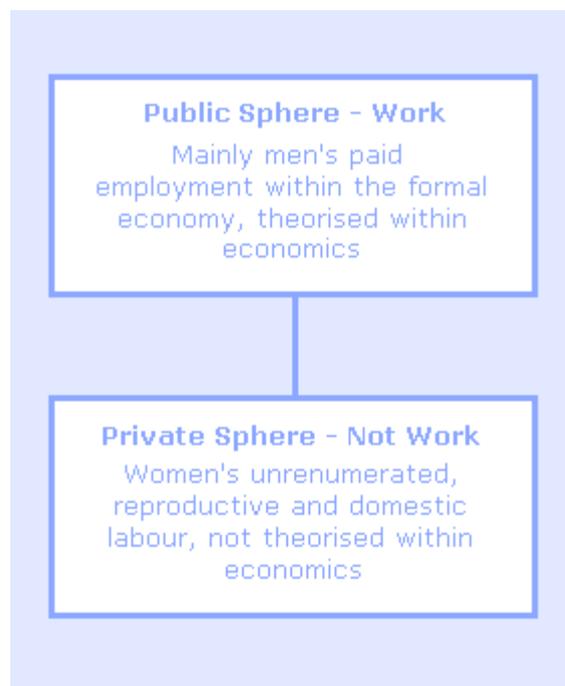


Figure 2.1 *The separation of the public and private spheres in traditional work theory* (Taylor, 2004: 32).

A further critique of this distinction is that notions of a divide between public and private work are untenable; there is no geographical separation between public and private spheres of work, as the boundaries are so frequently blurred as to be meaningless (Boyd, 1997; Crompton, 1998). Domestic workers, au pairs, carers and other such professions all conduct what have traditionally been conceptualised as private work, yet often are undertaken on a professional basis and in a geographical setting away from the individual undertaking the work's home. Further to this, public and private spheres (if conceptualised as such) cannot and do not exist in opposition to one another; rather, they exist within a complex network of reciprocal relations (Boyd, 1997). Thus, the theoretical framework that

the next section presents – the Total Social Organisation of Labour (TSOL) – presents a key challenge to the dichotomy between the public and private spheres which has underlain much analysis of the nature of work roles within academia (Taylor, 2004). Instead, it seeks to understand how the wide range of different work activities, whether they are paid or unpaid, whatever setting they take place in and however formal they are (Glucksmann, 1995).

2.2.3. The Total Social Organisation of Labour

This conception of public and private work was not challenged until the late 1960s and early 1970s, as feminism began to challenge the assumption that private, unpaid work was not 'real' work, a challenge which extended the concept of work to include labour which did not have direct economic outputs (Taylor, 2004; Parry et al, 2005). Rosemary Crompton's work on gender, class and the division of work roles (1998; 2006) and Ann Oakley's exploration of the sociology of housework (1974) were central to this movement. This played a crucial part in reconceptualising notions of work to encompass more than simply paid employment (Parry et al, 2005). As Glucksmann (1995) argues,

"By the early 1980s feminism had an enormous impact on the sociology of work by making untenable any definition that restricted work to paid employment alone..." (64)

Notwithstanding, though, that while progress was made in arguing for a reconceptualisation of what entails 'work', the dichotomy between paid and unpaid work remained firmly intact (Taylor, 2004).

The TSOL approach was developed by Glucksmann (1995; 2000; 2005), offering a theoretical approach which allows for the interdependence of all different forms of work to be understood and analysed (Taylor, 2004). Glucksmann argues that it,

"...is vital to adopt an inclusive approach to work as comprising all labour activity since it is undertaken within a wide variety of socio-economic relations. While paid employment is the dominant mode in modern industrial societies, work is also conducted in a multiplicity of ways, many of which are on an unpaid basis in the household, community and public formal sphere." (Glucksmann, 2005: 28)

The TSOL approach seeks to explore the ways in which different forms of work activities are divided up between and allocated to individuals, within families, organisations and communities (Glucksmann, 2000; Taylor, 2004). Any attempt to distinguish between paid employment and other forms of work is rejected, instead arguing for a conceptualisation of work which recognises that forms of work cannot

be separated from one another and from the relationships (of family, friends and community) within which they take place (Glucksmann, 2005). As such,

“Work is not assumed to be a discrete activity carried out in exchange for remuneration in institutions (although it can be) but, rather, is conceptualised as being embedded in other domains and entangled in other sorts of social relations.” (Parry et al, 2005: 3)

This widening of the conceptual boundaries of what constitutes work is necessary if we are to understand the complexity of people’s lives, and of the relationships between the different forms of work they do (Taylor, 2004; Parry et al, 2005).

An activity being work depends on the social relations in which it is undertaken; identical activities may constitute work in some situations yet not in others (Glucksmann, 1995: 65). Similarly, an activity may in one context be remunerated financially as part of a formal arrangement, yet in another context may be undertaken informally and for no financial payment (Parry et al, 2005). Traditional ways of understanding ‘work’ would have excluded such tasks when they were not remunerated, but included when they were. Given this, and that over time different work activities may shift between being remunerated and not being so, it is not tenable to consider work tasks on a hierarchy, or to suggest that some are more valid than others (Glucksmann, 2005). Therefore,

“...a TSOL perspective is concerned not with establishing a classification but rather with the overall articulation of interconnected work activities.” (Glucksmann, 2005: 21)

In this reconceptualisation of work it is essential that the interconnection between work activities, and the dynamic nature of this, is recognised (Parry et al, 2005).

2.2.4. Volunteering and the Total Social Organisation of Labour

Volunteering has been situated within the TSOL by the work of Taylor (2004), who has situated volunteering within a continuum of work, as explained in **Figure 2.2** (Taylor, 2004). The redrawing of the conceptual boundaries of what is considered ‘work’ to include volunteering arose from a recognition that traditional labour theory – as conceptualised by Glucksmann (1995, 2000; 2005) – overlooked those forms of work beyond paid employment. Volunteering, Taylor (2004) attests, challenges such dichotomies, in that it is taking place in the public sphere, often alongside paid workers, yet is unpaid. The reconceptualisation of volunteering that Taylor (2004) presents, is rooted in *Glucksmann’s (1995, 2000) assertion that there is not a straightforward correspondence between pay and work*, and, rather, that work is, *“...embedded in and defined by the social relations within which it is located”* (Taylor, 2004: 31).

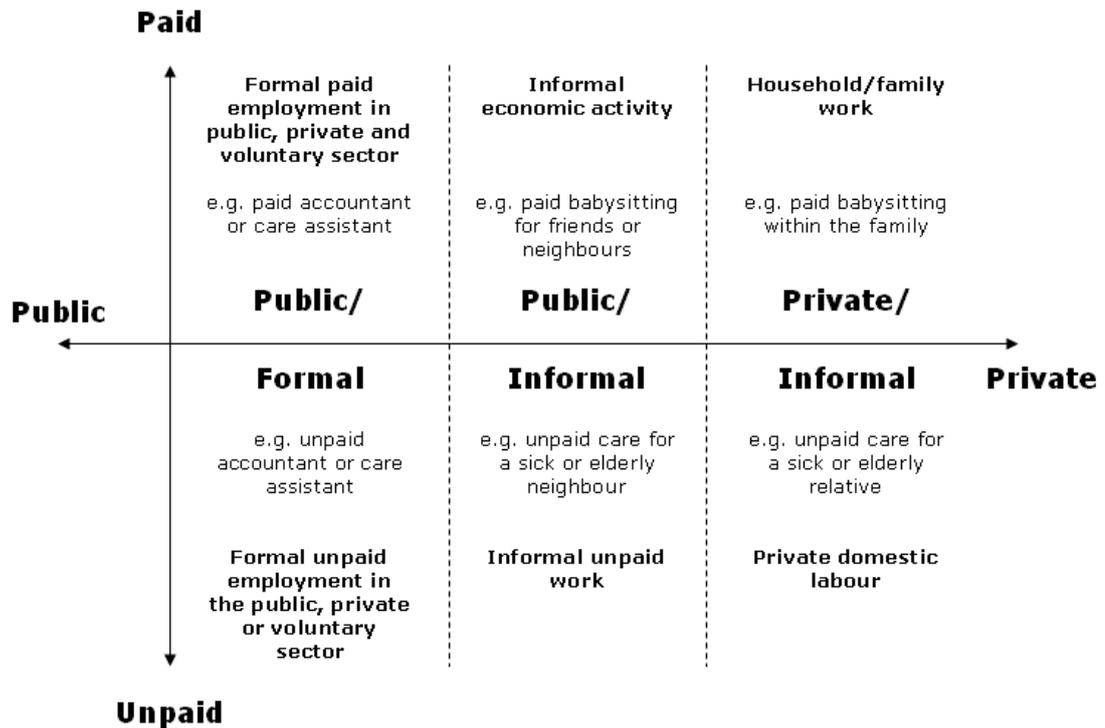


Figure 2.2 A framework showing the organisation of labour (Taylor, 2004: 39)

As a result of the previous oversight of these social relations, it is argued that there has been a lack of social science research on how volunteering fits into individuals' working lives (Taylor, 2005). This overlooks the interconnections between volunteering and paid work, the understanding of which is crucial to understanding one or the other (Glucksmann, 2005). This is because, inevitably, paid work, unpaid work and other aspects of life overlap. The work roles that individuals undertake fill their time and help give meaning to individuals' lives, whether they are being paid for it or not (Taylor, 2002). It is argued, therefore, that,

"Understanding a person's unpaid work in relation to their paid work and their economic and social position is crucial." (Taylor, 2005: 135)

As such, in this thesis I explore not just the volunteering that individuals participate in across the lifecourse, but also the paid work and other work activities which they are involved in. The processes by which individuals are in a position to volunteer – a position where the internal and external impulses which the next section explores can be followed – is therefore part of a complex interplay of circumstances, including their position within households and communities, and the extent to which the social organisation of labour in individuals' lives make volunteering possible (Taylor, 2005).

Work by Taylor (2002; 2004; 2005) and Williams (2009; 2011) has sought to extend the scope of the TSOL with the former constructing a new framework which

further extends the boundaries of work, placing paid and unpaid, formal and informal and public and private onto a grid framework, as shown in **Figure 2.2**.

Taylor (2004) looks to place work activities on this grid, arguing that each of the work roles that each individual does can be placed on this grid. Across their lives, therefore, individuals may have roles that vary in formality, and may have a wide range of different paid and unpaid roles that they are expected to fulfil. Over the lifecourse, this may change; new demands may be made in different spheres, and other roles may become less demanding. There has been some previous acknowledgement that the TSOL approach which Taylor (2004) proposes can be utilised from a lifecourse perspective, with Parry et al (2005) stating that it offers,

"...a more accurate depiction of the complex, messy, dynamic trajectories that encapsulate people's working lives. From this perspective for example, life-stages not normally associated with work, such as time spent in education, retirement or unemployment, take on new interest for the sociologist of work." (4)

Over the course of each individual's life, their movements between different forms of work, their ability to choose for themselves and their vulnerability to unwanted shifts between forms of work are shaped by the nature of the labour market – locally and nationally – at that time, and by the types and values of capital which they possess (Taylor, 2005). I take a lifecourse approach to understanding the wide range of overlapping work activities available by adopting,

"...a holistic perspective on a person's working life rather than simply focussing on their employment or their domestic labour gives rise to a more textured and complex picture of people's work practices and choices." (Taylor, 2005: 135)

This approach, taken across the lifecourse and as such capturing all of the work activities that individuals undertake and how they relate not just to those that occur alongside them is fundamental to the analysis which this thesis presents.

2.2.5. Gender and the Total Social Organisation of Labour

As explored in the previous section, the TSOL approach (Glucksmann, 1995, 2000, 2005) arose from feminist critiques of the ways in which work was conceptualised and centred on the study of financially remunerated activities. As such, TSOL needs to be sensitive to the impact of gender on an individual's different work activities across the lifecourse;

"Clearly, gender has direct effects on the incidence, timing, and duration of roles, as well as on social relations." (Moen, 2001: 179)

Writing prior to the emergence of the TSOL approach, Saraceno (1991) notes that women exist within two worlds; that of the family and that of paid employment. Saraceno (1991) notes that these spheres are interrelated yet separate, a separation which TSOL sought to challenge. Yet the assertion that women have different experiences from that of working men, because women often have more responsibility for domestic work and caring for family members (Saraceno, 1991), is one which resonates with the TSOL. Indeed, Moen (2001) argues that the experiences of women in the complex mix of work activities offers a chance to understand the intersectional nature of different types of work activity. While women's lifecourses and work 'careers' may be different to those of men, the ways in which they negotiate the twin stresses of remunerated work and family roles is important to consider (Moen, 2001). In light of these differences, then, we can expect to find in this research that the voluntary and community activities that women are able to engage in across the lifecourse may be different to that of men.

2.2.6. *Older Age and the Total Social Organisation of Labour*

In the previous chapter, it was established that retirement is a significant lifecourse event in older age for those who have been in paid employment. At this time – be it a single point or a long process – individuals depart from the paid employment in which they have been, and in which the role, function and personal relationships that work brings are well-established (Hunt, 2005). It is argued that this can result in a sense of loss of worth for the retiree, given the incidental benefits that paid work can bring, leading potentially to a "*loss of social prestige*" and potentially resulting in "*social isolation*". (Hunt, 2005: 190). Fairhurst (2003) considers the ways in which paid work orders the lives of individuals engaged in it, but concludes that while paid work may be regarded as a source of social status, "*retirement may not necessarily result in its loss*" (197). Retirement, while the end of paid work for many individuals, may simply be a time when individuals are motivated to find roles which give them identity and self-worth from other forms of work, be it within the family, in clubs, in organisations or elsewhere (Hunt, 2005). Post-retirement, men are more likely to work on an ad hoc basis for pay, while women are more likely to be involved in care-giving for friends or relatives (Moen, 2001). On top of this, individuals may make significant contributions to the work of voluntary and community organisations (Hunt, 2005), a further way of finding new work niches, of reconfiguring one's role in the TSOL and finding a means of remaining productive and active, yet not employed (Taylor, 2005). Glucksmann (2005) cites the example of The Netherlands, where older adults are very active in the provision of relatively formal care work. Here, the voluntary care work that older adults undertake is effectively supported by the apparatus of state and private pensions,

producing an indirect but nonetheless clear connection between paid and unpaid work, over a potentially significant period of time (Glucksmann, 2005).

2.2.7. Conclusion

The first research question that this thesis addresses looks at the mix of different work commitments across the lifecourse and their impact on participation in formal volunteering, and the approach to studying work commitments provided by TSOL underpins this. The TSOL approach outlined here (Glucksmann, 1995; 2000; 2005; Taylor, 2004) is central to the way that previous literature and primary data is understood and analysed; neither formal volunteering nor other work commitments – paid and unpaid – can be understood in isolation, and the impact that different commitments have on each other is central to understanding how individuals explain their decisions to engage in formal volunteering across the lifecourse.

2.3. Perspectives on Volunteering

2.3.1. Introduction

This section outlines different perspectives on impulses to volunteer, highlighting the distinction between internal and external impulses which underpins the second and third research questions posed in Section 1.5. To do so, it will first outline this framework for understanding impulses to volunteer, drawing upon the work by Lukka and Locke (2007) and Woolvin (2011) which explores internal and external factors affecting decisions to volunteer. It moves on to look at the relevance of how Beveridge (1948) and subsequent works define philanthropy and mutual aid. It then looks at Hardill et al's (2007) heuristic of volunteer impulses, and finally at how volunteering across the lifecourse has been conceptualised by Davis Smith and Gay (2005).

2.3.2. Impulses to volunteer

Much has been written about impulses to volunteer, much of it from psychology literature, and often using closed questions and quantitative methods to 'measure' reasons for engagement. Rather than engage with these analyses of motivations which often place the context of decisions in the background, I base this review of impulses to volunteer around a simple framework developed and utilised by Lukka and Lock (2007) and Woolvin (2011). This sees two different types of factors which impact upon whether an individual engages in voluntary and community activity at a particular time; internal and external factors. These are summarised in **Figure 2.3**. This distinction splits decisions to engage in formal volunteering into the wishes of the individual at that time (internal) and the context in which those wishes are met or not met (external) (Lukka and Locke, 2007). Understanding both is therefore crucial to understanding the decisions that individuals make across the lifecourse regarding whether or not to engage in formal volunteering at that time.

Internal Factors	Lukka and Locke (2007) see these as deriving in part from faith, while Woolvin (2011) draws upon elements of psychological and attitudinal research. Issues of upbringing are discussed by both; formative influences and social background. Motivations drawn from personal interest, such as hobbies and interests, skills and abilities and personal beliefs are considered in this thesis to be more relevant here as internal factors.
External Factors	Situational factors which are the context in which volunteering decisions are made. These could be the event or series of events which create the conditions for an individual to engage in voluntary and community activity, or to cease engaging.

Figure 2.3 *Internal and external impulses to volunteer* (adapted from Woolvin 2011, after Lukka and Locke, 2007)

In his overview of the history of voluntary activity in Britain, Davis Smith (1995) based his analysis on Beveridge's (1948) distinction between the two main impulses for voluntary action; *philanthropy* and *mutual aid*. Philanthropic voluntary activities are said to be those, "where an individual or group offers services to others" (Finlayson, 1990: 184), generally to those in need (Gerard, 1983). However, when studying philanthropic voluntary action, it is important to avoid overlooking the benefits in kind that are derived from undertaking such activity; while mutuality between giver and receiver may not be the primary driver in many forms of volunteering, there is still give-and-take and benefits experienced by both volunteer and recipient in any voluntary action. Mutual aid concerns voluntary activity in which individuals or groups undertake volunteering for mutually beneficial reasons (Gerard, 1983). Beveridge's own definition makes explicit the self-help impulse which drives mutual aid, based around a ...

"...realisation that since one's fellows have the same need, by undertaking to help one another they may also help themselves." (Beveridge, 1948, quoted in Davis Smith, 1995: 28)

This reciprocity need not be immediate or explicitly agreed, and may indeed be deferred over long periods, but it is integral to mutual volunteerism that there is an obligation and an expectation for reciprocation (Kidd, 1996; Gorsky, 1998).

This binary between self-interested mutual aid and altruistically-motivated philanthropy is rejected by Hardill et al (2007), who argue that volunteering needs to be understood in the context of the individual's life, in order to move away from

this divide. They propose instead four groups of volunteer impulse, as shown in **Figure 2.4**. Taylor (2005) suggests similar, stating that,

“Altruism does not define the volunteer any more than self-interest defines the employee, and it cannot render other social, economic and cultural factors irrelevant to understanding what other people do.” (Taylor, 2005: 122)

Understanding philanthropy or mutual aid in isolation is therefore a fallacy; there is inevitable overlap between them and each volunteering decision draws upon a complex mix of these and other impulses, internal and external.

Giving alms	These are volunteers who have, <i>“...identified an unmet need and they want to make a difference”</i> (Hardill et al, 2007: 405). Often these volunteers see themselves as helping people less fortunate than themselves. Such volunteering is, <i>“...necessarily both self- and other-rewarding”</i> (ibid: 405).
Giving to each other	These are volunteers who seek to help others with whom they perceive a shared issue, as a response to a problem they experience together.
Getting on	These volunteers are seeking to develop <i>“...skills and experience of value in labour market”</i> (Hardill et al, 2007: 406) through undertaking voluntary work.
Getting by	These are volunteers who, <i>“...entered volunteering as a response to a milestone life event, and that it fills something missing or an emotional gap in life”</i> (Hardill et al, 2007: 207). This refers back to the idea of social adjustment as a volunteer motivation (Knapp et al, 1995). Retirement and divorce are both suggested as potential milestone life events.

Figure 2.4 *Four groups of volunteer impulses* (Hardill et al, 2007)

There has been some previous work undertaken which looks at how adults engage in volunteering across the lifecourse, and how this impacts upon their volunteering in older age. This is necessary because, as Morrow-Howell (2010) notes in a review of work on volunteering in older age,

“...volunteering is a dynamic process. Participation starts and stops, waxes and wanes in response to changes in individuals’ lives as well as in response to the nature of the volunteer service.” (462)

Davis Smith and Gay (2005) developed through a qualitative study of older volunteers in England three broad groups of volunteer pathway in older age; *constant volunteers* give lifelong commitment to an organisation, and the

volunteering they do in retirement is a continuation of that done during their paid careers. *Serial volunteers* are those individuals who have volunteered while in younger and older age, but with a range of organisations and with different levels of engagement at different times, and who may be returning to voluntary work because their circumstances now allow them to do so. *Trigger volunteers* are those who only start volunteering in older age, as a result of some change in their circumstances or that of their family, such as retirement, children leaving home or the death of a spouse (Davis Smith and Gay, 2005; Rochester, 2006). These three categories are further developed in the data analysis chapters of this thesis, using a TSOL approach to consider the impact of other work roles.

2.3.3. Conclusion

This brief section has considered theoretical perspectives on volunteering, particularly with regard individuals' decisions to engage in formal volunteering at a particular time. This thesis draws upon Lukka and Locke (2007) and Woolvin (2011) to establish a distinction between internal and external impulses to volunteer, which allows us to seek an understanding of individuals' reasons for wanting to volunteer in context.

2.4. The Lifecourse as a Theoretical Framework

2.4.1. Introduction

This chapter turns now to explore theories of the lifecourse. This is fundamental to this thesis; volunteering in older age is approached throughout from a lifecourse perspective, understood not as a snapshot in time but as part of an on-going process (Dannefer and Sell, 1988; Bengtson et al, 1997; Johnson et al, 2011). Any activity undertaken in older age implicitly or explicitly reflects previous events and activities undertaken across the lifecourse, and this thesis argues that they need to be understood as such (Hareven, 1995). This section first explores how the lifecourse has been conceptualised over the past century as patterns of individual and family life have changed. It then looks at the current theoretical understandings of lifecourse, and how it has come to be understood as a means of analysing and exploring diverse and chaotic lives. Next it looks at the impact of significant events across the lifecourse, and how these occur at different times and in different ways for different individuals. While these events and the lifecourse processes around them are often highly individual, they occur within a wider social context, and this is explored next. Finally, this section finishes by looking at research into volunteering which has adopted a lifecourse approach.

2.4.2. From life-cycle to lifecourse

The term *lifecourse* is often used by academics to study individual and collective experiences from a longitudinal perspective (see Hareven and Adams, 1982; Katz and Monk, 1993). Scholars of the lifecourse reject the previously common term *life-cycle*, which is criticised for tending to assume a relatively rigid set of age categorisations, related to social norms about what activities and life events are expected at stages of life (Hunt, 2005). This has been rejected by many writers because of the way in which it assumes multiple turns, a presumed fixed or inevitable series of events occurring at certain chronological ages (Rossi, 1980; Hareven and Adams, 1982; Allatt et al, 1987; Katz and Monk, 1993; Hunt, 2005). Indeed, Bailey (2009) argues that;

"...a priori 'life cycle' categorizations of age and the deterministic timbre of stage and time are seen as normalized and politically problematic categories of analysis." (407)

This occurred in the context of social change, as Saraceno (1991) outlines, exploring how the now disregarded *life-cycle* terminology reflects the time in which its use emerged, during industrialisation and a time when women generally only worked while young and/or unmarried, or once married only in times of family crisis. **Figure 2.5**, below, draws upon the work of Mayer (2001, 2004) to explore how over time changes in the nature of lifecourse have occurred, as the *life-cycle*

has become less ordered, less predictable and less universal; has become the lifecourse.

	Life-cycle → → → → → → → → → Lifecourse			
<i>Social Period</i>	Traditional	Industrial	Welfare State	Post-Industrial
<i>Unit</i>	Family farm/firm	Wage earner	Male breadwinner, nuclear family	Individual
<i>Education</i>	Minimal, non-compulsory	Medium compulsory	Expansion of secondary and higher education and vocational training	Prolonged, interrupted and lifelong learning.
<i>Work</i>	Personal dependency, family division of labour	Wage relation, firm paternalism, unemployment	Full lifelong employment, upward mobility, income progression	Delayed entry, high mobility between jobs, flat income trajectories, unemployment
<i>Family</i>	Partial and delayed marriage, instability due to death, high fertility	Decline in fertility	Early universal marriage, early childbearing, medium fertility	Delayed and partial marriage, pluralised family forms, low fertility, high divorce rate
<i>Retirement /older age</i>	With physical disability, old age dependency, early death	Regulatory or with disability, low pensions	Regulatory, medium pensions	Early retirement, decreasing pensions, increasing longevity, increasing chronic illness

Figure 2.5 *Historical changes in lifecourse patterns* (Adapted from Mayer 2001: 93, 2004: 171)

This echoes the view of Hockey and James (1993) who suggest that the change in terminology from life-cycle to lifecourse is made necessary by the changes to the way of life in most Western societies. What emerges from this table is that lifecourses, as argued above, have become increasingly fragmented and chaotic, a

constantly changing and heterogeneous melee of social actors (Hunt, 2005). As Mayer (2004) states,

"The post-industrial, post-Fordist lifecourse regime... can be characterised by increasing de-standardization across the lifetime and increasing differentiation and heterogeneity across the population." (172)

Current understandings of the lifecourse, therefore, have arisen from recognition that individuals' lives are increasingly heterogeneous, with huge variation between different individuals' rich social experiences (Hunt, 2005). While a small number of events in each individual's life are inevitable – all will age, all will die – the nature and timing of even these events is neither linear nor predictable (Hunt, 2005). Indeed there are few clear associations between chronological age and individuals' activities; there are clear differences within, as well as between, chronological age cohorts (Katz and Monk, 1993). The study of the lifecourse then is concerned with the transitions that individuals go through as they age, and the pathways through life that individuals take (Katz and Monk, 1993). Hockey and James (2003) therefore state that the use of the lifecourse in academic work has,

"... been adopted as a way of envisaging the passing of a lifetime less as the mechanical turning of a wheel and more as the unpredictable flow of a river." (290)

Therefore, where the life-cycle terminology tended to assume relatively fixed 'rites of passage' at particular chronological ages, in the analysis of life experiences, divisions cannot be made by chronological age alone (Laslett, 1989).

How old an individual is does not define the roles they hold or the activities they undertake, nor are there clear relations between chronological age and significant life events such as marriage, child bearing or retirement (Katz and Monk, 1993). In the post-industrial lifecourse, these events and stages of life are dynamic and varied (Hopkins and Pain, 2007). This reflects a process by which,

"... a number of life transitions have been delayed, prolonged, and increased in age variance, and the degree of universality and of sequential orderliness has decreased." (Mayer, 2004: 172)

Understandings of the significance of the lifecourse to an individual can only be gained by drawing upon individuals' own perceptions of their life to date; the lifecourse is a "self-referential process" (Mayer, 2004: 166). Individuals act in the context of past experiences, and each individual's understanding of their past therefore serve to inform their future (Mayer, 2004; Hunt, 2005). The nature of the events which occur across the lifecourse is considered in the next section.

2.4.3. Lifecourse events

The study of the lifecourse is in effect the study of the cumulative impact of a lifetime's sequence of events, some major and some comparatively minor, which each individual is a part of (Elder, 1985; Hareven, 2000; Bailey, 2009). As such, lifecourse research is concerned with how individuals experience the range of events, states and stages which occur from birth onwards (Mayer, 2004). In constructing biographies of each individual lifecourse, it is possible to relate different elements of life together, to relate "careers" to work and residence and others to transitions such as leaving home, becoming a parent, divorce, retirement and others (Dykstra and van Wissen, 1999; Bailey, 2009). Understanding how all of these different events are ordered and overlapped, and how experience of them impacts on the lifecourse, is a major benefit of lifecourse approaches (Mayer, 2004). Having understood the ways in which an individual is the product of a lifetime of events experienced, and how at different stages of the lifecourse different events and elements impact in different ways, it is possible to look for what Rossi (1980) describes as the, "...social patterns in the timing, duration, spacing and order of life events" (7). An example of how patterns of the occurrence and timing of events changes, and how this impacts across the lifecourse, is given by Saraceno's (1991) work on Italian women's lifecourses. Here it is stated that two social phenomena have been observed – a decrease in marriage and a decrease in fertility rates – which have prompted changes in the ways in which Italian women experience the lifecourse (Saraceno, 1991). The paper concludes by arguing that;

"...women's biographies and life strategies have become explicitly more diversified, as resources and options have opened up. Childlessness, celibacy, divorce, and remarriage increasingly are legitimate options."
(Saraceno, 1991: 516)

These individual and/or family events – marriage, divorce, child-rearing – clearly exist in a wider context, of increased divorce, of starting a family later and of having fewer children as women increasingly work. As such, the next section considers the importance of the wider social and cultural context to the lifecourse.

2.4.4. The lifecourse in context

So far this section has considered lifecourse at the scale of the individual, and how patterns may be observed and understood over different individuals' lifecourses. Next, it addresses the impact of the social and cultural context in which an individual lives on the nature of the lifecourse and how it is experienced. Gielle and Elder (1998) advocate a lifecourse perspective which seeks to take into account both the individual stories of peoples' lives and the "social surroundings" in which

they take place (24). In doing so, a picture of how individuals' lives are shaped by both the social structures they inhabit and by the individual agency which they are able to exert can be developed (Hunt, 2005). Therefore, while lifecourse theory states that individuals experience and interpret their own lifecourses through choices and actions, these choices and actions may be reactions to external events, constrained by the parameters of their circumstances (Elder et al, 2003; Bäckman and Nilsson, 2011). The approach therefore,

"... attempts to bridge the macro- and micro-levels of social-structural analyses by incorporating the effects of history, social structure, and individual meaning into theoretical and analytical models." (Bengtson et al, 1997: S80)

The individual remains the unit of analysis, yet the approach cannot be totally individualistic, as an individual cannot separate their lifecourse of experience from the social context in which it occurred (Musson, 1998; Hardill et al, 2007). The lifecourse approach therefore allows for the study of the overlap between individual, social and institutional structures (Dex, 1991; Baines and Hardill, 2008).

Along with the impact of external factors on the lifecourse, the literature also points to the cohort to which an individual belongs as being significant in their experience of the lifecourse (Katz and Monk, 1993; Mayer, 2004; Hunt, 2005). Groups born in a similar place at a similar time constitute a cohort, and it is suggested that these individuals are likely to have been influenced by the same economic and cultural trends, and that as a result members of a cohort may hold comparable attitudes and have experienced similar events (Hunt, 2005). But cohort also illustrates one of the problems with adopting a lifecourse perspective; it is difficult to consider in a single analysis the wide range of contextual variables – social class, gender, race and more (Hunt, 2005) – which the theoretical basis of the approach suggests should be considered (Bengtson et al, 1997). Issues of cohort may be so implicit to an individual that they do not identify it as part of their lifecourse experience (Katz and Monk, 1993), and so analysing its impact may be beyond the scope of individual-based research. It is a weakness of lifecourse approaches that they, like any attempt to measure human experience, are not able to capture all of the huge range of factors impacting on individuals, and as such it is more common that only certain select elements of the lifecourse are studied (Bengtson et al, 1997). Having explored the theoretical basis of the lifecourse approach, and limitations of the method, the next section explores how papers on volunteering, ageing and other social science subjects have utilised a lifecourse perspective.

2.4.5. *Adopting a lifecourse perspective*

A small number of previous pieces of research on volunteering have also argued for a lifecourse approach (see Hardill et al, 2007; Baines and Hardill, 2008; Neuberger, 2008; Brodie et al, 2011; Woolvin et al, 2011). Baroness Neuberger (2008) in her Report of the Commission on the Future of Volunteering states that the Commission saw viewing volunteering in terms of "*volunteering journeys*" (16) as a useful way to study the opportunities and challenges faced by volunteers. The conceptualisation of these *journeys* has two dimensions (Neuberger, 2008);

1. Throughout an individual's life, volunteering will come and go, and will take on different forms and serve different purposes.
2. Each volunteer goes on a journey from when they first think about volunteering to the point where they are embedded in a voluntary role.

Decisions to volunteer therefore occur across the lifecourse, and any decisions made in older age need to be understood in the context of decisions, experiences and events which have occurred previously. As Neuberger argues,

"People may dip in and out of volunteering, doing more, less or nothing at all as volunteers at different stages of their lives, as a matter of choice or through circumstances." (16)

Hardill et al (2007) justify the use of a lifecourse approach to volunteering research by arguing that it allows the researcher to ...

"...understand the qualitative experience of volunteering, specifically why people create (emotional, temporal and physical) space for voluntary work, and how they juggle unpaid voluntary work with other 'work' (paid and unpaid) they undertake." (400)

It should be stressed that notions of *volunteering journeys* do not suggest that participation in voluntary activity is in any way linear, nor that individuals progress up some sort of volunteering career ladder towards ever-greater involvement (Neuberger, 2008). Rather, participation in voluntary activity changes in nature, becomes more or less significant and plays different roles in an individual's life at different stages of the lifecourse; this is what this thesis explores, to examine how this influences formal volunteering in older age.

2.4.6. *Conclusion*

This section has situated the lifecourse approach within changes to the broad patterns of social change, with a lifecourse concept argued for which takes into account the multiple turns, and concluded by briefly looking at some recent social science work and how it has justified the use of a lifecourse model of analysis. This section is fundamental to the analysis of the literature and of my data which makes

up this thesis. All the elements of volunteering in older age are considered in the context of the lifecourse approach which this chapter has outlined.

2.5. Conclusion

This chapter has established the theoretical framework which underpins the analysis undertaken by this thesis. This framework is fundamental to the way in which this thesis sets about answering the research questions posed in Section 1.5. It has directed the empirical research which is reviewed in the next chapter and guided how this previous research has been interpreted. Put simply, the research framework established in this chapter is as follows;

Volunteering is understood of one work role among many that individuals hold, and as an activity which is undertaken in different ways, in varying contexts and for changing reasons at different times across the lifecourse.

Having established this here, the next chapter looks at what has been previously found about the reasons why individuals volunteer across the lifecourse and into older age. The theoretical framework established in this chapter also underpins the methodological approach that this thesis has taken in designing, conducting and analysing primary research; as **Chapter 4** will outline, methods adopted are holistic, considering volunteering in older age from a lifecourse perspective, in the context of the broad mix of work commitments that individuals negotiate over the lifecourse. The analysis contained in **Chapters 5, 6** and **7** will again be undertaken within the theoretical framework outlined here. The heuristic established in **Chapter 5** develops Davis Smith and Gay's (2005) work, building on its lifecourse approach by considering not just the formal volunteering that individuals undertake across the lifecourse, but also the other work roles they engage in. **Chapters 6** and **7** build on this by drawing on the distinction developed by Lukka and Locke (2007) and Woolvin (2011) between internal and external impulses to volunteer. This chapter has been fundamental, then, in establishing the theoretical framework on which this thesis rests; it has set out the context in which the research questions will be answered.

3. Researching Volunteering

3.1. Introduction

This chapter reviews recent empirical research conducted in the United Kingdom and other advanced capitalist economies to give an overview of where reasons for engaging in formal volunteering, particularly for older adults, have been researched. It draws on the distinction between internal and external impulses to volunteer, while recognising Rochester's (2006) call for recognition of the complex mix of reasons why individuals engage in formal volunteering. It looks at how decisions to engage in formal volunteering – across the lifecourse and into older age – are influenced by factors arising in three contexts; the family, paid employment and communities. This approach recognises the scales and context of volunteering decisions, drawing on the work of Omoto and Snyder (2002), who propose that volunteering needs to be situated within the context of the individual and the wider social systems in which they operate.

The first section of this chapter looks at how previous empirical research has demonstrated the ways in which families – in their multifarious forms – affect individuals' volunteering decisions. It looks at the importance of parental example on engagement in formal volunteering, how being in a relationship affects decisions to engage in volunteering and how parenthood presents opportunities and challenges for formal volunteering. The next section looks at paid employment and skills, drawing on a cultural capital approach to explore how individuals value particular roles and skills and transfer these between paid work and formal voluntary roles. However, other skills are acquired across the lifecourse away from paid employment, and these are considered next. After this, this section looks at third age and retirement, and how these lifecourse transitions – moving away from paid employment – affect engagement in formal volunteering. The penultimate section of this chapter looks at how decisions to engage in formal volunteering are shaped in and by communities, of place and of interest. The final section of this chapter looks at other internal and external reasons for engaging in formal volunteering identified by the literature which do not fall into the categories explored in the previous three sections; volunteering for particular causes, for social reasons and the impact of awards received for volunteering.

3.2. Family and Volunteering

3.2.1. Introduction

Thus section looks at previous research which has looked at how individuals' families, and their roles within them, impact upon their volunteering. Rotolo (2000), writing about formal volunteering in the USA, notes the significance of the family in volunteering participation is not new; Goode (1960: 493) sees the family as the "role centre" around which an individual can build their paid work, family responsibilities, volunteering and leisure time; all of the complex mix which the TSOL seeks to understand (Glucksmann, 1995; 2000; 2005). Knoke and Thompson (1977), using quantitative data from 1967 and 1974 surveys conducted by the National Opinion Research Centre in the USA, look at how the roles that an individual is obliged to undertake within their family will at different times of life encourage or discourage participation in volunteering. It should be stressed, though, that the impact of family is significantly more likely to impact upon women than men. Family transitions such as marriage, children being born, children beginning school and children leaving home are more likely to affect women's participation in volunteering than it will men's, as Baines et al (2006) note from their qualitative research with older volunteers in northern England. Three different familial relationships have been found to impact upon an individual's volunteering activities: the example set by an individual's parents, the impact of a partner or spouse, and the ways in which having young children have been explored as encouraging engagement in formal volunteering.

3.2.2. Parental example

The earliest influences on individuals generally come from their parents; influences and experiences in childhood may well contribute to impulses to engage in formal volunteering in adulthood, be it in younger adulthood for constant and serial volunteers or in older adulthood for trigger volunteers. There has been little previous work on the links between parents' volunteering and their children's engagement. What little work there has been mainly draws upon social learning theory (see Bandura, 1977; Janoski and Wilson, 1995) to suggest that parents who engage in volunteering encourage their children to engage, by setting an example to them. Bekkers (2007) explains that,

"Parents who volunteer teach their children with deeds that volunteering is doing good in society. Volunteering requires giving up some leisure time in order to help an association reach its goals. Children who see their parents volunteer become accustomed to the idea that personal sacrifice for some greater good has intrinsic value." (Bekkers, 2007: 100)

There have been four recent studies of the links between parental volunteering and young people's volunteering and other social values. Flannagan et al (1998) looked at the relationships between volunteering and family values, and based on a quantitative study of 5,579 adolescents from 7 countries (Australia, USA, Sweden, Hungary, Czech Republic, Bulgaria and Russia, found that parental emphasis on civic responsibility is positively related to civic engagement by adolescents. In the USA, Beutel and Kirkpatrick Johnson (2004) conducted a quantitative analysis, using data from the 1992 Giving and Volunteering in the United States survey, and found that current parental volunteering promotes positive social values in their children. The only qualitative study among the four is Davis Smith and Gay's (2005) study of 21 older volunteers in England, report older volunteers describing how attitudes and values were passed down to them by their parents. Further to values, they also found that older volunteers described day-to-day events in childhood as having influenced their attitudes towards volunteering. Finally, Bekkers (2007) looked at the links between parental volunteering at age 15 and volunteering in adulthood, based on a quantitative analysis of 864 adults, using data from the 2000 Family Survey of the Dutch Population, and found that while there was a link between parental volunteering and children's volunteering, the link could not be separated from the passing on of religious attendance and social status. With the exception of Davis Smith and Gay (2005), this work is quantitative, statistics- based research. As a result, all it can do is present the nature of relationships between parents' and children's volunteering and social values, and it cannot and does not explore the nature of the relationship. Further to this, so many other factors are passed from parent to child and affect the extent and nature of individuals' volunteering – education, religious involvement – that it is not possible to establish a causal link here; do links found result from social learning, or are they the result from other elements of the embodied cultural capital which parents pass on to their children (Bourdieu, 1986)?

3.2.3. Marriage and spouses

It has been suggested that domestic stability is necessary in order for individuals to be able to get involved in volunteering (Davis Smith and Gay, 2005). This is borne out by quantitative research undertaken by Rotolo and Wilson (2006) in the United States. Using survey data from the Current Population Survey on the volunteering activities of 19,626 couples, they state that the voluntary engagement of spouses is closely related to each other, with engagement most likely to occur if both spouses are engaged in volunteering (although not necessarily with the same organisation). Hank and Erlinghagen (2009), using quantitative survey data from the 2004 Survey

of Health, Ageing and Retirement, collected across 12 continental European countries, corroborated these findings.

While stable partnerships can create circumstances under which spousal volunteering is encouraged, divorce and widowhood make individuals more than 10% less likely to volunteer than their still-married counterparts, Butrica et al's (2007) research using quantitative longitudinal data taken between 1996 and 2004 from the Health and Retirement Study in the United States argues. Divorce interrupts and changes family routines, which could lead to the individual having to move home, move jobs, change their caring responsibilities and change their social life (Nesbit, 2010). All of these changes leave less free time and energy for undertaking volunteering. Divorce rates for those in their 50s remain high, but fall sharply once individuals are in their 60s (ONS, 2009). In theory at least, this should mean that older volunteers are less likely to be forced to cease volunteering due to the uncertainty of the aftermath of divorce than their younger counterparts. However, the impacts of divorce for men in particular continue beyond the immediate time after separation; for older adults, widowed, divorced or never married men are particularly unlikely to be involved in volunteering. This is argued by three recent pieces of research in England and beyond; Davidson et al (2003), drawing on interviews with 85 men in south east England who attended some form of social group or organisation; Dean (2004), in a review of the Economic and Social Research Council's Growing Older Programme, a multi-disciplinary research programme consisting of 24 separate research projects, which ran from 1999 to 2004 and; Hank and Erlinghagen (2006), using quantitative survey data from the 2004 Survey of Health, Ageing and Retirement, collected across 12 continental European countries. Divorce also impacts upon women's participation; Baines et al (2006) found that divorce impacted upon female volunteers more significantly than on male volunteers, while Gaston and Alexander (2001) found from their quantitative survey of 1,226 volunteer Police Special Constables from five police forces across the UK, that female volunteer Police Special Constables who were married or co-habiting were likely to remain volunteering longer than divorced women.

3.2.4. Parenthood

Volunteering to a greater or lesser extent reflects the extent to which individuals are embedded in social networks; people who have larger social networks are unsurprisingly more likely to be asked to volunteer (Davis Smith and Gay, 2005), and this is supported by Choi and Chou's (2010) quantitative research using the Survey of Midlife Development in the USA. When young children, particularly those

of school age, are part of a household, their parents become embedded in social networks through their children; mothers meet at the school gates, through friends their children make and through activities their children do (Wilson, 2000). As such, a number of pieces of research have asserted that people who have dependent children living in their household are more likely to volunteer than those who do not (Wilson, 2000; Rochester et al, 2012). Rochester et al (2012) cite data from the 2005 Citizenship Survey (a quantitative survey using 4,390 interviews with individuals aged over 16 in England and Wales) to demonstrate the impact of dependent children on volunteering rates; 42% of those with no dependent children were found to have formally volunteered at least once in the past year, compared to 45% of those whose youngest child was aged between 0 and 4, and peaking at 61% for those whose youngest child was aged between 5 and 9, falling back to 45% for those whose children were aged between 16 and 18 (Kitchen et al, 2006; Rochester et al, 2012). This trend in England and Wales is also found in the United States, with Wilson (2000) citing three American studies which demonstrate this pattern; Menchik and Weisbrod (1987) based on quantitative survey data from a labour market survey in 1980; Schlozman et al (1994) based on quantitative data 2,517 participants from the Citizen Participation Study, a survey of the voluntary activity of the American public, collected in 1990 and; Damico et al (1998) based on quantitative data collected periodically from a survey of middle-aged women who graduated from high school in 1972. These studies, from England and Wales and from the United States, show clearly that parents with school-age children are likely to engage in formal volunteering. That individuals are often embedded in a wider range of social networks when they have young children may provide an explanation for this, but this has been under-researched, and there may be other explanations for greater engagement at this stage of life which have not been explored.

3.2.5. Conclusion

This section has looked at how an individuals' family context influences volunteering decisions. Research in this area has tended to concentrate on younger adults, and there is a gap in terms of how grandparenthood, rather than parenthood, impacts upon volunteering decisions. Individuals whose parents volunteer are more likely to volunteer: Davis Smith and Gay (2005) take a qualitative approach, suggesting that attitudes are passed down from parents to children; cultural capital is considered in the next section and offers a possible explanation for this. Previous research has shown that married people are more likely to engage in formal volunteering than unmarried, and particularly divorced, individuals (Davidson et al, 2003; Hank and Erlinghagen, 2009). It has also shown that individuals with young

- but not very young - children are more likely to volunteer than those without children (Rochester et al, 2012).

3.3. Paid Work, Skills and Volunteering

3.3.1. Introduction

This section turns next to look at how individuals' experiences in paid employment, and the skills learnt and developed elsewhere across the lifecourse influence the nature of formal volunteering in older age. While not all adults engage in paid employment, and those that do do so in a wide range of different ways, it nonetheless is a significant influence on many individuals' lives. As such, an understanding of the impact of paid work on volunteering in older age is necessary in understanding how decisions to volunteer in older age reflect lifecourse experiences. Retirement, too, is experienced in a wide variety of ways, and this section looks at how these different experiences have been found to affect experiences of older age and the activities – including formal volunteering – that individuals engage in. I begin here by outlining the theory of cultural capital (Bourdieu, 1986), which looks at how attitudes towards skills and their use are shaped, and how this may affect reasons for engaging in volunteering. I then look at the links between paid employment and volunteering and at skills, and how older volunteers have discussed this as a reason for engaging in formal volunteering. The final two parts of this section look at third age and retirement, phases in the lifecourse which come after the ceasing of paid employment.

In the previous section, I explored how previous research has looked at the influence of family – parents, spouses and children – on engagement in voluntary and community activities. The concept of *cultural capital* (introduced by Pierre Bourdieu, 1986) suggests a broader influence of family – and peers – on individuals' behaviour, individuals' values being shaped and moulded by their environments. Over time, individuals acquire cultural capital through their engagement with those around them, coming to constitute an individual's habitus (Bourdieu, 1986). Bourdieu (1986) posits that there are three elements that make up an individual's cultural capital; embodied, objectified and institutionalised cultural capital. It is the first of these that is of relevance to this research, and to the ways in which individuals engage in formal voluntary and community activities for reasons of skill learning and/or use. Embodied cultural capital is of most relevance here, as it refers to the ways which attitudes and beliefs are inherited through socialisation and through the passing of norms and traditions (Bourdieu, 1986). Objectified cultural capital is less relevant here, as it refers to the physical objects an individual owns and can therefore consume if they have the necessary embodied cultural capital (Bourdieu, 1986). The third element, institutionalised cultural capital, refers to formal qualifications which an individual holds, and which signify the skills and knowledge they have been assessed to have (Bourdieu, 1986).

Rochester et al (2012) in their review of research into volunteering, refer to the work of Bourdieu (1986) in defining cultural capital as ...

"...assets such as a shared sense of cultural and religious identity, including language, heritage and an underlying possession of knowledge on culturally specific social meanings." (Rochester et al, 2012: 173)

They conclude, though, that the impact that cultural capital has upon volunteering is hard to measure (Rochester et al, 2012). A number of recent quantitative studies in the United States have sought to undertake a measurement of cultural capital and impact on volunteering (see Choi and Chau, 2010; Graham and Haidt, 2010; McNamara and Gonzales, 2011). However, all of these take religious attendance alone as a measure of cultural capital, ignoring the influences of parents, spouses and other cultural factors. The rationale behind this is that religious can be taken as a proxy for other elements of cultural capital, but in an English context, I do not feel that religious attendance alone is a sufficient indicator of the cultural capital an individual possesses. As such, the conclusions they draw on the impact of cultural capital and volunteering are too limited to be of relevance in this thesis.

Despite the paucity of relevant qualitative research, cultural capital as conceptualised by Bourdieu (1986) and understood by Rochester et al (2012) is a useful lens through which to look at the ways in which skills (in a broad sense) influence decisions of whether to and how to engage in formal voluntary and community activities. What skills an individual has, and the extent to which they value them and wish to nurture and utilise them, are influenced by their embodied cultural capital. The aspects of skill development, use and overlap explored in the remainder of this section exist within a context of an individual's habitus – as previously – of what they believe and value to be useful and worthwhile.

3.3.2. Links with paid work

For individuals who engage in paid employment – and in middle age that amounts to just over 85% of individuals (ONS, 2011) – the paid work they do is closely bound to their cultural capital. The cultural capital they hold, embodied through habitus and institutionalised through formal qualifications, will impact on the job that individuals engage in, and the job they engage in in turn will further shape their embodied cultural capital. Two English studies have shown that individuals who have undertaken paid employment in professional and managerial roles engage in more formal volunteering, with Davis Smith (1992) undertaking qualitative interviews with older volunteers in the UK on behalf of the Carnegie United Kingdom Trust and Perren et al (2003) examining quantitative data from the

British Household Panel Survey, using a sample of 1,109 men aged over 65 in 1999. Caution is needed with these findings, though, as different individuals and groups undertake volunteering, or indeed any 'helping' activity, in different ways, as Woolvin's research (in Smith et al, 2010; Woolvin, 2011) on informal volunteering among residents in deprived communities in Scotland argues. The literature offers some explanations for why this difference may occur in older age. Perren et al (2003) suggest that the higher levels of geographical mobility that middle class older adults and their families often have may prompt them to seek social networks beyond their family, friends and neighbours, and that formal voluntary activity may be one means of doing this. It is also suggested that participation in formal voluntary action in older age may be facilitated by resources which, while not unique to the middle classes, are more commonly available to them, such as two-car households, higher disposable income and good health, a point made by Barnes et al (2002) and Perren et al (2003) in the UK, and also by Witucki Brown et al (2011) in their qualitative study of 40 older volunteers in the southern USA during 2006.

The literature, then, suggests that we would expect to find that those who have engaged in more white-collar, professional jobs are more likely to be engaged in formal, organisation-based voluntary and community activities. The nature of the cultural capital held by those in professional roles is likely to be different in nature to those in more blue-collar roles, and to those who are not or have not been engaged in paid employment (Bourdieu, 1986). In light of this, a small number of studies have sought to explore whether there are links between the skills and knowledge that individuals acquire and use in their paid employment and those which they acquire and use in their formal voluntary and community activities. Misener et al (2010), based on qualitative interviews with 20 older adults aged 65 or over in Canada, found that older volunteers often talked about how the skills that they had gained throughout their lives – in and beyond paid employment – could be used to make a contribution to the organisations they volunteered for. Aldikachi Marshall and Taniguchi (2012), through quantitative research using data from the National Survey of Midlife in the United States, also found these links:

"...having a job requiring high level skills may more directly promote volunteer work to the extent to which the skills are perceived to be useful outside the workplace." (Aldikachi Marshall and Taniguchi, 2012: 219)

From these findings, Aldikachi Marshall and Taniguchi (2012) conclude that it is necessary to consider the characteristics of an individual's paid work when studying their volunteering. Price (2003), conducting qualitative research with 14 retired professional women in the United States, did so in 2003 and found that ...

"...the professional occupations of these women appeared to significantly influence the types of community activities in which they participated."

(Price, 2003: 352)

All of the women interviewed by Price (2003) were retired from full time paid employment, and it was found that they ...

"...maintained an association with their former work identities by practicing their professional expertise in a variety of ways." (Price, 2003: 352)

Retirement is covered in more depth in Section 3.3.5, but what the work of Price (2003) and Aldikacti Marshall and Taniguchi (2012) shows is the link between paid work, and the skills people develop and use in it, and the formal voluntary and community activities that individuals undertake. However, these two papers offer a far from conclusive picture of these potential links; this is an under-researched area, which this thesis addresses in **Chapter 6**.

It is not just from paid work, though, that skills are acquired, and some research has looked at the desire to use a range of existing skills in volunteering in older age. This research suggests that the desire to use existing skills remains an important reason for beginning volunteering throughout the lifecourse (Barnes et al, 2002; Warren and Clarke, 2009), with 26% of 55 to 64 year olds and 29% of over 65 year olds citing it as a reason for volunteering, very close to the proportion for all ages, which is 27% (Low et al, 2007). This is supported by Davis Smith and Gay (2005) who argue that continuing to use skills built up over the lifecourse is an important reason why older adults undertake voluntary work. This is supported by Narushima's (2005) work in Canada, which found that an important motivating factor for older volunteers was a *"desire to contribute their skills"* (576), and further that this often was linked back to previous experiences, with volunteers stating that they wanted to *"...contribute specific skills and knowledge that they perceived as their strength"* (576), both from paid employment and the range of other activities individuals engage with across the lifecourse.

3.3.3. Learning new skills

Linked to continuity from paid work and again to themes of cultural capital, a group of reasons for beginning and continuing to engage in formal volunteering which decline sharply in older age are those related to career enhancement and the development of economically useful skills. Volunteering as a means of advancing one's paid career understandably declines in importance from 27% of all volunteers aged 16 to 24, to just 1% for all volunteers aged over 55 (Low et al, 2007). Finkelstein (2007) found evidence among older hospice volunteers which supported

this, suggested that career-enhancing motivations did not prove relevant for the volunteers in that setting, while Misener et al (2010) found that older volunteers were more likely to discuss using existing skills than to focus on wanting to learn new skills. This, too, is highlighted by the data from Helping Out (Low et al, 2007), volunteering to learn new skills is cited as a significant factor for 46% of 16 to 24 year olds, compared to just 10% of 55 to 64 year olds and 14% for those aged over 65. We can, though, observe from this that a desire to learn new skills by volunteering rises after age 65, and **Chapter 6** will look at this in the context of the primary data collected and analysed in this thesis.

Two policy documents published around the turn of the millennium suggested that for those who have ceased paid work, volunteering can be a way of developing new skills: the British government white paper *Winning the Generation Game* (2000) and the European Union report from the Commission to the UN International Year of Older Persons, *Towards a Europe of All Ages* (1999). While contrary to the work of Finkelstein (2007) or Misener et al (2010), these documents fit into wider debates about active ageing and lifelong learning, as Dean (2004) notes in his review of the ESRC Growing Older Programme. Often this learning of new skills can be incidental to the act of volunteering, but nonetheless Withnail (2006), based on two-year study of older adults from across the UK using biographical lifecourse methods, reports that undertaking volunteering can help those who have left the paid workforce to keep mentally active, although conclusions are not clear on whether this acted as a motivating factor for engaging in volunteering, or was an unintended – positive – outcome. Similarly, Narushima's (2005) qualitative research with 12 older volunteers in Canada found that on-going learning was emphasised as important by each of her sample volunteers, and cited as a reason for remaining – but not for beginning – volunteering.

Closely related to the ways in which individuals engage in volunteering in part to learn new skills, volunteering as a form of serious leisure is a field of thought which has emerged from a series of publications by Robert Stebbins from 1976 onwards (see Stebbins 1982; 1992; 2000; 2006). Serious leisure is defined as ...

"...the systematic pursuit of an amateur, hobbyist, or volunteer core activity that is highly substantial, interesting and fulfilling and where, in the typical case, participants find a career in acquiring and expressing a combination of its special skills, knowledge and experience." (Stebbins, 1992: 3)

According to serious leisure theorists, volunteering is intrinsically motivated and derives from the interests of the individual taking part, who participates in order to

derive enjoyment and satisfaction from the learning of new skills and the gaining of new knowledge (Rochester, 2006). Minsener et al (2010) in their research on older sports volunteers in Canada, use a serious leisure framework for their understanding of volunteering, building it into their definition of formal volunteering, which they define as

"...systematic involvement in an activity that is sufficiently substantial and interesting for the individual to find extended involvement there in the acquisition and/or expression of particular skills, knowledge and experience." (Misener et al, 2010: 268)

It is important then to acknowledge the centrality of skill acquisition and use to the serious leisure approach to volunteering, as outlined in this quote. While such a definition is far stricter in outlining the boundaries of formal volunteering than that adopted in **Chapter 1** of this thesis, it highlights the way in which serious leisure approach approaches volunteering as a career, with commitment to skill acquisition and application.

3.3.4. Third Age and active ageing

That increasingly older adults are seeking ways to use their time actively, to consolidate and utilise existing skills and to learn new skills is a reflection of increased life expectancy, health improvements in older age and with an increased belief in an active 'Third Age'. The concept of Third Age comes initially from the foundation, in France in 1973, of Les Universités du Troisième Age (Swindell and Thompson, 1995). From this, the University of the Third Age has grown to be an international movement, with the term third age entering the Anglo-Saxon vocabulary in 1981 with the foundation of the first English U3A (Laslett, 1989). For the U3A, the term refers to those individuals who are "no longer in full-time employment", but who are still keen to enjoy, "educational, creative and leisure opportunities" (U3A, 2011). In his exploration of third age and the nature of this stage of the lifecourse, Peter Laslett (1989) identifies four stages of life (**Figure 3.1**);

Laslett's (1989) Four Stages of Life	
First Age	"...an era of dependence, socialization, immaturity and education..."
Second Age	"...an era of independence, maturity and responsibility, of earning and of saving..."
Third Age	"...an era of personal fulfilment..."
Fourth Age	"...an era of final dependence, decrepitude and death."

Figure 3.1 Laslett's four stages of life (from Laslett, 1989: 4)

According to Laslett's (1989), as shown in **Figure 3.1**, third age is the stage of the lifecourse where personal goals, distinct from the world of work, can be realised and as such is known as the age of personal achievement and fulfilment. These individuals are characterised as being in relatively good health, financially secure and happy in retirement. The ability to live a happy and fulfilling third age is therefore dependent upon retaining good health following retirement and being financially secure. As a result, the third age has become synonymous with being well-off, or at least comfortably-off, ageing (Bond and Corner, 2004). For many this is not the case; many older adults – Laslett's third agers – are not fit and healthy, are unable to be independent and lack the resources – financial and other – to pursue their interests (Phillipson, 2002).

The fourth age on the other hand is associated with 'deep old age'. The shared experience of fourth agers is not necessarily based on chronological age but on "frailty, disability and social exclusion on the basis of disease and physical and cognitive impairments" (Bond and Corner, 2004:14). The fourth age therefore begins at the final stage of the lifecourse before death and is a time of dependence and decline. It is characterised by physical and psychological decline and as such those in the fourth age experience a lower well-being and quality of life compared with third-agers (Laslett, 1989).

3.3.5. Retirement

When individuals turn fifty, it is proposed that they enter the "*retirement zone*", from which point on some are able to retire if they wish, while others may chose or be forced to carry on working due to economic or other reasons (Vickerstaff, 2006a: 668). Rates of economic participation drop when individuals pass 50; **Figure 3.2** shows that economic activity falls to 68.1% for those aged 50-64, compared to an average of 76.7% for those aged between 16 and 64, and from a rate of over 85% for those aged 25-49. Post 65, until recently state pension age, rates of economic activity fall very sharply; of those aged over 65, only 8.8% were economically active between May and July 2011, a very steep drop even from the activity rates of those aged 50 to 64 (ONS, 2011).

Age Group	Economically Active (%)	Economically Inactive (%)
16 – 17	37.1	62.9
18 – 24	70.5	29.5
25 – 34	85.2	14.8
35 – 49	85.8	14.2
50 – 64	68.1	31.9

65 +	8.8	91.2
All 16 +	63.1	36.9
16 – 64	76.7	23.3

Figure 3.2 Economic activity rates for England, May – July 2011 (ONS, 2011)

From **Figure 3.2**, it can be seen that retirement – withdrawal from the paid labour force – is a process which begins for a significant minority post-50, and for the majority post-65. While retirement ages for women and men are in the process of being equalised, for the time being and in the years preceding this research, women were often forced to retire at a younger age than their male counterparts (Vickerstaff, 2006a). **Figure 3.3** illustrates this pattern; for those aged 50 to 64, only 61.4% of women were economically active in the period May to July 2011, while 75.1% of men were. This pattern continues post-65, with nearly twice as many men – 11.9% - being economically active than women – 6.3% (ONS, 2011).

Those aged 50 – 64		Those aged 65 +	
Women		Women	
Economically Active	61.4%	Economically Active	6.3%
Economically Inactive	38.6%	Economically Inactive	93.7%
Men		Men	
Economically Active	75.1%	Economically Active	11.9%
Economically Inactive	24.9%	Economically Inactive	88.1%

Figure 3.3 Economic activity rates for those 50+ for England, May – July 2011, broken down by Gender (ONS, 2011)

In light of this statistical evidence that post-50, individuals increasingly withdraw from the labour market – through their own choice or otherwise – forms the basis of this section of literature review. For individuals who have been engaged in paid employment during the lives, their withdrawal from it will be a significant period for them. While Vincent (2003) reports that the notion of retirement is a modern one, it has come to have great significance in our understanding of older age. However, the end of a person’s working life is no longer seen as the beginning of the end; retirement has been recognised to offer some individuals hitherto unavailable scope for choosing how to use their time, a time of opportunities rather than the end of active life (Laslett, 1989; Phillipson, 2002; Davis Smith and Gay, 2005). This recognition is far from confined to academics and policy makers, with commercial, educational and other sectors recognising the power of the grey pound and the growing army of active third agers (DoH, 2001). Fit, active and independent

retirees look upon retirement as a chance to acquire new roles, as volunteers, part-time workers, and have the chance to continue – indeed to strengthen – existing roles as parent, grandparent, friend, neighbour and community members (Reitzes et al, 1998). In retirement new sets of social contacts can be developed and these can often be based in religious, community, voluntary or leisure-based activities (Barnes and Parry, 2004).

However, this rosy impression of a nation of retirees with ever-increasingly wealth, opportunities and quality of life does not tell the full tale of the retirement experience for many individuals, families or indeed communities. There has been a widespread move across the Western world towards early retirement – see the data in **Figures 3.2** and **3.3**. For some this is a blessing while for others it can be a curse, a form of disguised unemployment (Vincent, 2003). Whilst a significant proportion of the half of British men and third of British women who retire before state pension age (ONS, 2011) do so out of choice and with sufficient assets that they no longer need to engage in paid work, many are forced into unplanned and unwanted early retirement without the preparation, support or savings to sustain a tolerable quality of life (Hardill and Baines, 2009). As a result of the relaxing of labour-market regulation and weakening of the trade unions in the 1970s and 1980s, job security is often weak, particularly in lower-skilled employment, and older workers often face being forced into early retirement as a result of redundancy born out of economic restructuring (Hardill and Baines, 2009). Thus, the landscape of retirement is faced with a perverse irony; the very conditions which are credited with facilitating the economic growth, and allied increased prosperity, of the late twentieth century have led to many older workers being laid off in its last three decades (Phillipson, 1998; Hardill, 2003; Dean, 2004).

What emerges is a “two nation” (Vickerstaff, 2006a: 462) structure of retirement, whereby more comfortably-off retirees, often professional workers with occupational pensions, can afford to retire earlier and more completely from the world of paid work, whilst those less well-off workers who are made redundant post-fifty struggle to get by and are often forced to find work to bridge the gap to sixty-five and even beyond (Barham, 2002; Barnes et al, 2002; Phillipson, 2002). For those forced into retirement without plans or resources, it may be a time of shrinking social networks, isolation, declining health, a lack of money and may be further characterised by bereavement or geographical immobility (Barnes and Parry, 2004). Therefore, within this two nation system we find two very different groups of retirees, both aged over fifty and both not in paid employment. Yet the financial situation and quality of life of these two groups is markedly different. Such individuals may go through many different stages before complete retirement;

unemployment, long-term illness, caring, redundancy and part-time work (Phillipson, 1998; Barnes et al, 2002) As such, it has been suggested choice is the most important element in retirement decisions; an individual who has the resources and flexibility to be in control of their own destiny is more likely to have positive experiences of retirement than one who has had the decision forced upon them (Barnes et al, 2002; Dean 2004; De Vaus et al, 2007). It is to be noted that within this landscape of retirement choices, a significant number of workers carry on paid work beyond 65. The rates of economic activity post 65 have risen overall from 7.9% in 2009 to 8.8% in 2011, have risen for men from 10.6% in 2009 to 11.9% in 2011 and have risen for women from 5.6% in 2009 to 6.3% in 2011 (ONS, 2011). The increase in the number of people working after state retirement age (or following its abolishment, following state pension age) during a period recession suggests individuals often do so for financial reasons. However, continued paid work may also be also so in order to continue to enjoy the incidental benefits such as friendships, status and indeed enjoyment of their work (Dean, 2004). The recent abolishment, during 2011, of the state retirement age of 65 has made it increasingly possible for those who wish to, and have the option to keep working beyond 65.

The concept of retirement as a simple point at which individuals cease to work has become increasingly misleading, with many different means of shifting from paid work to retirement (Phillipson, 2002). The nature of the transition from work to retirement has been conceptualised as a dichotomy – albeit one more fluid and flexible than much work acknowledges – between abrupt and gradual transitions (Vickerstaff, 2006a). Abrupt transitions occur when an individual in paid employment retires completely and from that point remains out of the workforce, whilst gradual transitions occur when an individual phases out the work they do, working part-time and winding down towards the point at which they leave the workforce completely (De Vaus et al, 2007). Abrupt transitions from working life to retirement have been termed the “cliff’s edge syndrome” (Vickerstaff, 2006a: 461) and abrupt retirees find radical and near-immediate changes to their routine as a result of their retirement; one week the structure of nine-to-five, the next no structure whatsoever (Viney, 1993). For some, this lack of routine is a long-anticipated break from work, yet for others it can result in the loss of far more than simply the economic benefits of work. When individuals retire they lose out on a number of incidental benefits which they have enjoyed across the lifecourse and are bound up with employment: routine and structure, social contact, a sense of collective effort and purpose and, social identity and status (Jahoda, 1983; Barnes et al, 2002). More than leaving a particular job, retirement brings to its end an

often long period of paid employment, a routine which has dominated a lifetime suddenly being lost (Savishinsky, 2000).

Men are far more likely than women to retire abruptly (Vickerstaff 2006a), and it is suggested that they may find retirement and the transition to economic inactivity harder to cope with than female retirees (Casey 1992; Ginn and Arber 1996). For men, it is suggested that the worker role is central to identity formation; despite the successes of feminist thought over the final quarter of the twentieth century, men are less likely than women to have established roles in the home and therefore retirement can strip away the roles with which they self-identify (Perren et al, 2003). Linked to this, for men the economic domain is often the central arena for the pursuit of life goals and as such the end of working life can seem like the end of meaningful achievement (Perren et al, 2003). Similarly, the loss of social contact in retirement is particularly acute for men, who it is suggested tend to have employment-based friendships (Davidson et al, 2003). This may not always be the case though; Barnes et al (2002) found that the majority of the retirees in their study were broadly ambivalent about leaving paid work; initially post-retirement, individuals were found to express a mixture of regret at leaving and happiness and the ceasing of paid work commitments. In time this changed, as individuals come to terms with the changes in their routine and finances (Barnes et al, 2002).

Phased retirement can help to overcome some of the negative impacts of retirement, to smooth the transition and to allow individuals to gradually come to terms with the idea and practicalities of not working. The cliff face can be made into a gentler slope by a number of means including downshifting (either in terms of hours or responsibilities) within the current employer or by taking on "*bridge*" employment with another organisation (Vickerstaff, 2006b: 510). Bridge employment has been defined as

"...employment that takes place after a person's retirement from a full-time position but before the person's permanent retirement from the workforce." (Kim and Feldman, 2000: 1195)

However Barnes et al (2002) report that many of their respondents felt that it was better to bridge through undertaking volunteering than to undertake uninteresting or badly paid jobs. However, being able to make this choice is a luxury only available to those older adults with sufficient financial resources to make such a choice. The benefits of a gradual retirement are outlined by continuity theory which proposes that gradual reduction of a person's paid workload or bridge employment can improve well-being in retirees. Transition towards retirement, it is suggested, may be best approached in ways which allow the retiree to maintain

some aspects of their working life which they have enjoyed across the lifecourse; to have similar daily structures; to continue to work occasionally in order to maintain the worker identity and; to maintain social contact post-retirement at similar levels to pre-retirement (De Vaus et al, 2007; Kim and Feldman, 2000). However despite the apparent benefits of gradual retirement and the phasing out of paid work, the key issue here is once again having genuine choice in how to go about retiring. On this basis it can be argued that,

"... the retirement pathway matters mainly if it is the pathway that workers actively select." (De Vaus et al, 2007)

As Vickerstaff (2006a; 2006b; 2006c) suggests, not all organisations give their paid workers the opportunity to make their retirement gradual – or even to make their retirement at the time of employees' choosing – and as such this choice is not readily available. Higher-paid workers, it is suggested, are often in a better position to negotiate phased retirement if they so desire, whilst those in lower-paid jobs are often, as with the choice of when to retire, left little option (Vickerstaff, 2006b).

Based on qualitative interviews with 160 pre- and post-retirees interviewed in England over the period May 2002 to May 2003, Vickerstaff, 2006a, argues that retirement from paid employment is a complex and often convoluted process, over which the individual involved does not always have control. It is worth then considering also the links between paid work and volunteering in older age. This relates not only to the link between a paid career and retirement volunteering, but also to the ways in which older adults use volunteering as a means of staying connected with the paid workforce, as Hardill et al (2007) found in their qualitative study undertaken in 2004-5 of volunteering in a distressed community. For those individuals able to make a clean break from paid work, volunteering can offer some of the incidental benefits of paid work: giving a structure to one's time, remaining socially active and continuing to feel part of a socially productive organisation. This is supported by four English pieces of research; Barnes et al (2002) in their qualitative study of those leaving paid employment post-50 across four diverse British communities; Perren et al (2003) using data from the 1999 British Household Panel Survey, which covers 15,000 individuals across England, Scotland and Wales. They use data from the 1,109 men in the survey aged 65 or older and look at their organisational affiliations; Davis Smith and Gay (2005) in a qualitative study of 21 older volunteers in England and; Lie and Baines (2007) conducted in-depth qualitative interviews with 76 older adults in northern England. However, it is suggested by Davis Smith (2000), in his review based on the 1997 National Survey of Volunteering, that rather than use volunteering as a means of making the

transition from paid work to retirement, many retirees leave a gap of a few years between retirement and beginning volunteering.

Here then, volunteer work can be a means by which retirees who are not presented with acceptable (to them) opportunities for choice from their employers can phase their retirement or form the bridge between work and inactivity, should they so wish, albeit in a way which does not earn them any money. In addition to De Vaus et al's (2007) suggestions regarding the potential benefits of gradual retirement to continuity, volunteering can be suggested as a means of graduating one's transition from paid work to retirement. Both academics (Davis Smith and Gay, 2005) and policy makers (Scottish Executive, 2004) highlight the way in which volunteering can be a successful vehicle for smoothing the transition between paid work and retirement.

3.3.6. Conclusion

While not all individuals engage in paid employment, and therefore also not experience retirement, the majority of adults do so, and as such the experiences in paid employment will likely influence volunteering decisions across the lifecourse and into older age. There is a literature gap in looking at the links between skills learnt and used in paid employment and their use in formal volunteering, with previous literature generally concerned with which professions are more likely to volunteer – identified as managerial and professional groups – rather than on links between paid and voluntary roles undertaken.

3.4. Communities and Volunteering

3.4.1. Introduction

Communities – of place and of interest – are important sites of voluntary action, and an important context for individuals’ decisions regarding volunteering to be made. Volunteering because of a perceived need in the community was cited as a reason for starting volunteering by 29% of all volunteers, rising to 33% of those aged 55-64 and 35% of those aged over 65, according to the *Helping Out Survey* (Low et al, 2007). This chapter explores first how communities have been conceptualised, outlining the distinction between communities of place and communities of interest, but arguing that rather than separate categories, these should be seen as interlinked with organisations sitting on a continuum. It establishes how community organisations can be seen as communities, and how these communities bind individuals together and may encourage members to give time and efforts to volunteer to support the community and its activities. The second part of this section looks at older adults and communities, exploring why the increase in community-motivated volunteering increases in older age.

3.4.2. Communities of place and communities of interest

All individuals are embedded – to a greater or lesser extent – in a range of communities, differing in nature and scale, but providing identity and support for their members. The term *community* has meaning far beyond simply grouping together individuals who share a particular geographical space. In *Bowling Alone* (2000), Robert Putnam highlights how a wide range of communities – local geographical communities, but also workplace communities, a classic-car-owners community, a community centred on a large voluntary organisation, a community of individuals who support a particular football team, and many more – give their members a sense of belonging. These communities are embedded to a greater or lesser extent in some geographic locality, but also share in common a sense of shared experience, shared norms and shared values among their members. Members of communities may become active within them, give time and effort to support them (Hardill and Baines, 2011).

In order to understand the nature of communities, it is necessary to go back to the work of Hillery (1955), who reviewed 94 definitions of the term *community*, and argued that they could be divided into these two main groups:

- Those who saw community as being largely a territorial term, to designate people living in a certain geographical space.
- Those who saw community as being based upon networks of social relations, independent of any firm geographical space.

From these two groups we see the beginnings of the distinction – although in reality it is a blurred and messy one – between communities of place and communities of interest. Lee and Newby (1983) built upon Hillery's (1955) work to suggest a three-element conception of community. Two of these three elements concern communities constituted, to a greater or lesser extent, within a geographical area. The third, though, considers community as being made up of relationships, with no geographical meaning, and where some sense of identity is shared between individuals who may never have met. For voluntary and community organisations embedded in communities of place, there is the chance for those giving their time and effort to the organisation to meet with the recipients of their care. While this may also be the case in a number of organisations embedded in both communities of interest and place, in many cases those that the volunteering is benefitting may be many miles, even continents, away from those giving their time and effort to support them, who themselves may be a group of individuals located in many different localities (Hardill and Baines, 2011).

The work of Peter Wilmott (1986; 1987; 1989) is important to consider when discussing definitions of community. He posits that *community* entails a collection of individuals who feel that they have something in common with other individuals. Within this definition, he felt it useful to distinguish between territorial communities, whose members live in a particular area, the interest community, whose members have something in common which they wish to share (Hardill and Baines, 2011). Rather than two distinct silos of community type, these concepts of community should be understood as being a continuum, at one end communities based explicitly in one locale and with no other links between members, and at the other communities entirely removed from a geographical locale, with links between members created by interests or other shared experiences (Wilmott, 1986, 1987, 1989). This continuum, and examples of where different types of VCO sit along it, are shown in **Figure 3.4**.

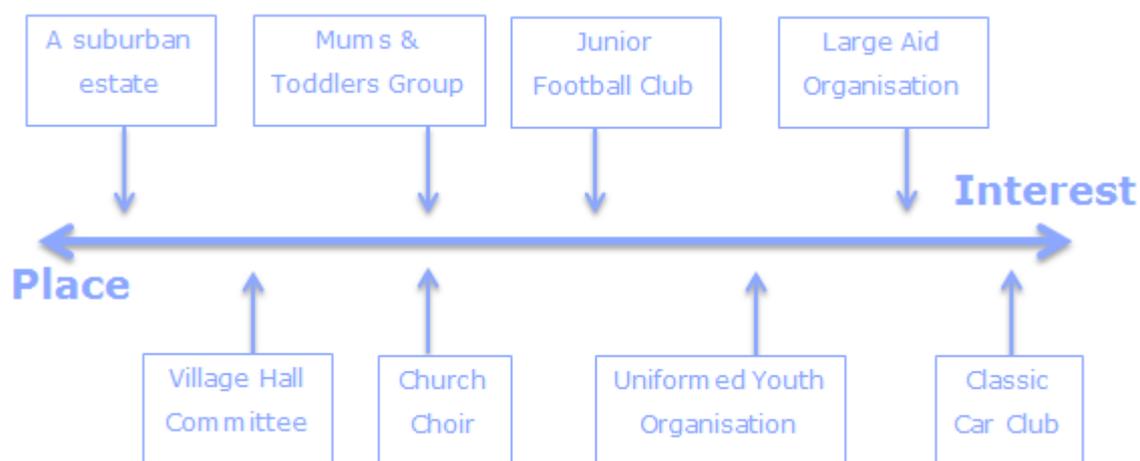


Figure 3.4 *Communities of place and of interest: a continuum*

As can be seen from **Figure 3.4**, VCOs and other community groups can be situated along a continuum from those mostly founded upon the geographical proximity, to those founded mostly on shared interests (Wilmott, 1986, 1987, 1989). Towards the middle are organisations whose members share some degree of geographical proximity, but also some degree of shared interest. At the far left, we see the community on a suburban estate; while not an organisation, this is a loose grouping of individuals who share nothing more in common than living in the same area. Further along the scale we find a village hall committee; individuals who volunteer on this are linked mainly by living in the same village, but also share an interest in having a well-run village hall, potentially linked to a wide range of diverse interests. Further along, and sitting at the same point on the continuum, we have a church choir and a mums and toddlers group. Both of these are communities born out of shared interests and needs, but clearly grounded in a geographical community; mothers 200 miles apart do not come together to form mums and toddlers groups, while non-singers who live in the same street do not form church choirs. There are other communities which the continuum shows as being both communities born out of place and of interest; a junior football club and a uniformed youth organisation serve as examples. At the more interest end of the continuum we find an international aid organisation; this links individuals with an interest in overseas aid, for whom living near one another is not important to their sense of community, but who may undertake local fundraising for the organisation. At the most interest-based end of the continuum we find a classic car organisation; this may draw its members from across the world, and they need not share any geographical space, even know whether their fellow community members live, in order to consider themselves part of that community.

3.4.3. *Older adults and communities*

The need within a community – of place or interest, as per the previous section – for something to be provided is more important for older adults than for younger age groups, with 33% of 55 to 64 year olds and 35% of over 65s giving this as a reason for beginning volunteering, against an overall level of 29% (Low et al, 2007). Hardill (2003) and Davis Smith and Gay (2005) note that older people are more likely to have lived in the same geographical community for a number of years, and as such may have a particular attachment to that community which makes them undertake voluntary work to its benefit; often older adults are the 'social glue' that binds communities together. Yet while Barnes et al (2002: 13) suggest that older volunteers often speak in terms of "*giving something back*" to their community, the figures from *Helping Out* do not back this up; it is cited as a reason for volunteering by just 1% of all volunteers aged over 55, the same as the average for volunteers of all ages (Low et al, 2007).

There have been three English pieces of research conducted in recent years which have emphasised the importance of feeling part of a community in older adults' decisions to volunteer. Davis Smith and Gay (2005), through case studies with 11 VCOs and qualitative interviews with 21 older volunteers in England, found that geographical stability results in older adults being embedded in communities of place, which encourages them to engage in volunteering in these communities. Hardill and Baines (2008) present a typology of older volunteers, as explored in Section 2.3, developed through qualitative research with four case study organisations in the East Midlands. They assert that those older volunteers who engage for social integration reasons often consider community as an important factor in their volunteering, either as giving alms to others (linking back to philanthropy) or as giving to each other (mutual aid). Lie and Baines (2006) conducted 76 qualitative interviews with older volunteers in the North East, and conclude from this that their volunteering is linked to expressions of active citizenship. They state that their findings show that older volunteers highlight the feeling of contributing to and feeling a part of a community as a key reward from volunteering. These articles reflect, then, how older adults are embedded in communities, and how this is reflected in decisions to engage in formal volunteering within, and to the benefit of, these communities.

3.4.4. *Conclusion*

This section has shown that all individuals are embedded in communities – of place and of interest – to some extent, and how membership of communities can lead to some individuals giving time as volunteers to support that community. Older

people are often the social glue which binds communities together (Hardill, 2003) and the previous research outlined in this section suggests that attachment to a community is a powerful driver of volunteering for older adults.

3.5. Further Impulses to Volunteer

3.5.1. Introduction

Previous empirical research has highlighted three other reasons individuals cite for engaging in formal volunteering which do not fit into the three previous sections of this chapter. This section explores these three reasons; volunteering due to a belief in the cause, volunteering for social reasons and awards given for voluntary service. The first two of these are internal impulses to volunteer, arising from individuals' own wishes. Awards and thanks are less clearly internal or external; the satisfaction derived from the award is internal, but the decision to award external. It is the satisfaction of the award, of being thanked for volunteering, that is seen here as being important. This section therefore provides context for the second and third research questions posed in Section 1.5, outlining how previous research has explained these reasons for engaging in formal volunteering.

3.5.2. Volunteering for causes

It is suggested by Davis Smith and Gay (2005) that those aged over retirement age are more likely to cite personal interests as a motivating factor than younger volunteers, who may have more instrumental reasons for volunteering. Data from the 2007 Helping Out Survey (Low et al, 2007), a Cabinet Office supported piece of quantitative research, supports this to an extent. It is true that volunteering as a result of religious beliefs (17% for 55-64 year olds and 25% for over-65s, compared to a base rate of 17%) and volunteering for a cause which was part of one's philosophy of life (24% for 55-64 year olds and 32% for over-65s, compared to a base rate of 23%) both increase post-55 as reasons for volunteering, and these could both be said to be indicators of volunteering to meet personal interests (Low et al, 2007). However, volunteering for a cause which is important to the individual is similarly important throughout the lifecourse (47% for 55-64 year olds and 41% for over-65s, compared to a base rate of 41%) (Low et al, 2007). Volunteering for something connected with one's interests and hobbies falls in significance in the older age cohorts (too low to be significant for 55-64 year olds and 2% for over-65s, compared to a base rate of 2% and rates of 4% for 16 to 24 year olds and 3% for 25-34 year olds) (Low et al, 2007). While *Helping Out* (Low et al, 2007) does not specifically list the simple enjoyment of the act a reason for volunteering, Barnes et al (2002) suggest that a number of older volunteers, as with all volunteers, while obviously being motivated to help others, may also volunteer for self-fulfilment and enjoyment, consistent with the complex mix of impulses outlined in Section 2.3.2.

It is also true that in and during older age, the proportion of volunteers who report beginning voluntary work in order to support their family's interests declines from an overall average of 29% and peaks of 41% and 38% for the 35 to 44 and 45 to 54 age groups respectively, to 20% for 55 to 64 year olds and 17% for over-65 year olds (Low et al, 2007). From this, it could be deduced that in older age, when an individual's children are likely to be grown up, they are less bound by their family's interests and are, as Davis Smith and Gay (2005) state, more able to follow their own personal interests. Finkelstein (2007), in a qualitative study of older adults volunteering in hospices in the USA, found that personal interests played a significant role in older adults' decisions to engage in formal volunteering.

Davidson et al (2003), based on interviews with 85 men in south east England who attended some form of social group or organisation, note that men are more likely than women to have belonged to an organisation for a long period of time, and that these organisations often serve a dual purpose of social interaction and volunteering. Sports clubs, uniformed movements and other male dominated groups such as Rotary, Lions or Freemasons are given as examples of such organisations (Davidson et al, 2003; Gergen and Gergen, 2003). Not only do individuals often stay with these organisations after retirement, but they are also able to give more time to these organisations in a voluntary capacity, because of the time freed up by ceasing to engage in paid work, state Gergen and Gergen (2003), based on their qualitative work in the USA.

3.5.3. Social benefits

It has been widely stated that older volunteers are more likely to cite a wish to be sociable as reasons for volunteering. Barlow and Hainsworth (2001) in a study of 23 older volunteers participating as leaders in an arthritis self-management programme, from across England and Wales, found that many older adults derived social benefits from their volunteering. So too did Barnes and Parry (2004), based on qualitative research with older volunteers in four contrasting parts of the UK; suburban Scotland, inner-city London, rural South Wales and rural South West England. This was also found by Davis Smith and Gay (2005), based in England, who used case studies of 11 VCOs which involved older volunteers, qualitative interviews with 21 older volunteers from these VCOs and with 12 national stakeholders in the field of older volunteering and by Warren and Clarke (2009) drawing from biographical interviews with 23 people aged 60-96 years in England. Barnes et al (2002), in their qualitative study of those leaving paid employment post-50 across four diverse British communities, found that wanting to meet new people and make new friends becomes particularly significant reason for

volunteering post-65. This is supported by the findings of the Helping Out survey; 41% of over 65 year olds citing being sociable as an important reason for beginning volunteering, against an overall level of 30% (Low et al, 2007). Hardill's (2003) review article on ageing in England and Dean's (2004) review of the Economic and Social Research Council's Growing Older Programme suggest that a possible reason for this is that a larger proportion of older adults live alone than in other age groups, and that volunteering provides these individuals with social contact and with care networks in their community.

3.5.4. Awards and thanks

Older volunteers – particularly continuous and serial volunteers who may have volunteered with an organisation for many years – may have their work formally recognised or be given awards for their contribution to the organisation. We know from the data from Helping Out (Low et al, 2007) that being informally recognised – by being thanked and other informal tokens of appreciation – is significant to decisions to continue volunteering by 95% of volunteers aged 55 to 64 and 94% of those aged over 65, and indeed for 95% of all volunteers. With regards to more formal rewards, Hardill and Baines (2009) report an older volunteer being proud to have received a certificate at an awards ceremony for the organisation she works with. Other research, too, has found that volunteers appreciate being given formal awards in recognition of the contribution they make to VCOs. Misener et al (2010) conducted qualitative research with 20 older volunteers – aged 65 and over, average age 72 years – from community sports organisations in Canada. They found that around half of the volunteers they interviewed mentioned having received recognition or awards for their volunteering, such as being given theatre tickets as a thank you. They state: “...while recognition did not seem frequent or expensive, the older adults were pleased and spoke very favourably about the experience when they were given some token of appreciation...” (277). In Australia, Deery et al (2011) conducted quantitative research with 450 older adults volunteering in a state museum. They found that volunteers appreciated being thanked in newsletters and other documents, and receiving personal recognition through service awards and other formal awards. However, it is clear from both of these pieces of research that individuals do not initially engage in formal volunteering because they wish to receive formal awards and recognition for doing so, but rather their being awarded/rewarded serves to reinforce that their volunteering is useful and appreciated. There are a number of recent pieces of research, mainly from the United States, which look at the possibility of up-front incentives for volunteering as a means of encouraging older adults to volunteer (see Tang, 2010; Moore McBride et al, 2011; Morrow-Howell, 2010), but these

have not been considered here as expecting payment (of a sort) for giving one's time falls outside of the definition of volunteering proposed in **Chapter 1**.

3.5.5. Conclusion

This short section has outlined three other commonly cited reasons for engaging in formal volunteering identified by previous empirical research. The first two outlined – belief in a cause and social benefits – are identified as reasons why individuals first engage in formal volunteering, and as something which continues to bind them to organisations. The latter – awards and thanks for volunteering – are not identified as an initial reason for volunteering, rather as a way of making volunteers feel useful and appreciated, and therefore helping ensure sustained commitment.

3.6. Conclusion

This chapter has explored a wide range of previous empirical research from sociology and across the social sciences into the reasons for engaging in formal volunteering in older age. **Figure 3.5** gives an overview of the internal and external reasons identified in this chapter, briefly and concisely summarising the five internal and two external reasons for volunteering which have been explored here.

Internal Reasons	
Using existing skills	Volunteering allows older adults to continue using skills they have developed across the lifecourse, both in paid work and through other experiences.
Learning new skills	Volunteering is a way in which older adults can learn and use new skills. This links to debates around third age and serious leisure, as volunteering becomes a way of learning in older age.
Belief in the cause	Believing in the goals of an organisation is recognised as an important factor in individuals' decisions regarding where and when to volunteer.
Social benefits	Individuals may engage in formal volunteering because they have been asked by a social contact, or in order to widen their social contacts. In either scenario, being social is an important factor.
Awards and thanks	While not an initial reason for volunteering, being thanked or being presented with an award for voluntary service can help to bind volunteers to organisations by knowing their work is valued.
External Reasons	
Family	Across the lifecourse, family affects volunteering in different ways. Parents influence the volunteering behaviour of their children, and the impact of this may continue across the lifecourse. Being married or coupled helps facilitate volunteering, while having young children encourages engagement in formal volunteering
Communities	Communities of place and of interest encourage their members to volunteer for the good of the community. Individuals may be asked by other community members, or may see a need in the community and seek to meet it.

Figure 3.5 *Internal and external reasons for volunteering identified in this chapter*

These internal and external reasons for volunteering inform the analysis contained in **Chapters 5, 6 and 7**, outlining what factors previous empirical research has found to be important in volunteering decisions across the lifecourse and into older age. Individuals engage in volunteering, the literature suggests, to use their existing skills and to learn new ones, to do something in support of a cause they believe in and to be with existing friends or make new ones. People are also drawn to volunteering by the interests and activities of other family members, parents, partners and children, and by the communities to which they belong. Retirement, considered at length here, is not an internal or external reason for volunteering as such. It is, however, a significant lifecourse event for those who have engaged with paid employment, and as such is likely to impact on volunteering in older age. While the majority of this chapter outlines the context for answering the second and third research questions posed in Section 1.5, the retirement section is relevant to the first research question, and how changes in the mix of work commitments – understood in a TSOL framework – follow retirement and changes in household composition.

This chapter concludes the literature review conducted in this thesis. The previous chapter and this one have presented the theoretical framework on which this thesis draws and reviewed the existing empirical research which has been conducted in the areas which this thesis explores. In these chapters, the academic context in which the three research questions posed in Section 1.5 will be explored has been set out. This informed the nature of the data collection outlined in the next chapter, and is then important in the analysis of this data that this thesis undertakes.

4. Methodology

4.1. Introduction

In this chapter I look at how the methodological approach adopted in this thesis was designed such that it would facilitate data collection which would answer the research questions posed in Section 1.5. Drawing upon epistemological and methodological approaches from sociology and across the social sciences, this methodology chapter is the central pivot of this thesis. This chapter outlines how this framework and previous research guided the collection and analysis of primary data, and critically reflects on this process. The primary data collection for this research was mainly qualitative, consisting of 26 semi-structured interviews with older adults engaged in formal volunteering from across England. A small quantitative questionnaire was conducted prior to this in order to guide the recruitment of interview participants.

This chapter first looks at how the theoretical framework presented in **Chapter 2** has informed the design of research methods and the way in which they have been analysed, outlining how the Total Social Organisation of Labour (TSOL) (Glucksmann, 1995; 2000; Taylor, 2004) and the lifecourse (Hareven and Adams, 1982; Katz and Monk, 1993) have been central to the methods adopted. Next, it looks at how voluntary and community organisations (VCOs) were used to recruit participants to this research, giving a brief overview of the nature of the VCOs, how they were contacted, how the questionnaire they completed was designed and how the results of it informed the sampling of older volunteers as interview participants. The next section looks at, having recruited older volunteer participants, how a semi-structured interview was designed, informed by the theoretical framework as outlined, which would generate data to answer the research questions. This section then briefly critically reflects on the interview process, before finally looking at how the interviews were transcribed in preparation for analysis. The final section of this chapter addresses how the primary data was analysed, and concludes this chapter by giving brief biographies of the 26 older volunteer participants.

4.2. From Theory to Methodology

4.2.1. Theoretical approach

In **Chapter 2**, the theoretical approaches on which this thesis draws were comprehensively outlined and explored. These approaches have informed the way in which the methodological approach outlined in this chapter has been developed, to ensure that the data collected was consistent with the theoretical approaches adopted. Fundamental were the feminism-based theoretical concepts of TSOL and the lifecourse. Central to these feminist approaches is that they are holistic in nature, calling for the focus not to be on just the topic of study – in this case formal volunteering in older age – but at the broader context in which it occurs (Whitbeck, 1989). **Figure 4.1** outlines the three central theoretical approaches on which this thesis draws and states how they relate to data collection and analysis.

Theoretical Approach	Influence on Methodology
Total Social Organisation of Labour	The TSOL approach (Glucksmann, 1995; 2000; Taylor, 2004) argues that when studying work roles, it is crucial that different roles – paid and unpaid, public and private – are considered in relation to one another. As such, the data collection in this thesis looks not just at formal volunteering, but at how this interrelated with paid employment, domestic commitments and other work roles. In doing so, formal volunteering was contextualised within other work relations and within the context of the household.
Theories of Volunteering	Davis Smith and Gay's (2005) heuristic of older volunteer pathway is fundamental to the way that the interview data has been analysed. Lukka and Locke (2007) and Woolvin (2011) propose a distinction between internal and external reasons for volunteering, and this has helped structure the wide range of reasons for volunteering that emerged during data collection.
The Lifecourse	The lifecourse approach (Hareven and Adams, 1982; Katz and Monk, 1993) argues that individuals' lives are unpredictable and subject to multiple turns. In order to understand an individual in the present, it is necessary to understand their past and the experiences that have impacted on them. As such, to understand experiences in older age, it is necessary to contextualise this in terms of experiences across the lifecourse. Data collection will

	not, then, just look at volunteering in older age, rather at engagement across the lifecycle.
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Figure 4.1 *Theoretical framework and methodological approach*

Figure 4.1 outlines the approach advocated throughout by TSOL and the lifecycle, with the theories of volunteering provide a structure for the analysis of the data; Davis Smith and Gay's (2005) heuristic is developed significantly, and analysis of reasons for engaging in formal volunteering is structured using the twin set of impulses identified by Lukka and Locke (2007) and Woolvin (2011). This theoretical framework is fundamental, then, not just to the methods adopted for data collection, but also to the analysis of this data. The framework established in **Chapter 2** and briefly outlined here is referred to throughout this chapter and those which follow. It is the framework in which the research questions established in Section 1.5 are answered, and as such is central to the methods used to generate the necessary data.

4.2.2. Research ethics

This data collection has been undertaken according to ethical guidelines established by the Nottingham Trent University (where this research project was initially developed), which in turn was guided by the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC), who funded this research. Since 2005 the ESRC has had a framework for research ethics which requires that research funded by the Council is;

- Designed and conducted in such a way that it meets certain ethical principles.
- Subject to proper professional and institutional oversight in terms of research governance.

The ways in which the research met the first of these requirements is made clear from the descriptions of methodology which follow, while the latter was met by gaining ethical approval at Nottingham Trent University. The process of gaining ethical approval required the meeting of a number of ethical criteria and submitting a detailed description of the methods to be used, which was approved by the School Ethics Committee, shaped by ESRC guidelines

4.2.3. Collaboration with Age UK

This PhD research was conducted in collaboration with Age UK, in the form of an ESRC-CASE collaborative studentship (see Demeritt and Lees, 2005). While the partnership was in theory with Age UK as an organisation, in practice it came down to being a partnership between myself and John Ramsey, National Volunteering Manager at first Age Concern England and later at Age UK, following the merger of

Help The Aged and Age Concern. John formed a key part of my supervisory team, attending supervision meetings every six months and engaging with us by email far more regularly. The nature of the relationship changed over time as this research developed. At first, John was invaluable in tutoring me in the way that voluntary and community organisations operate and signposting to me to key issues facing older volunteers and the organisations they engage with. Through these discussions, John was able to communicate to me what he and Age Concern England (as it then was) wanted from my research, and I was able to design this thesis with that in mind, agreed in collaboration with John. It was perhaps during the data collection stage that John's help was most useful; when contacting voluntary organisations to request they participate in my research, I was able to use John's name and status within the sector as both a gatekeeper and a reference. John was able to tell me key contacts within organisations, particularly within larger organisations where finding the relevant contact was problematic. Having Age UK as a collaborator was useful too in making the case to prospective participants that the research was worthwhile and had the potential to be useful. While analysing and writing-up the thesis, I regularly sent updates and chapters to John, and his feedback on what struck him as surprising or what confirmed what he already knew was very useful during this stage.

Reflecting back on the collaboration (see Macmillan and Scott, 2003), I was fortunate that John and Age UK were happy for me to take ownership of the project and make it my own, allowing me to explore what emerged as interesting within the context Age UK had originally envisaged. There is potentially a danger with academic research conducted in collaboration with a user that the researcher will be pulled in two directions, but the trust that John and I have had has meant that this was not an issue. The priority for me was always the academic thesis, and John's input meant I could concentrate on this while being confident that my findings would be useful to Age UK. Undertaking this research as a CASE partnership ensured that the work was grounded and investigated issues with academic rigour but in collaboration with the users of research. My research was designed to be rigorous, academic and theoretical, but was conceived, undertaken and written with users in mind.

4.3. Formal Volunteering in Organisations: A Questionnaire

4.3.1. Introduction

This section looks at the process which was used to recruit older volunteers as participants in this research. To do so, it first looks briefly at the nature of VCOs, outlining why they have been chosen as the means to recruit older volunteer participants. Next, it looks at why and how a quantitative questionnaire of VCOs was designed and conducted. It concludes by looking at the findings of the questionnaire and how they informed the recruitment of participants for the qualitative interviews. This section shows how the questionnaire process contributed to the answering of the research questions posed in Section 1.5; conducting and analysing the questionnaire was a step in the methodological process, a way of finding older volunteers and obtaining access to them.

4.3.2. What are voluntary and community organisations?

Not all formal volunteering takes place in VCOs, as **Figure 4.2** shows. However, the majority of formal volunteering occurs in the voluntary and community sector

Sector of Organisation	Proportion of Formal Volunteers
VCS	65%
Public	23%
Private	11%

Figure 4.2 Sector of organisation helped (Low et al, 2007)

(VCS), with some 65% of all formal volunteers volunteering with organisations who are a part of the VCS (Low et al, 2007). This figure rises for those aged over 55, with 67% of 55-64 year old volunteers based in the VCS and 70% of over 65 year olds (Low et al, 2007). As such, VCOs were the most

relevant type of organisation from which to recruit older volunteers. They also represented the best way to access older volunteers; those who were recruited through VCOs were guaranteed to be formal volunteers at the time they were recruited, both in that organisation and potentially in others too, across all three sectors. This thesis is not concerned with non-volunteers, so there was no need to access individuals who were not engaged with a VCO; those not currently engaged in formal volunteering were outside of the scope of this thesis.

Having established that the majority of formal volunteering occurs in VCOs, it is necessary to briefly reflect on the nature of VCOs in England. Among those organisations which identify as VCOs, there exists an enormous heterogeneity in terms of the work they do and the way they do it (Hardill and Baines, 2011). Organisations identified as VCOs can include charities, co-operatives, social enterprises, infrastructure groups and others (Hardill and Baines, 2011). Turner (2001) and Milligan and Fyfe (2005) note that which unites VCOs is that they

promote opportunities for social participation, for reciprocity and for local democratic involvement for their volunteers and service users. Kendall and Knapp (1995) propose that there are five different functions which VCOs may seek to fulfil;

- *Service providers:* VCOs which exist to provide a direct service to individuals or groups, or to provide information or support. An example is a Meals on Wheels service.
- *Mutual aid:* VCOs which engage in self-help and exchange around a common need or interest. An example is a crèche run by a group of mothers.
- *Pressure group:* VCOs may be involved in policy advocacy or organising campaigns, to put pressure on decision makers. An example is a human rights organisation.
- *Individual advocacy:* VCOs which pursue advocacy on behalf of individuals, on a case by case basis. An example would be a legal advice and support organisation.
- *Resource co-ordinating:* VCOs which act as infrastructure groups, providing support, training and contacts to other VCOs. An example would be a local council for voluntary service.

VCOs may have one or more of these functions, and similarly volunteers may engage in one or more of these areas (Rochester et al, 2012). The questionnaire needed, therefore, to reach VCOs across all five of these function.

VCOs also engage in a number of areas of work, pursuing a range of aims. The 2012 National Survey of Charities and Social Enterprises (Cabinet Office, 2010b) found that the most common areas for organisations to work in were education and

Number of Paid Staff (full-time equivalent)	Percentage of VSOs
None	53%
One	9%
Two	6%
3 to 5	9%
6 to 10	6%
11 to 30	5%
31 to 100	3%
101 plus	2%
Cannot say/did not answer	7%

Figure 4.3 The number of paid staff in VCOs (Cabinet Office, 2010b)

lifelong learning (28% of organisations listing this as their main area of work), leisure (21%), health and well-being (17%), community development and mutual aid (17%), culture, arts and music (13%), religious- and faith-based activities (13%) and in training (10%). The National Council for Voluntary Organisations note that in 2009 (when primary data collection commenced) there were 193,000 registered charities operating in England and Wales, of which around

145,000 fitted into a narrower category of 'general charities'. However, these figures only include those organisations with charitable status. It is suggested that if we include every non-profit organisation – including those that do not appear on the formal lists of regulating bodies – the figure would be between 600,000 and 900,000, based on research by the New Economics Foundation (MacGillivray, Wadhams and Conatry, 2001). These VCOs differ not just in terms of what they do, but also in terms of the number of

paid staff and volunteers they have. From **Figure 4.3** it is clear that the majority

of VCOs have no paid members of staff at all – they are run entirely by volunteer efforts – while only 10% of VCOs have more than 11 paid members of staff (Cabinet Office, 2010b). VCOs tend, too, to have relatively small numbers of

volunteers, as shown in **Figure 4.4**. From these figures, we can observe that 68% of VCOs in England in 2010 had fewer than 20 volunteers, while just 4% had more than 101 volunteers. However, while there are far more small organisations, the

size of the largest means that they have significant numbers of volunteers. The size of organisation volunteered with may impact the volunteer experience, so the questionnaire needed to reach organisations of a range of sizes, both in terms of volunteers and of paid staff.

Number of Volunteers (full-time equivalent)	Percentage of VSOs
None	5%
1 to 10	40%
11 to 20	23%
21 to 30	8%
31 to 50	7%
51 to 100	5%
101 to 500	3%
501 plus	1%
Cannot say/did not answer	7%

Figure 4.4 *The number of volunteers in VCOs (Cabinet Office, 2010b)*

This brief overview of the nature of VCOs in England has shown the diversity of organisations. These are the context in which the majority of formal volunteering occurs, and VCOs will be used to access and recruit older volunteers. Having this brief overview of what VCOs are and what they look like was important in designing the questionnaire described in the next section.

4.3.3. *Conducting the questionnaire*

The first stage of primary research conducted for this thesis was an online quantitative questionnaire of VCOs. The purpose of this stage of research was to provide a sampling frame for the next stage of research and some basic data to support sampling within this frame. The questionnaire contributed to the answering of the research questions posed in Section 1.5 by providing details of gatekeepers

within organisations, who then facilitated access to older volunteers within their organisations. It took the form of a web-based html questionnaire hosted by the SurveyMonkey questionnaire hosting website. Conducting a questionnaire allowed me to obtain a large number of responses in a short period of time (McNeill and Chapman, 2005). Undertaking the questionnaire online had a number of advantages over paper-based methods; the unit cost per response decreases significantly (Huang, 2004; Umbach, 2004; Zimitat and Crebet, 2002); the time taken to conduct the questionnaire – once designed – was much lower as it could be distributed instantly, and once completed was received and reviewed instantly (Birnbaum, 2004; Dix and Anderson, 2000; Zimitat and Crebet, 2002) and the responses could be gathered with ease, twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week without the need for me to enter the data (Birnbaum, 2004; Umbach, 2004).

The questionnaire was designed taking into account guidance from previous literature. An overview of the considerations taken is shown in **Appendix 1**. In summary, previous literature was clear that the questionnaire needed to be clearly written and laid out (Dix and Anderson, 2000; Binbaum, 2004; McNeil and Chapman, 2005) and easy for respondents to use, without needed to understand complex questions or devote significant amounts of time (Bowers, 1998; Umbach, 2004). There were also a number of particular issues regarding online questionnaires that I considered, including differences between browsers and screen sizes, the need to avoid pre-checked response boxes and the need for a facility to allow respondents to skip one or more question (Dix and Anderson, 2000; Umbach, 2004). In order to meet ethical guidance, prior to the first question, respondents viewed a page explaining the voluntary nature of the survey, how their responses are to be used and how they can follow up their participation or opt out at a later date (Zimitat and Crebet, 2002). To proceed from this page to the questionnaire, participants had to click on a button labelled "I Agree". All output data was stored in a password protected computer file, making it as secure as paper outputs would be in a locked draw (Bowers, 1998). Screenshots of the questionnaire are shown in **Appendix 2**.



Figure 4.5 Scales of VCO recruitment

In order to access VCOs, national and local infrastructure groups were used as gatekeepers, to facilitate the widest possible access with the soundest possible reference (Broadhead and Rist, 1976; Jenkins, 2004). At a

national level, the National Council for Voluntary Organisations (NCVO) is the largest umbrella body for VCOs in England, with Volunteering England (VE) and the National Association for Voluntary and Community Action (NAVCA) also significant national umbrella bodies. Below the NCVO sit regional and local Councils for Voluntary Service (also called Volunteer Centres), which are intermediary umbrella bodies (Morrison, 2000), and serve as the “*de facto headquarters or liaison point for voluntary groups in the city or district*” (Forbes, 1996: 353). **Figure 4.5** shows the relationship between these different organisational scales. Councils for Voluntary Service were asked to distribute details of the questionnaire to their member organisations. This ensured that as many VCSs as possible would receive an invitation to participate. A weakness with this choice of gatekeepers was that CVSs did not always inform me as to whether they had or had not circulated my invitation, and so I am not able to state whether the results reflect the picture throughout England. Nonetheless, the geographical spread was relatively even, as **Figure 4.6** shows.

Region	Number of VCSO Responses
East Midlands	28
East of England	31
London	30
North East	16
North West	7
South East	31
South West	14
West Midlands	13
Yorkshire and Humberside	29
Nationwide	21
Prefer Not To Say/No Answer	2

Figure 4.6 Geographical spread of VCO respondents

Alongside the problem of not knowing which CVSs had circulated details of the questionnaire and which had not, the questionnaire also experienced issues of self-selection. Because I had in the invitation email stated that it was an

“older volunteers survey”, I think that the results show a skew towards those VCOs who have a high proportion of older volunteers. This means I was unable to make any claims about the extent to which VCOs engage with older adults. In retrospect, it would have been sensible to advertise the questionnaire as simply a “voluntary organisations survey” to ensure that all VCOs, regardless of the nature of their volunteer base, are equally inclined to participate.

4.3.4. Where are older volunteers?

The purpose of the questionnaire phase of research was to provide a sampling frame for the interviews phase of research, and as such the questions asked were designed to show the key characteristics of the participating VCOs, to inform selection for the interviews. This section outlines the significant findings of the questionnaires, and how they were used to sample VCOs through which to recruit older volunteers. The data presented here can be seen in more detail in **Appendix 3**, which shows the graphs referred to here. The key findings were:

- VCOs which worked mostly or only with older people had significantly larger proportions of older volunteers than those working with all age groups or with younger people.
- There was a trend towards small and medium-sized VCOs having higher proportions of older volunteers than large and very large organisations.
- Organisations with a higher proportion of volunteers to paid staff had higher proportions of older volunteers than organisations with a greater proportion of paid staff.

These findings informed the organisations I approached in order to recruit older volunteers to be research participants. **Figure 4.7** looks at how these findings, in particular the ways in which they identified the different types of organisations older volunteers engage with, were used to sample organisations from the database the questionnaire created (Low et al, 2007).

Measure	Evidence and Relevance	Definitions
VCO Characteristics	VCOs with greater proportion of volunteers had a greater proportion of older volunteers. I sought to explore whether the experience for older volunteers was different in different sized and professionalised organisations, and how this affected decisions to engage in volunteering.	<p><i>Small</i> = fewer than 25 staff. <i>Medium</i> = between 25 and 100 staff. <i>Large</i> = more than 100 staff.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">and</p> <p><i>High</i> = over 60% of total workforce are volunteers <i>Low</i> = under 60% of total workforce are volunteers</p>

Proportion of older volunteers	I wanted to explore why some older volunteers chose to engage in VCOs where there are many other older volunteers, while others chose organisations with a more mixed volunteer group. This relates to social impulses to volunteer.	<i>High</i> = organisations where more than 60% of volunteers are aged over 50. <i>Low</i> = organisations where fewer than 60% of volunteers are aged over 50.
Age groups worked with	VCOs who work mostly or only with older people had significantly higher proportions of older volunteers than VCOs that worked with all or younger people. I wanted to explore why many older adults prefer volunteering in support of older people, and whether specific things about such roles act as impulses to volunteer.	<i>Old</i> = the organisation works with only or mostly older people. <i>Young</i> = the organisation works with only or mostly young people. <i>Working Age</i> = the organisation works mostly or all with working age people. <i>All</i> = the organisation works with all ages.

Figure 4.7 *Sampling criteria for interview participants*

The definitions, and the numerical values they use, relate to the categories used in the questionnaire stage of research, and are the same as those used in the 2007 Helping Out volunteering survey (Low et al, 2007).

As **Figure 4.7** outlines, three ways of categorising VCOs were established, informed by the questionnaire data and with the aim of recruiting older volunteers whose experiences would help answer the research questions posed in Section 1.5. I wanted to get a broad spread of types of organisation, rather than speak to a range of organisations which reflected the (potentially skewed) spread of types in the questionnaire sample, so using a spreadsheet grid I selected a range of organisations with different characteristics, as shown in **Figure 4.8**. In each category I randomly selected one organisation to approach. If no response was forthcoming, another VCO from that group was drawn and approached. In categories with just one organisation – such as an organisation which works with younger people, which is large and has a high proportion of volunteers aged over 50 – I approached an organisation with similarly characteristics, for example medium sized rather than large, if no response was forthcoming.

	B	D	G
1	StandardisedGroupsWorkedWith	StandardisedOrganisationSizes	VolunteersOver50HighLow
2	All	Large	High
3	All	Large	High
4	All	Large	High
5	All	Large	High
6	All	Large	High
7	All	Large	High
8	All	Large	High
9	All	Large	High
10	All	Large	High
11	All	Large	High
12	All	Large	High
13	Older	Large	High
14	Older	Large	High
15	Older	Large	High
16	Older	Large	High
17	Older	Large	High
18	Older	Large	High
19	Older	Large	High
20	Working Age	Large	High
21	Younger	Large	High
22	All	Medium	High
23	All	Medium	High
24	All	Medium	High

Figure 4.8 *Sampling grid for interview participants*

The contacts approached at VCOs (mostly, although not all, paid staff) acted as gatekeepers. Gatekeepers are organisations or individuals who facilitate initial access to research participants, and whose sponsorship of the researcher – a result of having introduced them to the participants – underpins the relationship between researcher and participant (Jenkins, 2004). This method did not work as well as I had hoped, with non-response rates high even though the organisations had responded to my questionnaire not long before. Further, some categories simply did not have any organisations – in my questionnaire sample there were few organisations that worked with only or mostly working age people, so it was only possible to recruit one organisation who worked with this group. Nonetheless, using this method I recruited 26 older volunteers from 10 VCOs to participate in the interviews phase of research. These organisations were distributed across the categories described above and provide a range of viewpoints, but I was not able to get organisations prepared to recruit volunteers to be interviewed from each of the categories outlined here. How these interviews were designed, conducted and transcribed is described in the next section.

4.4. Older Volunteers: Lifecourse Interviews

4.4.1. Introduction

In order to answer the three research questions posed in Section 1.5 of this thesis, I conducted 26 semi-structured interviews with older volunteers, organised through VCOs from across England. By using qualitative interviews I was able to generate a large amount of rich qualitative data about the social worlds of voluntary organisations and the older adults who volunteer in them (Holstein and Gubrium, 2003). Qualitative interviewing is distinct from questionnaire research in that it moves beyond the simple question and answer format to allow for a “*conversation with a purpose*” (Burgess, 1984: 102). The previous section outlined how the questionnaire phase of research developed a sample of VCOs from which to recruit volunteers, and provided some basic data about these VCOs which informed selection of research participants. This section builds on this to consider first how the interviews were designed and undertaken. Next, it critically reflects on the interview process and the data it generated. Finally, this section looks at how the interviews were transcribed, the process by which audio data was transformed into written data, ready to be analysed.

4.4.2. Undertaking interviews

The interview structure was designed such that it would produce data which would allow this thesis to answer the research questions posed in Section 1.5. As such, during the process of interview design and interview conducting, the research questions were crucial in guiding the questions asked (Mason, 1996). Further to this, I was keen to ensure that the ways in which the interviews approached generating this data were consistent with the theoretical framework established in **Chapter 2**: the interviews needed to be holistic, looking not at a snapshot of a moment in time but instead at how formal volunteering has inter-related to other work commitments across the lifecourse and into older age. While I was keen to avoid the interviews feeling like a questionnaire read out loud, it was important nonetheless to have an interview plan with themes to be covered, but one which was flexible enough to allow changes of sequence and to follow up issues raised in the interview (Mason, 1996, Kvale, 2007). In writing my interview outlines I included under each topic a few questions that I could use if needed, and I ensured that these questions were short, easy to understand and did not use academic jargon (Kvale, 2007). While these topics were on my interview outline in a certain order, I was keen to be flexible and open to changes of sequence and question form, in order that I could follow up on any interesting comments made by the interviewee (Mason, 1996; Kvale, 2007). Kvale (2007) states that by starting from my research questions and translating these into more colloquial questions to be

asked in the interview, I could, "...generate spontaneous and rich descriptions..." (58).

Consistent with the theoretical framework adopted by this thesis, the interviews took a lifecourse approach, with the main section of the interview consisting of the interviewee being invited to share their experiences of volunteering from the first time they ever volunteered through to the present day. For each piece of volunteering, they were invited to discuss why they had initially begun, what their role encompassed and, for roles they no longer fulfilled, why they had stopped. This was contextualised as we worked through the volunteering lifecourse by details of paid work and of family commitments, consistent with TSOL. An outline of the interview structure is shown in **Figure 4.9**. The full script of questions and follow-ups is shown in **Appendix 4**.

Interview Section and Questions	Purpose
<p><i>Setting the Scene:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Define what I mean by volunteering and the different types of role this encompasses. • Tell me about all the volunteering you do at present, with all the organisations you volunteering with. 	<p>To outline what we are discussing in the interview, and to establish a rapport with the participant by discussing something in the present that is close to mind.</p>
<p><i>Biographical:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tell me about the first formal volunteering you ever undertook? • Talk me through your volunteering history from then to now. • What do you remember were your reasons for volunteering at that time? • Have your reasons for volunteering changed since you first started? • Have you ever stopped volunteering and if so what were the reasons for this? • What other commitments – including paid work and household tasks – have impacted on your volunteering decisions? 	<p>This was the main section of the interview, and was designed to capture individuals' patterns of engagement in formal volunteering across the lifecourse. For each period or item of volunteering described by the participant, the interview sought to understand why they had volunteered at that time and what their household composition and broader work commitments had been.</p>
<p><i>Issues:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are there any things about your volunteering, your organisation or the 	<p>To investigate any particular issues or challenges faced by older volunteers, and whether these</p>

context in which it operates that bother you?	might lead to ceasing volunteering.
Retirement (if retired): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What impact has retirement had on your volunteering? • In what ways is your formal volunteering similar or different to your paid occupation? 	To explore the links between paid work and volunteering, in the context of TSOL, and to see if skills are transferred between different work contexts.

Figure 4.9 Interview structure and justification

As Mason (1996) and Kvale (2007) suggest, the interview structure and questions set out in **Figure 4.9** were by no means rigid. These sections and questions were written as a guide to help the researcher and the participants to generate data that would help to answer the research questions posed in Section 1.5. Rather than target sections of the interview at answering specific research questions, the entire interview was aimed at answering the three research questions: for each voluntary role described, the participants were asked what their broader circumstances had been at that time (in terms of paid employment, co-habitation and dependent children), how this had affected their decisions to engage, and what they remembered as their reasons for engaging in that activity at that moment in time. Similarly when participants described stopping volunteering, they were asked what their broader circumstances were and why they had chosen to cease formal volunteering at this time. Having designed an interview structure which will create data to answer the research questions, the next section reflects on the process of conducting the interviews.

4.4.3. Reflections on the interview process

In total I interviewed and transcribed hour-long discussions with 26 volunteers aged from their mid-50s to late-70s. The gender mix was 62% female and 38% male, which is consistent with the trend of women being more likely to volunteer than men (Low et al, 2007). Interviews were conducted in a variety of locations, in all cases reflecting the wishes of the participant. **Figure 4.10** shows a breakdown of where the 26 interviews were conducted.

Location	Number of Interviews
VCO Offices	18
Participant's Home	4
Café etc	4

Figure 4.10 Location of interviews

There was no noticeable difference in the nature of the interviews conducted in VCO offices or in the participant's home, while cafés did pose additional challenges in terms of background noise for transcription. As such, cafés

were only used as a last resort when no other option was available. Interviews on the whole lasted an hour, with a few as short as 40 minutes and some lasting over an hour. The length of the interviews reflected the amount of volunteering that the participants had engaged in over the lifecourse and the detail with which they described their experiences. Different styles of interviews worked best for different participants, and my skills in adjusting to these needs developed over the interview process. In some interviews, once the preliminary scene-setting questions had been completed, I only needed to ask the participant to describe the first time they'd volunteered and from there they described their entire volunteering history, while others required a large number of questions to be asked. In each, I was keen to adopt the interview strategy that would generate the best quality data to help answer the research questions posed in Section 1.5.

4.4.4. Transcribing interviews

Having designed and conducted my interviews, I next had to transcribe them, in order to prepare the data for analysis. At its most basic level, transcription refers to the process by which spoken words, in this case those recorded during the interviews, is converted into written text (Halcomb and Davidson, 2006). Yet this process of transcription requires significant consideration to ensure that the data it generated was both useful and academically sound. With this in mind, there were two key areas to which I was keen to pay close attention. The first is that the act of transcribing is a "*powerful act of representation*", where I as researcher am making decisions about how participants' spoken words are to be presented (Oliver et al, 2005: 1284). The second important consideration is that the process involves converting spoken language, with its own set of rules, to written language with wholly different rules (Kvale, 2007).

I consider first the issue of representation and how I approach the process of transcription. My decisions as researcher on what information to include and what not to was informed by the theoretical stance of my study (Poland, 2003; Halcomb and Davidson, 2006): in choosing to conduct interviews, I acknowledged my belief that social phenomena can be understood by accounts of lived experience, and that participants have the wherewithal to recount these experiences. When choosing between naturalised and denaturalised approaches to transcription, this belief guided my decision to adopt a denaturalised, rather than a naturalised, method of transcription. The naturalised approach assumes that language is a representation of the world, and that verbatim reflection of language, pauses and other noises is necessary in order to reflect the world (Oliver et al, 2005). Denaturalised transcription instead suggests that within speech there are meanings and

perceptions that construct the reality that we know, but that the language used is not this reality. Denaturalised transcription also attempts to provide a verbatim depiction of the speech which has taken place, but is less concerned with depicting accents and involuntary vocalisation, rather with depicting faithfully the substance of the interview, the meanings and perceptions created and shared in the interview (Fairclough, 1993; Oliver et al, 2005). Schegloff (1997) suggests that taking a denaturalised approach leads to my committing a form of theoretical imperialism, where I as the academic use my power over the data to select what is important. I reject this though: all transcription involves decisions on behalf of the researcher and as such all transcription is subjective, and I have acknowledged what is included in the transcripts, and what is not (Fairclough, 1993). Notions of 'accurate' or 'true' naturalised transcription are, Guba et al (1994) argue, rooted in a naïve realism that accepts representations as realities unproblematically.

Having decided upon the denaturalised approach to transcription, I then needed to set out a system for my transcription, laying out what I was to include and what was not to be written down (Poland, 2003). Consistent with a denaturalised approach to transcription, I did not include pauses in the transcription, nor did I include most involuntary sounds such as coughing, sneezing, sniffing, burping and so on (Oliver et al, 2005). I chose not to make any notes in the transcript regarding accent, as the denaturalised approach declares what is said, rather than its delivery, as the topic of study (Oliver et al, 2005). At no point during transcribing did I change sentence structure to make it read more like the written word; I was keen to maintain the flow of conversation, even though it was being turned into written words (Poland, 2003). With regards the insertion of punctuation, I had to make judgements as to what pauses, intonation and other signs indicate the end of a sentence or a comma. Oliver et al (2005) note that conversation is littered with response tokens – hmm, ok, ah, yeah, um, oh, huh etc – and that these can be important in what is being said. As such, these are included in the transcript as they are felt to be a key competent of how the interviewee is going about explaining their social world. No transcription is perfect, and in translating the spoken word to the written word, an exact match will never be achieved. The transcription of the 26 interviews, then, sought to produce written data as best as possible from the interviews which would support the analysis presented in this thesis. The next section of this chapter outlines how this analysis was undertaken, and introduces the 26 interview participants.

4.5. Approaching Analysis

4.5.1. Introduction

The analysis of the 26 interviews was conducted in the context of the theoretical framework established in **Chapter 2**, with the analysis seeking to use the data generated by the interviews to answer the research questions posed in Section 1.5. We have seen how the interview phase of research took a lifecourse approach in investigating formal volunteering in older age, considering the mix of work commitments individuals engage in across the lifecourse using a TSOL approach. This final section of the methodology chapter outlines how the interviews were analysed, and how this analysis has been used in the following chapters. It introduces the 26 older volunteers who participated in this research, giving brief biographical details of the formal volunteering they have undertaken across the lifecourse and the paid employment and family commitments that they have had. In doing so, it concludes this methodology chapter by introducing the 26 volunteers who represent the result of the methodological process outlined in this chapter.

4.5.2. Analysing the interviews

Interviews were prepared for analysis using the NVivo software package, with each of the 26 older volunteers interviews coded using a range of categories. These categories were created and refined during the process of coding; no pre-defined categories were created, and all arose from the process of reading, interpreting and analysing the content of the interviews. A full list of the categories created, along with the number of references to each category arising from the 26 interviews, is shown in **Appendix 5. Figure 4.11** shows the most significant themes which emerged from the interviews. Some of these relate to individuals balancing their different work commitments, some to the links between different work roles, while a number refer to the internal and external reasons which the interviewees referred to when discussing the formal volunteering they have

Theme	References
Belief in the cause	69
Changing circumstances	39
Changing roles	23
Differences to paid work	21
Doing something useful	26
Enjoyment	52
Family	30
Flexibility	64
Interests	27
Local community	39
Other time commitments	24
Retirement and changes	64
Skills	46
Training	24
Volunteering: Stopping	38
Volunteering: Being Asked	40
Volunteering: Offering	34

Figure 4.11 Categories from interviews

engaged in across the lifecourse. These themes, along with the previous empirical research reviewed in **Chapter 3**, have guided the focus of the analysis that this research presents. They indicate what the older volunteers who participated in this research explained as being important in their decisions to volunteer and in their experiences of volunteering, across the lifecourse and into older age. Experiences of these themes naturally varied among the 26 older volunteers who participated in this research. As such, the next and final section of this chapter introduces brief biographies of the 26 older volunteers.

4.5.3. Volunteer biographies

The analysis that this thesis presents draws on all 26 of the older volunteers. It does so by using a case study approach in each section, drawing upon the volunteers who best illustrate the particular theme being discussed there. The case study approach allows for an exploration of wider themes expressed by the older volunteer participants, through an exploration of the experiences of exemplar volunteers (Hardill and Baines, 2009). It is a valuable approach because it allows the research to examine a real-life, in-depth, and down-to-earth example of a phenomena and from this to highlight the key findings in context (Stake, 1978; Yin, 2006). In each instance where a case study is used, there is justification of why those particular cases have been chosen. In this section, I briefly introduce the 26 older volunteers. They are listed in the order in which interviews were conducted, and the names given are pseudonyms, consistent with ethical guidance. Of the 26;

- 16 were women and 10 were men.
- While I did not ask exact ages, one was in her 50s, 16 in their 60s and nine in their 70s.
- 21 were married at the time the interview took place, 15 of them in their first marriage, five remarried following a divorce and one remarried following being widowed. Two were divorced and had not remarried, while two were widowed and not remarried. One had never been married.

Amber – mid-70s

Amber has balanced a lifelong commitment to formal volunteering with a uniformed youth organisation with looking after her children and paid employment. She first volunteered as a teenager, and following her marriage when her children were young she stayed at home to look after them, continuing to volunteer at this time. As her children grew up, she returned to paid work as a school administrator, which she continued to do until her retirement 10 years ago. In her retirement, Amber volunteers five days a week for the uniformed youth organisation at a county level,

having changed roles 10 years ago from being a youth leader to being involved in the administration of the organisation. Amber has been married for over 50 years.

Betty – *mid-60s*

When younger, the demands of being a single mother of three children meant that Betty was unable to do any formal volunteering. She brought up her children alone following her husband's death, as well as being in full-time paid employment. Subsequently remarried, following her retirement seven years ago Betty initially volunteered at a local charitably-operated hospice and at a local school. However, the demands of caring for her grandchildren have meant that she has ceased volunteering at the school, but continues one day a week at the hospice.

Bill – *mid-60s*

Bill currently volunteers with two VCOs. He has been a member of a local members association for around 15 years, serving on its committee in a number of roles including as chairman and as treasurer. Two years after his retirement from a professional managerial job six years ago, Bill started volunteering with an international aid VCO, with whom he travels overseas once a year and fundraises all year round. He has been married since his 20s and has two grown up children.

David – *mid-70s*

David has been involved with a uniformed youth organisation, both at a local and county level, for his entire adult life. Over his years with the organisation he has fulfilled a number of different roles, initially as a youth leader before moving into more managerial roles in the last 10 years. His children were youth members of the organisation and he shared many experiences with them through his volunteering. Since retiring from his paid employment in communications over 15 years ago, David has also volunteered occasionally at the primary school where his wife teaches.

Eric – *mid-60s*

Eric was in full-time paid employment until two years ago, working as a management consultant. Alongside this, he has volunteered throughout this adult life with a uniformed youth organisation, both in the village where he and his wife live and at a county level, in a number of different roles. In retirement, his time commitment to this organisation has increased significantly as he has taken on new roles. Previously, the amount of time he gave fluctuated depending on the demands of his family – his youngest child has only recently left home – and his paid employment. He continues to take on occasional paid work on a part-time

basis, and since his retirement from full-time paid work has taken on new voluntary roles as a mentor with business infrastructure groups, and with groups in the village where he and his wife have lived for the past 30 years.

Ellie – late-60s

Ellie was for nearly 40 years the primary carer, along with her husband, of their seriously disabled daughter. This was a full-time commitment which meant that Ellie has not been able to engage in paid employment since before having her first child. For the past 15 years, Ellie has been the editor of her village magazine, which she was able to fit around her caring responsibilities. Four years ago her daughter died, and since then she has volunteered for one day a week in the local offices of an international aid organisation.

Fiona – mid-50s

Fiona has been a church Sunday School teacher since she was a teenager. Over that time she has worked with all age groups of young people, from toddlers to teenagers. She and her husband have four children and five grandchildren, caring for whom has taken up a lot of their time, but Fiona's commitment to Sunday School has remained constant. Around a year ago she was made redundant from her part-time job in sales. She is seeking new paid employment, but in the meantime she is studying at a local college and volunteering one day a week in the offices of an international aid organisation.

Grace – early-60s

The volunteering that Grace has engaged in has had to fit around her career and the needs of her family. While her children were young, she volunteered at a children's group and a local sports facility. Once her children had started school she began volunteering for two local welfare provision organisations. However, divorce from her first husband meant that she had to stop all her volunteering in order to concentrate on raising her children and engaging in paid work. While in paid employment in a social welfare organisation, she volunteered on a number of committees overseeing welfare provision in the city she lives in. In retirement, she stepped down from her voluntary roles on these committees and began volunteering as an advisor and advocate for an older persons' support organisation. Alongside this, she now works part-time in retail.

Graham – early 60s

Graham was until 3 months ago a civil servant, working full-time. While married with young children he found it impossible to find time to volunteer, despite

wanting to, with his family responsibilities. He divorced from his wife over ten years ago and at the time still had some caring responsibilities for his children. A few years later, he began volunteering with a different disability support charity, and a couple of years later started volunteering as an advisor and advocate for an older persons' support organisation. Since his retirement he has begun to devote large amounts of time, often over 30 hours a week, to the latter organisation.

Helen – mid-60s

Due to the breakup of her marriage while her children were very young, Helen became a service user at a local women's welfare organisation. As she found her feet, she began to volunteer with the organisation which had supported her, which in turn led to a full-time paid job with the organisation, in which she remained until her retirement. While in full-time paid employment and continuing to bring up her children alone, Helen did not engage in any formal volunteering. Once retired from paid employment she continued to volunteer with the organisation where she had been a paid staff member, and started volunteering in three different charity shops. She has since stopped volunteering with her old employers and with one of the two charity shops, but remains with two of the shops, as well as caring for her grandchildren.

Hugh – early-70s

For the past five years Hugh has volunteered as an advocate and advisor for an older persons' advocacy organisation, offering his time as and when his health and other commitments allow. His offering to volunteer for this organisation came about after Hugh moved to a new city in retirement. Previously, he had been in full-time employment in a variety of jobs, including teaching, research and social work, and in retirement he had until his move taken on some part-time paid research work. Hugh has never married and has no children.

Iain – early-60s

Iain volunteered as a primary school governor while his children were pupils there, while also working full-time in local government. He stopped volunteering as a governor when his children left that school, which occurred at a similar time to his divorce from their mother. While working full-time and spending time with his children, Iain did not engage in any formal volunteering. Three years ago Iain and his second wife retired from their paid-employment with the aim of setting up their own business. However, an accident left Iain disabled and made this plan impossible, so instead his wife suggested he volunteer; at present he volunteers as

an advocate and advisor for an older persons' advocacy organisation, has returned to being a school governor and is on a local community group committee.

Jack – mid-70s

Jack was in full-time paid employment as a manager in a large manufacturing company, up until his retirement over 15 years ago. During his working life he struggled to achieve a balance between his work and his family, and this did not leave time for formal volunteering. In retirement he initially volunteered at a local school, before stopping this and becoming involved at a homeless shelter and with running courses at his church.

Judith – mid-70s

Judith became involved in volunteering for the local branch of a uniformed youth organisation while her children were youth members of the organisation, and remained volunteering there for a number of years after they had left. However, her husband became ill and was unable to work, and as a result she was forced to take on full-time paid employment in a manufacturing company. The demands of this and her family commitments left Judith no time to volunteer, up until her retirement around 15 years ago. A couple of years after her retirement, Judith's husband died and shortly after this she made the decision to volunteering in a charity shop which funds medical research, and she continues to volunteer there to this day.

Karen – early-60s

For most of her working life, Karen was in full-time paid employment as an area manager for a national communications company. Alongside this, she and her husband have two children, who have now left home. She took voluntary redundancy four years ago, and for the next three years took on short-term paid employment. Around a year ago, when a paid job came to an end, Karen decided to retire from paid employment. In the year since her retirement, Karen has started volunteering a day a week in a charity shop, and a day a week as an advisor for a national disability charity.

Laura – mid-60s

Laura volunteered in a welfare charity while her children were young, while on an overseas posting with her first husband. On their return to the UK, she initially did some volunteering at her children's school, before needs meant she had to engage in paid employment. This, plus her separation from her first husband, meant that Laura had no time for volunteering during this stage of life. Once her children were

older, and having remarried, Laura began volunteering with a national heritage conservation charity, and her time commitment to this increased following her retirement from paid employment in healthcare six years ago. Recently she has cut down on the volunteering she does for the heritage charity, but has begun volunteering at a homeless shelter and a local welfare provision charity.

Liam – early-70s

Liam has volunteered throughout his adult life, but his retirement from paid employment brought about a significant change in the nature of his volunteering. While in full-time paid employment as a civil servant, Liam was the union representative for his department, resigning this position the day he retired, 15 years ago. Immediately he began volunteering with a countryside conservation organisation, and a few years later began volunteering at a local historic property. He balances this volunteering with spending time with his wife, children and grandchildren.

Margaret – late-60s

After her divorce over 40 years ago, Margaret moved back to her home town to be near her parents. She was in full-time paid employment until her retirement three years ago, while also caring for her elderly parents until they died. In retirement Margaret began volunteering at a homeless shelter. She does not have any children.

Mark – late-70s

Mark in effect had two paid careers: in his first he worked for the local council, while in his second he and his wife ran their own small food business. During the first of these, he and his wife were also caring for their two young children. While they were running their own business, he was involved as a volunteer in a local history project for a couple of years. However, it was in retirement from his second paid career that Mark really began volunteering; he is now involved in the residents association where he lives and volunteers with a countryside conservation organisation. He fits these commitments around spending time looking after his grandchild.

Nadia – early 60s

Prior to starting her family, Nadia worked full-time as a civil servant. After her children were born, she was initially a full-time mother, before beginning part-time paid work as her children grew older. Alongside this, she began at this time volunteering with a countryside conservation organisation. Once her children were

old enough to be independent, Nadia went back to full-time paid employment and at that point ceased volunteering. Once her children had left home she set up her own business mentoring business, and structured her time in such a way that she could resume volunteering with the conservation organisation, and take on a committee role with a hobby group. Around three years ago the hobby group folded, and at a similar time Nadia wound up her business and retired from paid employment. At this point she became a trustee of the countryside conservation organisation, as well as continuing as a conservation volunteer. She has been married for over 35 years.

Nicholas – early-60s

When Nicholas' children were young, he volunteered at a range of youth groups and sports clubs which they attended, and as a result of this he became the volunteer chairman of an annual local festival. He maintained his commitment to this event until a year ago, when he handed over the role to his wife. Following the relocation of his paid employment with a large international company to a site nearer his home, he also volunteered for a few years for a local welfare organisation. Nicholas took early retirement from his paid employment nearly 10 years ago and immediately began volunteering with a countryside conservation organisation, where he remains to this day. Following his retirement, he also briefly volunteered in childcare, and now volunteers with another local environmental organisation. He balances these two voluntary roles with family roles, spending time with his wife, children and grandchildren.

Olive – early-60s

Olive has for over 30 years independently provided voluntary first aid cover for sports clubs in her local area. For many years she did this with her husband, until his death two years ago, following which she continued with a new colleague. Through her paid employment at a large communications company, she became involved in voluntary first aid training. She did this for over a decade, but stopped this when she and her husband became involved with the local branch of a national first aid charity, where they both volunteered for 10 years before stopping. Following her husband's death, she has resumed both the first aid training and her involvement with the local branch of the national first aid charity. Following early retirement from her full-time paid job with the communications company, she now has part-time paid employment in an administration role. Olive does not have children.

Pam – early-70s

As a single mother of two, Pam found it hard to find time to engage in paid employment or to engage in formal volunteering. As her children grew older, Pam started volunteering at a church-based mothers and toddlers group, which she continued until she remarried around 15 years ago. Around this time she started part-time paid employment in retail, before leaving that to volunteer in a charity shop. After that charity shop closed Pam returned to paid retail employment, before retiring from that around five years ago. Following her retirement, Pam began volunteering in a different charity shop, raising funds for a local community youth centre.

Ruth – late-70s

Around 30 years ago, married and with her children having left home, Ruth was involved in the setting up of a charity shop to raise funds for a local community youth centre. She began volunteering there at this time, and has remained as a volunteer there ever since. This is apart from four years around 15 years ago, when she was the paid manager of the charity shop. Alongside her long-term commitment to the charity shop, Ruth has also helped run a coffee morning once a week for over 25 years and has been treasurer of a local social group for the past 15 years. Aside from her short time as shop manager, Ruth has not engaged in any paid employment since before her children were born.

Susie – early-60s

Apart from taking a couple of years off when her son was born, Susie has been employed full-time in IT for all of her adult life, up until her retirement a year ago. For the past year she has volunteered in the head office of a national conservation organisation, and this has led in the past few months to her taking on a part-time paid role with the organisation.

Trish – late-60s

Trish was a teacher for many years from young adulthood, taking time out from this when her children were born. Once her children were older and Trish had resumed teaching, she volunteered at a local sports club, on a local event committee and, when they were older, on a church committee. However, once her children had left home Trish changed career and her new paid employment required a long daily commute which meant she had to cease her formal volunteering. After Trish's retirement just under 10 years ago, she has taken on a number of voluntary roles: a few years after retirement she began volunteering in the head offices of a national conservation organisation, and over the next few years took on roles as

treasurer of a local community group and for an international aid organisation. More recently, Trish has also begun volunteering for a local disability support organisation.

4.6. Conclusion

This chapter has set out the methodological approach that this thesis adopted in order to answer the research questions posed in Section 1.5. It has outlined how these methods have been consistent with the theoretical framework established in **Chapter 2**, taking a holistic approach to gathering data which will be used to explore the ways in which older adults engage in formal volunteering in older age. This chapter has explained step-by-step how the primary research for this thesis has been conducted. First, it was necessary to establish how the theoretical framework would influence the research design, and how I could ensure that the data collected could be analysed within the framework provided by the TSOL (Glucksman, 1995; 2000; Taylor, 2004), the lifecourse (Rossi, 1980; Katz and Monk, 1993) and theories of volunteering (Davis Smith and Gay, 2005; Hardill et al, 2007; Lukka and Locke, 2007; Woolvin, 2011). Next, it explained how an online questionnaire was carried out in order to provide a database of VCOs who engaged with older volunteers, and to give some basic data about these organisations which would guide sampling of older volunteers as research participants. The results of this survey were explored, and the selection criteria for VCOs to approach as gatekeepers to older volunteers outlined. The next section looked at how the interviews were designed in such a way as to ensure they would generate data which would contribute to the answering of the research questions posed in Section 1.5. With this data generated, a strategy for the transcription and analysis of it was outlined. This led to the final section of this chapter; brief biographies of the 26 older volunteers who participated in this study. In doing so, the link is made between the methods outlined in this chapter and the analysis contained in **Chapters 5**, which develops a heuristic for understanding volunteering across the lifecourse, **Chapter 6**, which looks at how experiences across the lifecourse impact on internal reasons for volunteering and **Chapter 7**, which looks at how experiences impact on external reasons for volunteering. The methods outlined in this chapter are the story of how this research went about designing the methods and the collecting data from these 26 older volunteers, and in doing so links to the analysis chapters which explore and explain this data.

5. Volunteer Lifecourses

5.1. Introduction

Each of the 26 older volunteers has different experiences of volunteering, and has had different journeys to come to the voluntary roles they currently participate in. This chapter considers these different journeys and looks at patterns that emerge and what they can tell us. In doing so, this chapter forms a bridge between the literature review, methodology and the analysis contained by looking at how the 26 older volunteers fit into Davis Smith and Gay's heuristic of volunteer engagement, and how their experiences can help develop this heuristic. In analysing them here, this chapter addresses the first research question that this thesis proposed:

What is the impact of the mix of work and non-work activities across the lifecourse on individuals' participation in formal voluntary and community activities, and does this change in older age?

The second aim of this chapter is to establish a heuristic to be used in the subsequent data analysis contained in **Chapters 6** and **7**, in which the reasons why older adults engage in formal volunteering will be explored within the framework of volunteering across the lifecourse. The 26 life history interviews have been analysed in light of the Total Social Organisation of Labour (TSOL) and the concept of the lifecourse. TSOL (as explored in Section 2.2.3) is a theoretical framework proposed by Glucksmann (1995; 2000; 2005) build on previous work to understand the ways in which an individuals' paid work and tasks of social reproduction are interlinked. The focus though was on working age adults at any one particular cross-section in time. As noted in **Chapter 2**, Taylor (2002; 2004; 2005) has built on the work of Glucksmann by adding unpaid work undertaken outside the home and uses TSOL to consider how such work fits into the mix of work roles that make up individuals' TSOL.

As was explored in **Chapter 2**, the lifecourse is a theoretical framework which argues that it is necessary to understand individuals not simply at a given moment

in time, but to recognise the multiple turns and events which have shaped lives over time (Rossi, 1980; Hareven and Adams, 1982; Katz and Monk, 1994; Mayer, 2004; Hopkins and Pain, 2007). Davis Smith and Gay's (2005) typology seeks to explore different lifecourse experiences and volunteering patterns;

- *Constant volunteers* are those individuals who have given continuous – often lifelong – service to an organisation or organisations, and the volunteering that they do in older age is a continuation of this.
- *Serial volunteers* are those individuals who have volunteered while in younger and older age, with the extent and nature of their volunteering changing at different stages of life, including periods where they do not volunteer at all.
- *Trigger volunteers* are those individuals whose first experience of volunteering comes in older age, and who therefore have not previously undertaken formal voluntary and community activities.

This chapter uses the Davis Smith and Gay (2005) typology as a framework to understand the volunteering journeys of the 26 volunteers who participated in this research. For each of the 26 older volunteers, I consider their volunteering across the lifecourse and how this relates to other – paid and unpaid, public and private – work commitments across the lifecourse.

This chapter, then, not only outlines the heuristic which underpins the subsequent analysis in **Chapters 6** and **7**, but it also establishes the fundamental condition necessary to engage in formal volunteering: having (or feeling one has) the free time to participate. **Figure 5.1** shows the relationship between three different groups of factors which influence decisions to volunteer: an individual's TSOL and having the time to spare; their internal impulses to volunteer and their external impulses to volunteer. This chapter deals with the base layer in this diagram; in order to engage in formal volunteering at any point across the lifecourse, an individual must have the time to engage, facilitated by the mix of roles that they are committed to at that time.

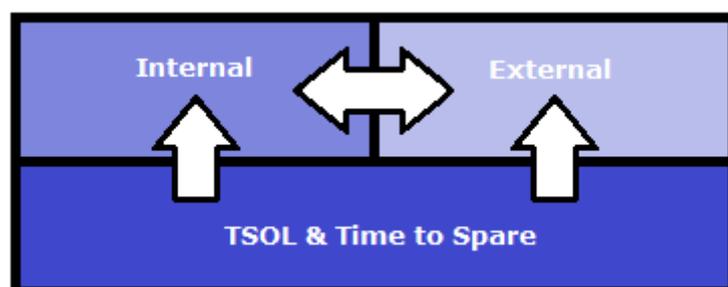


Figure 5.1 Factors influencing volunteering decisions

5.2. Exploring Volunteers' Lifecourses

5.2.1. Introduction

The first stage of analysis involved drawing out from each of the 26 volunteer interviews a list of the different formal voluntary roles they had engaged in across their lifecourse. By drawing out when and for how long they had volunteered with each organisation, the volunteers were allocated to a category – as defined in the introduction to this chapter – and these are shown in **Figure 5.2**, consistent with the explanations of these categories proposed by Davis Smith and Gay (2005).

Constant	Serial	Trigger
Amber	Grace	Betty
David	Helen	Bill
Eric	Iain	Ellie
Fiona	Judith	Graham
Liam	Laura	Hugh
Nicholas	Nadia	Jack
Olive	Pam	Karen
Ruth	Trish	Margaret
		Mark
		Susie

Figure 5.2. Participants divided up by volunteering lifecourse categories

This categorisation, however, only shows the nature of each individual's formal volunteering across the lifecourse. It fails to capture that across the lifecourse, individuals are at every moment negotiating their own TSOL, and that each will have to make decisions as to when and how to volunteer, and that these will be facilitated or constrained by other work commitments. As such, it is necessary to explore all of the different work roles that individuals have had to balance, that have made up their TSOL at different points across the lifecourse. In considering work roles, this section looks at paid work (and whether it is full-time or part-time), at household structure (demonstrated by marriage/cohabiting and by having dependent children) and at engagement in formal volunteering.

5.2.2. Mapping volunteers' lifecourses

In order to understand the ways in which the 26 older volunteers have engaged in formal volunteering across the lifecourse, and the ways in which this relates to paid work and household structure, I mapped the paid work (be it part- or full-time), household structure (the presence/absence of a cohabiting spouse and of dependent children) and engagement in formal voluntary and community activities.

In doing so, these diagrams represent a synthesis of the theories of the lifecourse and of TSOL; they show the different work roles that individuals have had at different times across the lifecourse, and how the balance between them has changed over time. This is represented diagrammatically by lines, the length of which is determined by the number of years in paid employment (**PW**), the presence of a cohabiting spouse (**S**), of dependent children (**C**) and of formal voluntary and community activity (**V**). These lines are necessarily simplistic to allow for complex relationships between different types of work to be observed and understood. They allowed for patterns of other forms of work to be examined, to see if individuals who have similar patterns of engagement in formal voluntary and community activities also have similar patterns in other work roles.

In the sections which follow, I explore first the way in which the lifecourses of the three case study older volunteers have been mapped, in order to illustrate the three different categories of volunteer journey and how they relate to the 26 older volunteers who took part in this study. In order to explore the relations between different forms of responsibilities, I use case studies of three older volunteers;

- **Eric** is in his mid 60s and is a constant volunteer
- **Grace** is in her early 60s and is a serial volunteer
- **Jack** is in his mid 70s and is a trigger volunteer

The case study approach, as explored in **Chapter 4**, allows me to explore wider themes of TSOL and voluntary and community engagement across the lifecourse, looking at how different modes of work entwine in particular individuals' lives (Stake, 1978; Yin, 2006; Hardill and Baines, 2009). Taking such an approach allows this section to focus on the particular characteristics of these three older volunteers, and the complex relationships between types of work in their lives (Taylor, 2004). These three volunteers are explored here to illustrate the three different forms of volunteering, and to show how the categories of volunteering across the lifecourse identified by Davis Smith and Gay (2005) were applied to the three of the 26 older volunteers who participated in this research. Case studies for this section were selected because these individuals best illustrate the nature of the three types of volunteer journey, and how they are embedded within other work and domestic relations. For each pattern of volunteering, I look first at the detailed case study for one volunteer in that category, and then look at how they reflect wider patterns within that group.

5.3. Constant Volunteers

Constant volunteers are those individuals who have volunteered from young adulthood, or before, and have continued to do so without interruption into older age. Some constant volunteers had engaged before they were married, others' engagement began after marriage, but all were engaged in formal volunteering prior to their turning 40 and all have remained volunteers ever since. Most of the constant volunteers who took part in this research have volunteered with the same organisation throughout their adult lives, although that was not the case for all constant volunteers, some having moved between organisations. Further, some of those who have maintained a commitment to one organisation throughout their adult lives have also volunteered for other organisations at different times. Of the eight constant volunteers who participated in this research, four are men and four are women. Eric is used as a case study, representative of an older volunteer who

has engaged in formal volunteering throughout his adult life and into older age, as outlined below.

5.3.1. Eric's lifecourse map: a constant volunteer

Eric is in his mid-60s and has lived in a village outside Greattown for the past 30 years, having moved from Greattown with his wife and young children. He lives there now with his wife of around 35 years, and she is represented in **Figure 5.3** by the first blue line (**S**). Together they have three children, the first two born while Eric was in his late 20s and the third born while he was in his early 40s. Eric has therefore had dependent children for a long period of his adult life, with his youngest child leaving home around three years ago, as shown in **Figure 5.3** by the second blue line (**C**). Throughout his working life, Eric held a series of white collar professional jobs, as a draughtsman, a university start-up business advisor and a business innovation manager – and was in full-time employment throughout his adult life, with no interruptions.

He retired from full-time work aged 62, and has since then done some

part-time work as a business advisor and mentor, as and when it has been available. The period Eric spent working full time is shown by the double-width red line (**PW**), while the last three years when he has worked part-time are

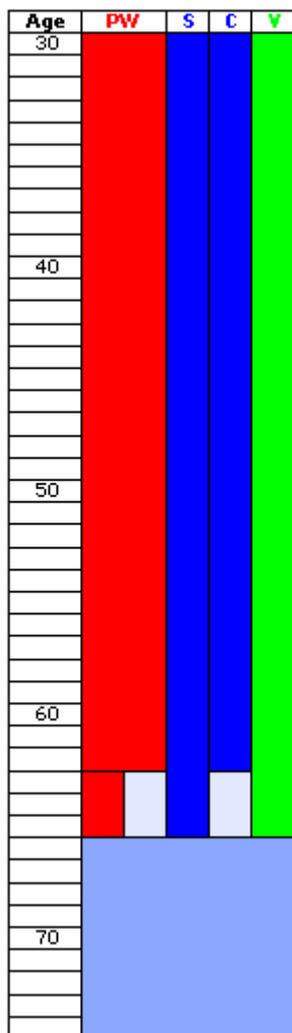


Figure 5.3 Eric's lifecourse map

shown by a half-width red line. Eric currently commits more than three days a week to formal volunteering, with five different organisations;

- Greatown Youth Association – for around 50 years to present
- Village Hall Committee – for around 5 years to present
- Business Mentoring – for around 3 years to present
- Youth Business Mentoring – for around 3 years to present
- Village Appraisal Group – for around 2 years to present

The green line (V) reflects that Eric, as a constant volunteer, has had a lifetime association with Greatown Youth Association. His volunteering with the organisation began in his late teens, his having been a youth member of the organisation prior to this. His commitment has remained for almost 50 years, as he explains,

...from the age of 17 or 18 to now I've always been involved in [Youth Association], and have been a leader for close on 50 years with warrants and appointments and so on and so forth.

Eric

Eric's children have all been youth members of Greatown Youth Association during the long period he has volunteered there, although none have gone on to become volunteers as their father did. Eric's wife has not been involved in Greatown Youth Association, but has throughout her adult life been a volunteer with a similar, but female-focussed organisation.

While Eric's commitment to Greatown Youth Association has remained consistent for almost 50 years, the amount and nature of the time Eric has been able to give to the organisation has been constrained by his paid employment, as he outlines,

...during my working life I have worked pretty long hours, and over the years my base of operations has been different, so I haven't had the capacity to always get back for 6 o'clock on a Tuesday night...

Eric

As this quote shows, Eric has fitted his volunteering with Greatown Youth Association around his paid employment. While Eric's wife was the primary caregiver to their children, Eric has also had domestic responsibilities which have placed demands on his time,

...our elder children grew up, then we had a third child and had a lot of transporting and taxiing to do from a semi-rural area where no one could get anywhere or do anything.

Eric

While volunteering for Greatown Youth Association has been a constant feature of his adult life, the impact of these other roles has been that the nature of Eric's volunteering has changed over the course of his lifecourse,

I think the things that I do have changed. I mean early on it was very much hands on with young people. Working directly with young people. Now it's more third hand... So my roles have changed, it's become more and more remote from the front line young people.

Eric

The need to be flexible for the sake of his paid employment and his family meant that Eric was for some time unable to commit to a regular time-slot for his volunteering, making this move away from running regular youth meetings necessary. Reflecting on the different roles that he has had within Youth Association across his lifecourse, Eric notes that,

...it's partly as opportunities arise, it's partly the recognition that one's own life changes at different times.

Eric

Since his youngest child left home (the end of the second blue line on **Figure 5.3 – C**), and coupled with reduced time commitments in paid employment since becoming part-time, Eric has been able to take on more roles within Greatown Youth Association, as well as beginning new volunteering roles with other organisations. Within Greatown Youth Association, Eric explains that,

When I retired I suggested to Greatown Youth Association that there was a need for some fundraising activities, and that was accepted but then after about four months of that I was asked to become the county secretary and so for the past period of time I've been doing both those things.

Eric

Eric also got involved volunteering in other organisations following his retirement, a feature of which was their relation to his previous paid employment as a business innovation manager,

Because of my links when I was at the Government Office with the Regional Development Agency and the Business Link, when I retired they asked to get involved in trying to help businesses get started, so hence the reason for mentoring.

Eric

As well as this, Eric has also started volunteering with a youth business mentoring charity, having been invited by a former youth member of Greatown Youth Association, who had benefited from Eric's volunteering many years previously.

As we have noted previously, Eric has been married since his mid-20s, and this stability – and his wife’s part-time paid employment meaning she could take on the majority of the domestic work – has facilitated his being able to make a lifelong commitments to Greatown Youth Association, with no disruption and within a household where both partners were keen to make time for volunteering;

Maybe it’s the way one is, but my wife is also a doer of things and as well as being a supply teacher on occasion, she’s the president of the local [women’s organisation], she’s secretary of [female youth organisation], this that and the other. And so I suppose we both get our interests and enjoyment and, but being able to communicate about different things that are going on between us. It’s not one sitting at home while the other one’s out and about, it’s a case of doing things sometimes together, but often things that are complementary.

Eric

While Eric and his wife have a relationship where both is free to volunteer and they derive enjoyment from sharing their experiences, that is not to say that he does not seek to manage his volunteering so as to make room to spend time with her. While not domestic work, this also presents Eric with alternative demands on his time,

...when I started volunteering here I volunteered for a Monday... Part of it was that my wife was supply teaching and often that’s a Monday or a Tuesday or a Thursday. We enjoy walking, and we don’t go with others walking on a Monday, we might go on another day of the week.

Eric

While Eric is keen to make time to be with his wife, they both have busy lifestyles and are accommodating of one another’s volunteering.

Nonetheless, Eric has recently been concerned that his volunteering is taking up too much of his time,

...I started volunteering for a Monday, that then became a Monday and a Wednesday and now it’s a Monday and a Wednesday plus one or two other days that I sometimes do at home. So there’s a physical lack of days in the week. So currently I’m tending to work on the computer at midnight and I’m thinking about that, but yeah you can’t keep dealing with that. So I will in the near future be dropping one of those.

Eric

Eric then reiterated this by stating that,

I have talked to my wife about sort of reducing if not dropping off one of the things, one of the major things that I do. By major I think about Greatown Youth Association, [local Youth Association], [youth business mentoring] and [business mentoring], and I've thought about dropping off one of those, and it's a toss up between the [business mentoring] and the [youth business mentoring] at the moment, to walk away from it, in the not too distant future.

Eric

There was no suggestion though that Eric would stop volunteering with Greatown Youth Association in the foreseeable future, although he was clear that he wanted to stop before “others wanted a change”, noting that,

...I think I'd rather hopefully know when it was right to stop, rather than have other people make it possible.

Eric

This short biography of Eric’s volunteering, in the context of his paid employment and family responsibilities, has presented an example of a constant volunteer, an individual who has been volunteering with an organisation throughout his adult life. This theme is true of all constant volunteers, as the next section explores.

5.3.2. Other constant volunteers

As the example of Eric has illustrated, constant volunteers are those who have volunteered throughout their adult lives, and continue to do so in older age. This is demonstrated in **Figure 5.6** by the solid green lines, representing a continuous engagement in formal

volunteering by these eight volunteers, four men and four women. While these individuals’ engagement in formal volunteering is constant, it may not be in the same role or even in the same organisation. We saw previously how Eric illustrates the former; in the previous section we saw how he spoke of being unable while working full-time in a job which required significant travel, which meant he was unable to

Liam	
Paid Work	Civil Servant for over 30 years until age 58. Five years of part-time work into early 60s, in retail. Now retired.
Spouse	Remains married.
Children	Grown-up and left home. Has grandchildren and some caring responsibilities.
Formal Volunteering	Civil Service Union Rep for all of his working life. Has been volunteering with Squirrels Countryside project for 15 years, since leaving the Civil Service. Volunteered with large heritage society for past 11 years, has led health walks for the past 10 years and has done some volunteering with National Ecology Society in the past few years.
Figure 5.4 Liam’s mini-biography	

commit to a regular youth group meeting, and during this time his involvement was mainly in management and organisation roles within the group. In his retirement, Eric has continued his management/organisational role with the organisation, increasing the time he spends with them significantly. The latter is illustrated by Liam, whose mini-biography can be seen in **Figure 5.4** and whose lifecourse map can be seen as part of **Figure 5.6**; during his paid career as a civil servant, he was the union representative from very early in his career until the day of his retirement. On the Friday of his retirement, Liam resigned from the position of union representative, this necessitated by his no longer being a member of the civil service, and chose not to join the organisation representing retired civil servants. On the following Monday, Liam began volunteering with Squirrels Countryside Project, with whom he has volunteered ever since. Liam's volunteering has been constant, his move between two very different VCOs seamless.

Olive	
Paid Work	Worked full-time in a telephone exchange until taking early retirement. However, soon resumed paid work full-time as a hospital administrator. Six months ago she went part-time, but remains working.
Spouse	Married in her 20s, her husband died two years ago.
Children	None.
Formal Volunteering	Initially with First Aid Society in her teens, and remained with them until around 10 years ago. Since her husband's death she has resumed volunteering with them. She also provided first aid training for local companies, which she also stopped around 10 years ago and resumed after her husband's death. For the past 30 years has volunteered with athletics clubs providing first aid at race events, every weekend and with no breaks.
Figure 5.5 Olive's mini-biography	

An interesting trend among the continuous volunteers is stability of marriage; note the solid blue spouse lines in **Figure 5.6**, indicating that the eight formal volunteers all reported being in stable relationships throughout their adult lives. The only exception to this is Olive (whose mini-biography can be seen in **Figure 5.5**), who had been recently widowed, but had carried on her volunteering with local athletics clubs, and had re-joined First Aid Society in the wake of her husband's death. While those with stable home

lives did not raise this as an important factor in their stability of volunteering, its positive effect is emphasised by the negative impact on formal volunteering that domestic instability is outlined as having in the next section. Domestic stability then is not a push factor into volunteering, but rather helps an individual to maintain their involvement. This was observed in Eric's example, and can be seen through the further constant volunteers shown in **Figure 5.6** to be the case.

5.4. Serial Volunteers

Serial volunteers are older adults who are currently engaged in formal volunteering and who have undertaken formal volunteering on-and-off over the lifecourse and into older age. For some serial volunteers this has involved volunteering for different organisations at different times, with periods of non-participation in between, while for others it has involved a long association with one organisation with periods not volunteering but maintaining an association. Serial volunteers are disproportionately female; of the eight serial volunteers who participated in this research, all but one was female. Grace is used as a case study, illustrative of an older volunteer whose engagement in formal volunteering stopped and started across the lifecourse, as outlined below.

5.4.1. Grace's lifecourse map: a serial volunteer

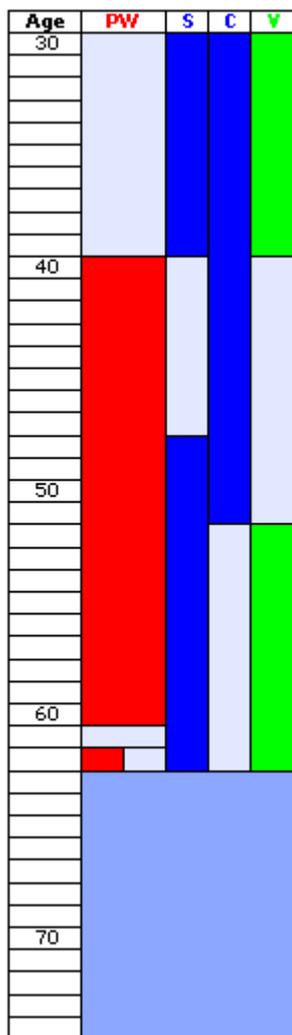


Figure 5.7 Grace's lifecourse map

Grace, whose lifecourse map is shown in **Figure 5.7** has lived in Jackton all her life, although she has moved to different areas of the city as life events have necessitated. Over the lifecourse, Grace has been involved with a number of VCOs;

- Playgroup – for around 4 years from late 20s
- Mobile Library – for around 5 years from late 20s
- Swimming Club – for around 8 years from early 30s
- Meals on Wheels – for around 5 years in mid 30s
- Local Health Committees – for around 8 years in 50s
- Elders' Support Jackton – a year to present

She married in her mid-twenties and had two daughters in her late twenties, at which time she did not engage in paid work while her husband engaged in full-time paid work. Grace's first experience of

volunteering came when her daughters were very young, when she and two friends in her local community set up a playgroup,

...when it came about there were 3 of us, we used to stand at the school gate talking, when I would go to the shops, mums stood at the school gates and I stood there talking to them and things, there'd be a lot of little topics around, and I, I don't know, the three of us suddenly

kind of thought what we need is a playgroup. And it just kind of rolled on from that.

Grace

Once Grace's children had stopped going to the playgroup, she too stopped volunteering there. At this point, she became involved in volunteering to help establish and run a swimming club in her local community:

...swimming was always my passion... I took my kids to swim pretty much from birth, they were in the bath chucked in and swimming when they were little babies, so it's something that I've always done with them. I suppose now that I'm talking about it, I suppose it switched from the playgroup to the swimming, very quick in succession. I don't remember not doing either, one or the other, do you know what I mean, so I suspect it went from one to the other.

Grace

At the same time as Grace was volunteering with the swimming club, and in the free time she was afforded by her daughters starting primary school, Grace began doing other formal volunteering, away from activities concerning her children:

...what I did was I drove the library round to elderly people, I did that for quite some time, just delivering books and talking to people and supporting them. So I did that for quite a while, but then I started, then I moved on and I started delivering meals for people as well, because that kind of, that kind of was the same type of thing, I did that for some time.

Grace

While her children were young, then, and while married to her first husband and not in paid employment, Grace participated in a number of different formal voluntary roles, both with organisations which her children attended and in organisations wholly separate from her daughters.

However, Grace's volunteering at this time came to an abrupt stop following her divorce aged 40, as can be seen on **Figure 5.7**. The framework of Grace's life had to change completely:

...because I lived in one area of Jackton and I had to move to another, to a totally different area of Jackton. And transform things, you know, other issues, so I had to, I had to deal with my children and the fallout from everything, and that was more important to me.

Grace

On finding her feet again, volunteering was not a priority for Grace:

...I stopped my volunteer work, my marriage broke up and lots of personal things, so I stopped volunteer work, and then I started to, that had all

finished and I started to get back on my feet again, I started to go back to work properly and things, and I worked as a graphic designer originally, and then I worked for the local evening paper doing reports and things.

Grace

Grace starting full-time paid employment following her divorce is shown on **Figure 5.7** by a thick red line (**PW**), showing that she took on full-time employment in order to support her daughters. Having initially worked as a graphic designer and then for a local newspaper, she moved on to work at a mental health hospice. From this, she began working with a local care-in-the-community business, which she later took over and ran until her retirement two years ago. During her time running this business Grace resumed volunteering by joining newly formed local health committees, sharing the benefits of her experience, the first volunteering she had done since her divorce:

While I was proprietor I then started to attend, to work as a volunteer, and I was on various panels within the local authority. There was me, there was lots of people from Help the Aged, there was people from Mind, people from lots of things... And so I was quite lucky and I was able to use what I'd learnt and put them into use by being on these panels and helping the local authority to grow and offer more support for the elderly.

Grace

Grace continued with volunteering on these panels until her retirement, when she sold her business. Grace remarried around ten years after her divorce, and remains married, as indicated on her lifecourse map by the restarting of the first blue line (**S**), meaning that domestic responsibilities could once again be shared.

Following her retirement, for a few months Grace took a complete break, but shortly she started volunteering at Elders' Support Jackton, first as a trustee and then soon as an advocate,

When I retired and then as I say after a few months they advertised in the paper for a trustee, and so I thought that's a good idea, I could go, I could get back into using my skills for that. So I wrote to [the manager] and went in to meet her and they accepted me on the board of trustees. And then from there I became an advocate.

Grace

As well as taking on this new voluntary role in retirement, after a year away from paid employment, Grace decided to take on a part-time paid job in a retail company, as shown on her lifecourse map as a half-width red line after a short gap (**PW**). As she explains:

...I'd retired, and after working 7 days a week, 24 hours a day for many many years, that's why I took it off that I didn't want to do anything at all, I kinda came away from it feeling quite disgruntled and not wanting to do anything at all. But then after about a year I thought, umm, no, I can't do this any more. But I didn't want a job that had any responsibility, and I didn't want a full-time job. I've never worked in that kind of sector before, so it is fun for me. It's really to keep me active, and keep me interested in doing other things, and meeting people.

Grace

Part-time paid work and volunteering with Elders' Support Jackton are said by Grace to be providing "structure to her week".

While Grace has six grandchildren, she notes that she is not a "lovey-dovey grandmother", and that while she spends some time with her grandchildren, she does like to "look after them and then give them back". On why she has begun volunteering in her retirement, and taken on part-time paid work, she explains that,

I spent a lot of time with my daughters, and I'm thinking, this is not me, as much as I love my children dearly, you know, and I'd do anything for them obviously, I need something else.

Grace

This short biography of Grace's formal volunteering in organisations, situated in the context of her domestic life and her paid employment, has shown an example of a serial volunteer's lifecourse. Grace was one of many serial volunteers for whom divorce was a significant event in their lifecourse, but her pattern of starting and stopping formal volunteering around lifecourse events was one mirrored by many volunteers, as the next section explores.

5.4.2. Other serial volunteers

As the green lines in **Figure 5.11** show, participation in formal volunteering for serial volunteers is much more on-and-off than it was for the constant volunteers in the previous section. The majority of the serial volunteers who participated in this research were female: seven women and only one man. Female participants were more likely to report having left the paid workforce when they had very young children, and this often coincided with their first experiences of volunteering organisations which their children attended; as we saw in the previous section, Grace started volunteering with a playgroup. Often, the children growing older lead to these women going back to work, at which point engaging in formal volunteering as well as managing the domestic tasks that having children living at home require

became impossible, as Nadia illustrates (see **Figure 5.8**). Nadia explains this further when discussing her volunteering with Squirrels Countryside Project,

I've been doing that off and on for over 25 years. I started when my children were young, and I wasn't working, so I first came out with the Squirrels Countryside Project then. And then when I went back to work I couldn't come regularly and then I started again once I became self-employed, I kept Tuesdays as my day when I didn't work if possible and had the Tuesday working with the project. And then when I retired I've carried on with that.

Nadia

Nadia	
Paid Work	Was a full-time civil servant before having children. Stopped paid work until youngest child was 8, then began part-time work as a PA. When her children were older she worked full-time and set up her own business, from which she retired 3 years ago.
Spouse	Remains married.
Children	Grown up and left home.
Formal Volunteering	Volunteered at her children's school running a cookery club. Then helped set up and run a hobby club, latterly serving as chairperson until three years ago. First volunteered with Squirrels Countryside Project when children were at primary school. She had to stop this when she started full-time work, but resumed in retirement and also became a trustee of the organisation three years ago.
Figure 5.8 Nadia's mini-biography	

The result of this is that it is not just volunteering which is serial for these volunteers; their paid work too is clearly far more unstable than that of the constant volunteers; see the more disjointed red lines in **Figure 5.11**. Note that all but three of these serial volunteers, one of these three being the sole male, have worked part-time at some time during younger age, while Grace does so now in older age. Contrast with the constant volunteers in **Figure 5.8**, only one of whom worked part-time in younger

age, and in her case did so continuously for around 25 years. We can suggest from this, then, that many individuals whose volunteering across the lifecourse has been on-and-off have also been in and out of the paid work force at different times, as life events dictate.

One which stands out from **Figure 5.11** is the number of divorces, the impact of which we have already explored through Grace. Of the eight serial volunteers, five have been divorced. Going through a divorce was explained by a number of volunteers as a reason why they had to stop undertaking formal voluntary and

community activities at that stage of their lives, as Iain illustrates (see **Figure 5.9** for a mini-biography of Iain):

...I also got divorced from my first wife, and my daughter's mother, at that time, so all sorts of things happened and my life changed.

Iain

As Grace and this quote from Ian demonstrate, references to lives changing and having to deal with the reconfiguration of domestic duties that take place in the aftermath of a divorce were all cited as a reason for ceasing volunteering at that time. Thus, the serial nature of many of these individuals'

Iain	
Paid Work	Worked full-time in local government until retirement three years ago.
Spouse	Divorced over 20 years ago. Remarried and remains married to his second wife.
Children	With his first wife, now are grown-up.
Formal Volunteering	Was a school governor when children were pupils there. In retirement has once again become a governor, a trustee of the village hall and for the past year has volunteered with Elders' Support Jackton.
Figure 5.9 Iain's mini-biography	

volunteering related to instability in their domestic lives, in contrast with the stability shown in the constant volunteers' domestic lives. Laura experienced her

Laura	
Paid Work	Did not work while her daughter was young, began working following her divorce and worked full-time until six years ago, latterly as a senior nursing sister. Now retired.
Spouse	Divorced from first husband when daughter was young. Remarried around a decade later and remains married.
Children	One daughter with first husband, now grown-up and has left home.
Formal Volunteering	While daughter was a baby volunteered with a mental health charity, and later helped in her daughter's school. Stopped volunteering after divorce. Once remarried began volunteering with a heritage organisation, with whom she has now volunteered for 15 years. Has volunteered with Summerby Homeless Support for past four years and for another homeless charity for the past 18 months.
Figure 5.10 Laura's mini-biography	

marriage breakdown at a time when she was also having to work in multiple paid jobs, as **Figure 5.10** outlines. However, she outlined how, once she had dealt with the immediate fallout of her divorce and had found stable paid work:

...I was earning on a better scale, then I could start my volunteering again and started with the [heritage society].

Laura

Grace also noted that once she started to get back on her feet, managed with the extra domestic labour that being a single mother required and

got back to work properly, she was also in a position to resume undertaking formal volunteering. From these examples, we can observe that serial volunteers show a greater amount of unexpected events in their lives, of lifecourse-turning points which have affected their ability to engage in formal volunteering. This was demonstrated by the example of Grace previously, and this section, and in particularly **Figure 5.11**, has demonstrated how the pattern and reasons behind it which Grace discussed are relevant to a number of serial volunteers. Moving in and out of paid employment, and experiencing unexpected life events, with associated changes in lifestyle and in some cases enforced house-moving - have both been shown in this section to be significant for serial volunteers.

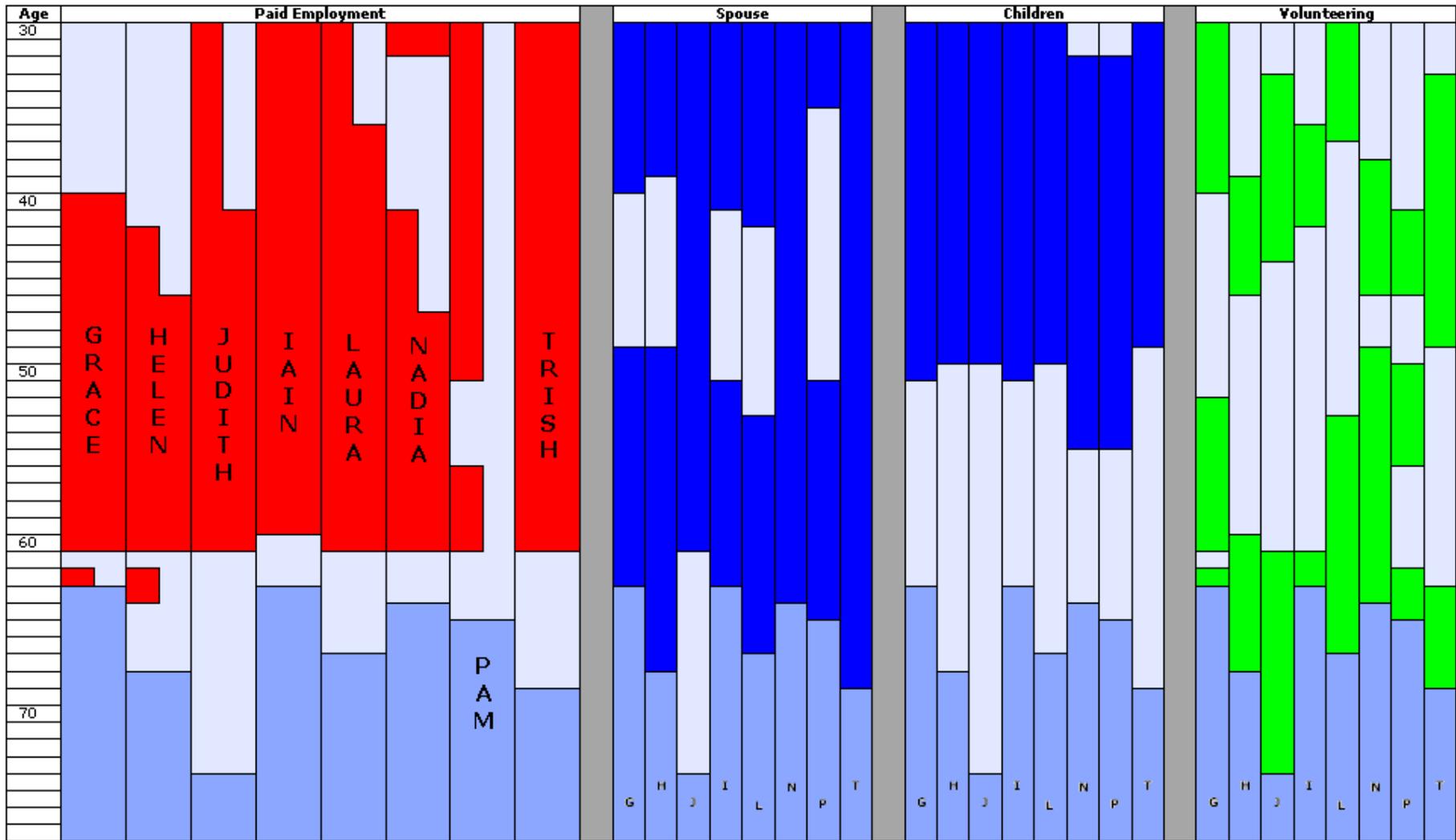


Figure 5.11 Serial volunteers' lifecourse maps

5.5. Trigger Volunteers

Trigger volunteers are those individuals whose first experiences of formal volunteering have come in older age. As this section, and the two chapters which follow, will explore, there were a wide range of reasons cited by trigger volunteers as to why they had not engaged in formal volunteering prior to older age. Of the 26 older volunteers who participated in this research, 10 were trigger volunteers, five men and five women. While volunteers in this group had not engaged prior to older age, in older age some volunteered with a number of different organisations, while others only engaged with one organisation. Jack is used as a case study, representative of an older volunteer who had not previously engaged because of other commitments, as outlined below.

5.5.1. Jack's lifecourse map: a trigger volunteer

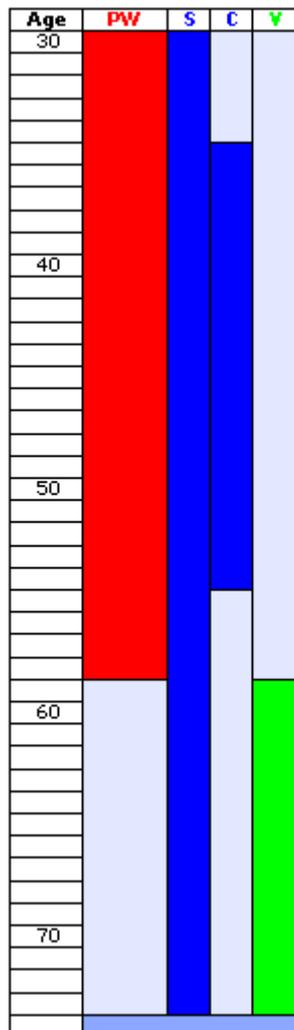


Figure 5.12 Jack's lifecourse map

Jack moved to Summerby in his early 20s with his wife, who he had met at university (S). They adopted their two children in their mid thirties (C). Jack did not volunteer prior to his retirement, and in retirement has volunteered with three organisations;

- Church Alpha Group – 15 years to present
- Local School – for around 7 years from late 50s
- Summerby Homeless Support – 10 years to present

Throughout his working life Jack worked in a managerial role in a large manufacturing organisation, as is shown by the red line on his lifecourse map (PW). Talking about his paid employment, Jack says, *...great fun, lots of travelling abroad. Erm, lots of responsibility, lots of satisfaction, and yet at the same time, if you're looking at the job that way you tend to put much too much time into the job...*

Jack

Jack, then, notes that during the period of his life when he was in paid employment he worked such long hours that he was not able to spend as much time with his children (as represented by the second blue line, C) as he wished,

...we adopted our two children and when writing to the adoption society I remember saying I should put

their interests ahead of my career, and I meant that very strongly, and yet I realise I'm not kind of following that through truthfully, I'm actually not there to be reading the stories in bed sometimes, so, you know you go in cycles of saying I must be a better dad and then gradually getting pulled back in again.

Jack

The feeling that Jack was not able to spend as much time with his family as he wished to meant that the times that Jack was able to make space from his paid employment, he spent with his family, rather than volunteering,

...when the family comes you focus on helping the family to mature and, we adopted, having to make sure work doesn't interfere and as I said from time to time it did. I did enjoy helping the children. I would regularly go with my daughter at the weekend, on Saturday to hockey...

Jack

While Jack cited his paid employment and his domestic responsibilities (the latter incorporating domestic work and in particular the desire to spend time with his children) as reasons why he was unable to volunteer prior to his retirement, he also stated that he had not engaged in any volunteering prior to adopting his children:

There was nothing in my earlier life which was me contributing, as in I did things but in terms of you know, I enjoyed being part of a choir, tours and things. But in terms of giving, no, I can't, I don't think I could identify anything.

Jack

While he was a member of a choir, Jack did not help in younger or middle age in the organising of the choir, and did not engage in any formal volunteering prior to retiring from his paid employment around 15 years ago, citing the demands of his paid employment and his family meaning he was unable at that time to participate.

Jack took early retirement at the age of 58, and now that paid employment was not placing demands on his time, and with his children grown-up and living away from home, he planned to begin volunteering:

...so I retired, but the idea was that I could then in retirement be more socially involved with help, and I was really looking forward to that and of course that's then what transpired.

Jack

The first volunteering that Jack did following his retirement was to offer to run certain groups within his church – of which he'd been a member since young adulthood, but which he only began volunteering with in older age, following his retirement – as well as to offer to help at a local primary school,

I initially went and helped in the local school. I am a pianist, so I volunteered to help in their morning assembly at the primary school, and I was invited then to actually take the morning assembly and give a little talk, with a Christian bias, it was a C of E school, and I found that tremendous to be involved with the young folks again...

Jack

The volunteering he began in retirement is shown by the green line in the diagram on the left (**V**). This volunteering at the school stopped this when Jack's wife – shown in the diagram by the first blue line (**S**) – suggested that he might like to volunteer a bit less and spend a bit more time with her,

...what I need to say to you though is that your family always comes first, and you find so often, you know, your wife will say you're spending more time on that than with me. And we are, my wife is so incredibly busy, and we do have a lovely garden, which she enjoys, and which we enjoy having people into and so forth, that takes time as well. Erm, so it's where does the time go in some ways.

Jack

He also, through a contact at his church, began volunteering with Summerby Homeless Support around five years after retirement, and has remained volunteering with them until the present, a commitment that involves providing meals and support for homeless people one night a month.

Jack's biography has shown an example of a trigger volunteer, someone who for a range of reasons was unable to volunteer in younger age, and for whom the ceasing of other work commitments – through retirement from paid work and his children leaving home – meant that in his retirement Jack was able to get involved in formal volunteering. Since his retirement he has volunteered in his church in a number of different roles, and initially in a local primary school and more recently with Summerby Homeless Support. This pattern is common for a number of trigger volunteers, for whom work roles and other time commitments in younger age prevented volunteering, as the next section explores.

5.5.2. Other trigger volunteers

Trigger volunteers are those individuals whose first experiences of formal volunteering came in older age, with no (or in one case very little) previous experience of engaging in formal voluntary and community activities. As **Figure 5.17** shows, many of the volunteers in this category were in full-time paid employment for the bulk of their adult lives, up until retirement. Indeed, of the trigger volunteers all but Ellie were in full-time paid employment between the ages

of 40 and 58. Ellie too had a full-time commitment; she was the carer of her seriously disabled daughter for 38 years until her death, and as such had little free time at all, as **Figure 5.13** shows. The demands of a paid job were often cited by volunteers in this category as being prohibitive to engaging in formal voluntary and community activity while in paid employment – as Jack’s experience shows – while again domestic tasks were cited as placing a significant demand on individuals’ time.

A number of these volunteers, as with Jack, found it difficult to create space in their lives for formal volunteering prior to retirement. As we have seen, Jack states how he saw retirement, when his paid work was no longer placing demands on his time and when his children were grown-up and living away from home, as a time when he could be “*more socially involved*”, and that prior to

Ellie	
Paid Work	Was a PA before she married, has not done any paid work since.
Spouse	Remains married.
Children	Two children. Her daughter was seriously disabled and required 24 hour care, and lived at home until she died four years ago.
Formal Volunteering	For the past 15 years, 11 of which while she also cared for her daughter, she has edited the village magazine. Following her daughter’s death she was invited to volunteer with International Mission, and she has volunteered there for the past four years.

Figure 5.13 Ellie’s mini-biography

this point he had been able to do “*very little*” in wider society. Graham (see **Figure 5.14** for a mini-biography) too notes his “*high-pressure job*” meant that he could not “*justify*” undertaking formal voluntary and community activities at that time. Similarly, Bill (see **Figure 5.15** for a mini-biography) states that:

Graham	
Paid Work	Was a full-time civil servant until retirement three months ago.
Spouse	Divorced 13 years ago and single since.
Children	Two grown-up children, have left home.
Formal Volunteering	Has for past 10 years volunteered as a buddy with a disability charity and for past eight with Elders’ Support Jackton. His time commitment to the latter has increased substantially in retirement.

Figure 5.14 Graham’s mini-biography

...when you retire, of course, you’ve got time, that’s the biggest difference between going to work and being retired is you have time to do things.

Bill

Bill discussed how some of the volunteering he has done in

his retirement would simply not have been possible while he was in paid work, volunteering on an overseas trip;

The one thing that I did undertake was taking the 10 people to Germany, because that's something that I would not have had, it was something I wanted to do, to take a team of people on what's known as a GSE, a trip I'd wanted to do for a number of years, but felt that I wouldn't have the time to do, I knew I wouldn't have the time to be able to do it, because you had to have at least 4 weeks. So that's something that I believe can be done only when you retire.

Bill

Similarly Karen (see **Figure 5.16** for a mini-biography), who began volunteering in retirement, notes that after she retired she,

...had to kind of completely rethink things really.

Karen

Part of this rethinking for Karen involved beginning volunteering in two charity shops in her hometown, the first formal volunteering she recalls ever having done. Divorce (Graham, Margaret), marriage in later life (Betty) and never being married (Hugh) all appear in the domestic lives of this category of volunteers, each placing

Bill	
Paid Work	Worked full-time as a senior manager in a manufacturing company. Retired six years ago.
Spouse	Remains married.
Children	Two grown-up children, also grandchildren but no major caring responsibilities.
Formal Volunteering	Has held a number of positions in a membership organisation, including chairman and treasurer. For past four years has volunteered with International Mission delivering aid overseas for one month a year.
Figure 5.15 <i>Bill's mini-biography</i>	

Karen	
Paid Work	Worked full-time in communications. Retired five years ago, and for three years worked part-time. Retired completely two years ago.
Spouse	Remains married.
Children	Grown-up children have left home.
Formal Volunteering	Since retirement has volunteered in a charity shop for the past year and with a disability charity for the past six months.
Figure 5.16 <i>Karen's mini-biography</i>	

unique demands on the individuals involved, who may have to take on more domestic work, and indeed more paid work, than those with stable home lives. Trigger volunteers, then, would appear to have a wide range of factors which prevent them from undertaking formal

volunteering in younger age, and which allow or push them to undertake formal volunteering in older age. This was illustrated by the example of Jack, and this section and **Figure 5.17** have demonstrated how other volunteers have had similar experiences.

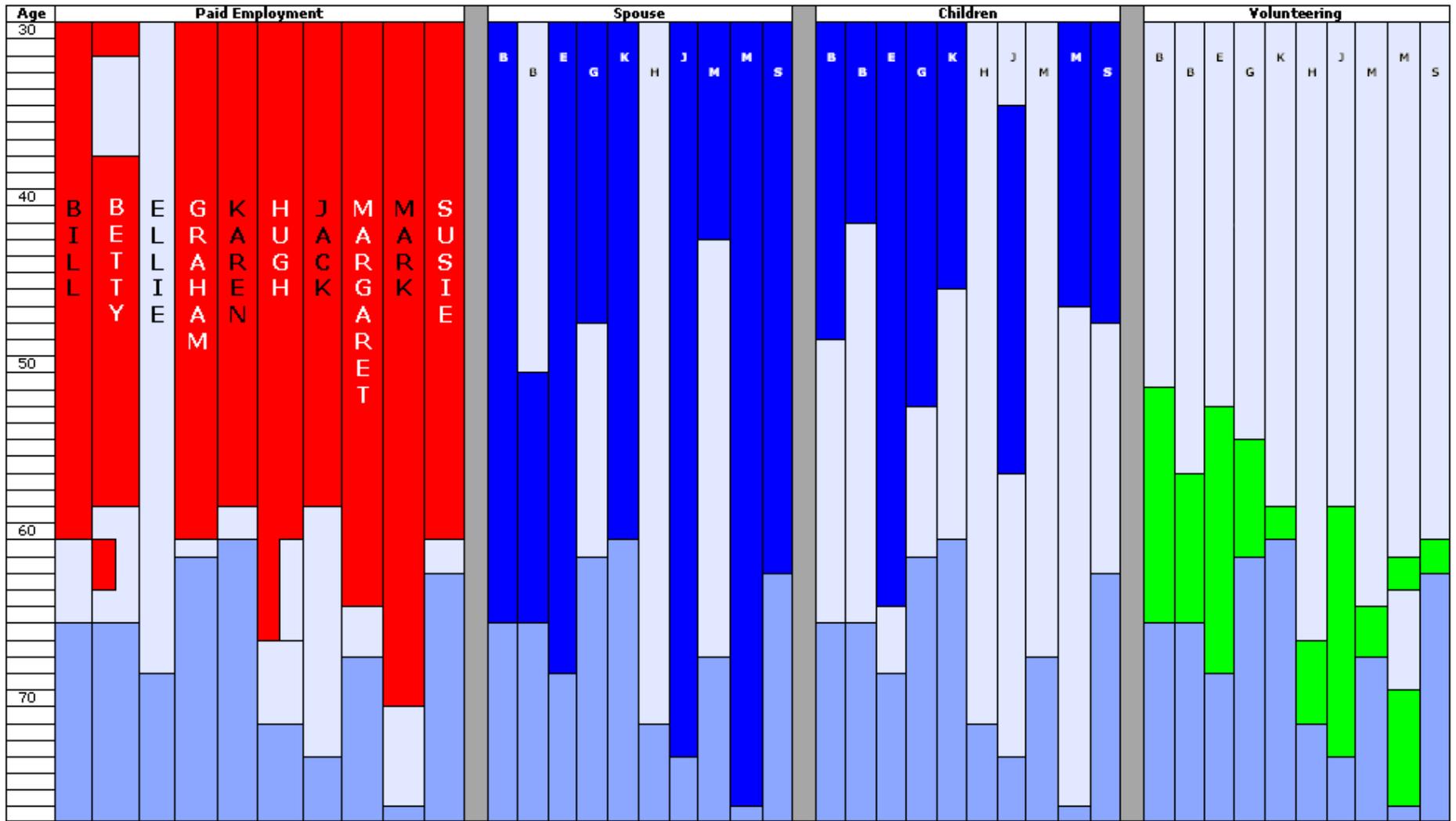


Figure 5.17 Trigger volunteers' lifecourse maps

5.6. Conclusion

This chapter has explored how the theories of the lifecourse, the Total Social Organisation of Labour and of the three categories of older volunteers have been applied to the analysis of the experiences of the 26 older volunteers interviewed. This section first recapped the theories of TSOL and the lifecourse, and the two theoretical approaches were brought together to make the case for understanding individuals' engagement in formal volunteering in the context of their lifecourse and of the different work roles they undertake across it. This was demonstrated first by looking at detailed biographies of three exemplar volunteers: Eric as a constant volunteer, Grace as a serial volunteer and Jack as a trigger volunteer. The three exemplars introduced the ways in which lifecourse maps have been created for each volunteer, offering a simplified graphical representation of individuals' work roles and household situations across the lifecourse, and then we looked at how the lifecourse maps for all of the volunteers in each of the three categories – constant, serial and trigger – have been created, and how these show how patterns in other work roles and household situations impact patterns of engagement in formal volunteering.

This chapter has therefore explored how different work roles interrelate across the lifecourse. It has looked at patterns of engagement in formal voluntary activity – as proposed by Davis Smith and Gay (2005) – and has added to them the insight from TSOL theory that different work roles interrelate to one another. This has enabled the development of diagrams which show the interrelation of different factors and their impact on participation in formal volunteering. **Figure 5.18** simplifies the differences in patterns of paid work, household structure and engagement in formal volunteering between the three categories of older volunteer explored in this chapter.

	Engagement in formal volunteering, paid work and the impact of household structure
Constant	Constant volunteers are those individuals who have been engaged in formal volunteering throughout their adult lives, usually with the same organisation. This engagement continues into older age. These individuals may change roles within the organisation across the lifecourse, depending on their circumstances, and may join and/or leave other voluntary organisations. It would seem that constant voluntary engagement is often mirrored by a constant engagement in paid work across the lifecourse, although this was not the case for all constant volunteers. The demands of paid work

	<p>sometimes impacts on the extent and/or nature of formal volunteering, but does not cause it to cease. Domestic stability is significant for constant volunteers, with none in this sample having been divorced and only one widowed. This stability helped create the conditions for constant engagement in formal volunteering. Children, where relevant, sometimes impact on the extent or nature of engagement in formal volunteering, but do not cause it to cease.</p>
Serial	<p>Serial volunteers are those individuals who have engaged in formal volunteering intermittently across the lifecourse, engaging when circumstances allow, but also having periods when they do not engage. Engagement in paid work is also intermittent for some serial volunteers, with periods out of the paid workforce often being periods when formal volunteering can be undertaken. Nonetheless, the majority of serial volunteers in this study were working full-time in early-older age, prior to retirement from paid employment. First engagement in formal volunteering often occurs when a serial volunteer has young children, dropping away when children are teenagers but then recommencing when children leave home, in the years before or after this retirement. Significant for serial volunteers was the impact of divorce, which led a number of serial volunteers to cease volunteering in the immediate aftermath, as they were forced to adapt to new household structure and a new routine.</p>
Trigger	<p>Trigger volunteers are those individuals whose first experiences of volunteering come in older age. Many trigger volunteers are in full-time paid employment throughout their adult lives, or have full-time domestic commitments. Trigger volunteers feel that these activities have placed limits on their time such that they have been unable to give up what free time they have in order to engage in formal volunteering in younger age. Retirement, then, is often a trigger to engage in formal volunteering for the first time. There is little pattern of household structure; trigger volunteers come from stable households, divorced couples and from single-person households. The pattern is that these individuals feel that their paid work and/or domestic responsibilities have, until the trigger, prevented them for engaging in formal volunteering.</p>

Figure 5.18 *How TSOL and making space for volunteering influences volunteering decisions for constant, serial and trigger volunteers*

Constant volunteers, as **Figure 5.18** outlines, have volunteered across the lifecourse and into older age. Many, such as Eric, were volunteering prior to marriage and parenthood, and their volunteering has as a result been a central part of the adult life and relationships they have built. A commitment to volunteering has often been shared by their spouse – be it together, as with Olive and her late husband, or separately, as with Eric and his wife. This commitment has often been passed on to children, an ethos of volunteering, and both of these family links – of spouse and of children – will be explored further in **Chapter 7**. For serial volunteers, this commitment to volunteering may have been present in younger age, but life events and other commitments have meant that individuals have stopped volunteering, before resuming in older age. Changes in engagement in formal volunteering have often been the result of external factors – family commitments, paid work and unexpected events – and re-engagement has often reflected changes in these in older age. However, as **Chapter 6** explores, internal reasons for volunteering are also significant in serial volunteers’ re-engagement in older age. Changing internal impulses for volunteering are also significant for trigger volunteers, those individuals with no history of formal volunteering prior to retirement. This chapter has explored how withdrawal from paid employment and/or diminished day-to-day childcare responsibilities create space for trigger volunteers to engage for the first time. This heuristic underpins the analysis contained in the following two chapters, in which further differences between the categories in terms of engagement with formal volunteering are explored.

6. Internal Reasons for Volunteering

6.1. Introduction

In the previous chapter I presented a framework for understanding volunteering across the lifecourse, using TSOL to understand how volunteering relates to other work commitments across over the course of individuals' lives. This chapter turns to look at how decisions to volunteer are motivated by what Lukka and Locke (2007) and Woolvin (2011) have conceptualised as internal motivating factors, as explored in Section 2.3.2. In doing so, it answers the second research question posed in the introduction to this thesis:

When older adults reflect on their volunteering, what internal impulses do they cite for participating, and how do these reflect their experiences across the lifecourse?

Internal impulses to volunteer, as conceptualised by Lukka and Locke (2007) and developed by Woolvin (2011), involve issues of upbringing, of previous life experiences, of formative influences and social background, of personal interests and hobbies, of skills that individuals have learnt and developed and of individuals' personal beliefs. Having established in **Chapter 5** that the composition of an individual's work roles – their own Total Social Organisation of Labour (Glucksmann, 1995; 2000; 2005) – is fundamental to their being able to engage in formal volunteering, this chapter looks at the next group factors influencing involvement: the will to engage.

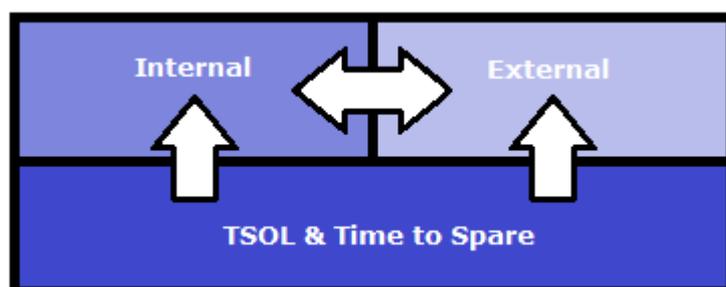


Figure 6.1 *Factors influencing volunteering decisions*

No individual can engage in volunteering if their TSOL (explored in **Chapter 5** as the complex mix of paid work and domestic responsibilities) does not allow them time and resources to do so. As shown in **Figure 6.1**, this chapter adds one of the two groups of influences which can push an individual towards volunteering if they have the free time and resources to engage, as having time to volunteer does not alone explain why and how individuals choose to engage. This chapter looks at why and how individuals come to have the will to volunteer. This will come from a range of internal impulses, drawing on experiences and events from across the lifecourse, and a range of these will be explored in this chapter. Data from the quantitative Helping Out Survey (Low et al, 2007) suggests that internal reasons for volunteering are significant to volunteers of all ages, young and old. **Figure 6.2** shows those reasons to volunteer from Helping Out which can be considered internal in light of the distinction proposed in **Figure 3.5**.

Reason for Volunteering	Percentage of all Volunteers
Cause was important to me	41%
I wanted to meet people, make friends	30%
To use existing skills	27%
Part of my philosophy of life	23%
To learn new skills	19%

Figure 6.2 *Internal reasons for volunteering* (Low et al, 2007)

Figures 6.3-7 (Low et al, 2007) graphically represent how the different internal motivations shown in **Figure 6.2** changes in importance across the lifecourse. The patterns shown do not suggest major variations in the importance of the range of internal impulses across the lifecourse. Beliefs are consistently important, as shown in **Figure 6.3**, making friends dips in middle age and rises again in older age (**Figure 6.4**), using existing skills shows a similar pattern (**Figure 6.4**), volunteering being a part of an individual's philosophy of life becomes gradually more significant over the lifecourse (**Figure 6.5**), while learning new skills is predictably most significant as an impulse in younger age, declining during middle age and showing a small increase in older age (**Figure 6.6**).

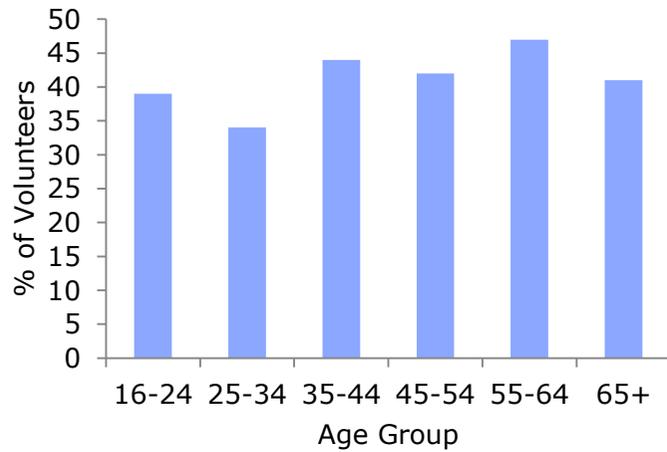


Figure 6.3 *Cause was important to me*

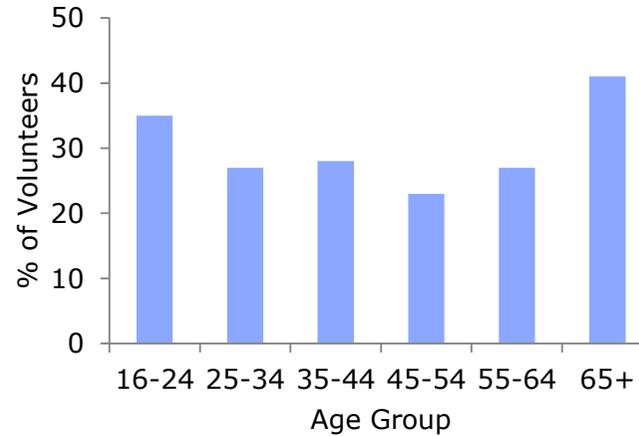


Figure 6.4 *I wanted to meet people, make friends*

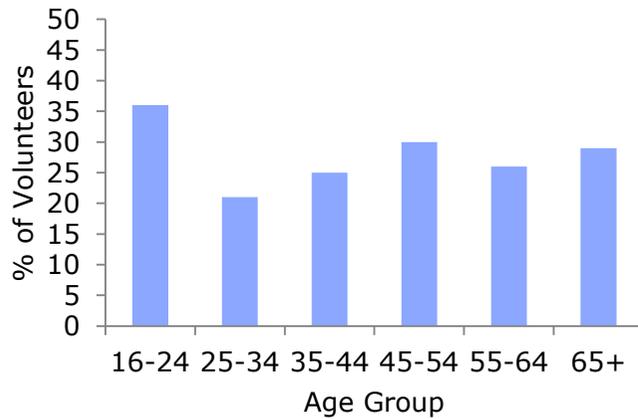


Figure 6.5 *To use existing skills*

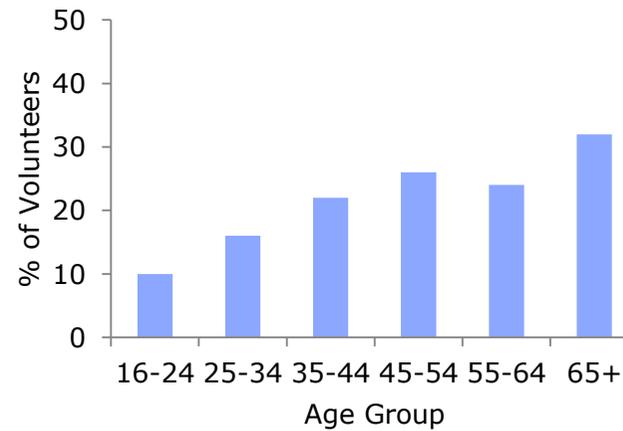


Figure 6.6 *Part of my philosophy of life*

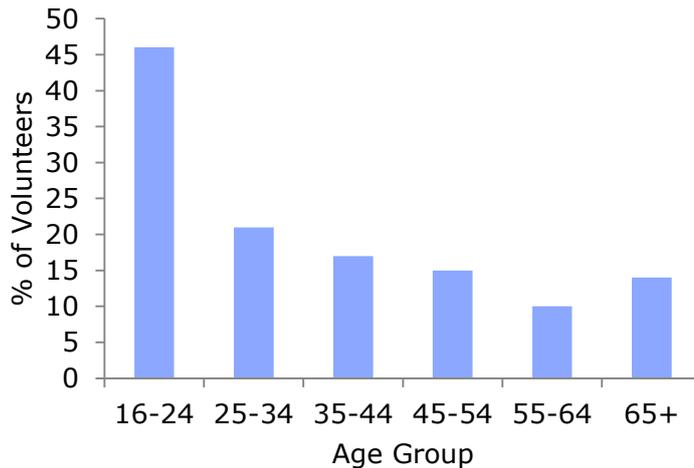


Figure 6.7 *To learn new skills*

This chapter explores four different groups of internal impulses – grouping them in terms of those identified by *Helping Out* (Low et al, 2007) as the most significant internal impulses – using the heuristic established in **Chapter 5**, exploring differences between individuals in the three groups of older volunteer: constant, serial and trigger. First, it looks at how older volunteers see their volunteering as a means of demonstrating and meeting the demands of the beliefs that they hold, and how these beliefs relate to experiences across the lifecourse. Next it looks at how older volunteers consider the skills that they contribute through volunteering – existing or new – and how these have been acquired across the lifecourse through the responsibilities individuals hold and the activities they undertake. The third section of this chapter looks at social motivations for volunteering, in particular how older adults note how they experience volunteering through VCOs as being significant to their social network. The final section of this chapter looks at the other rewards that older adults get from volunteering, be they rewards that individuals anticipated when making decisions to volunteer, or unexpected ‘perks’ of undertaking formal volunteering, those which were noted by a number of volunteers in one or more of the three categories.

6.2. Beliefs and Volunteering

6.2.1. Introduction

Individuals who volunteer in order to demonstrate their beliefs are understood here in light of Hardill et al's (2007) heuristic of volunteer impulses as being volunteers motivated by being able to 'give alms', and may also be those who wish to give to each other (see **Figure 3.6**), but for others their beliefs may not be relevant, and volunteering may be undertaken for reasons of 'getting on' or 'getting by'. Further to this, in Section 3.6.2 it was noted that Davis Smith and Gay (2005) suggest that older adults, particularly those who have retired from paid employment, are more likely to cite their beliefs as a motivating factor than younger volunteers, and **Figure 6.3** shows this, albeit with beliefs having been only slightly less significant during younger age. The first part of this section looks at constant volunteers and the extent to which their long commitment to volunteering with one or more organisation derives from a belief in the work of an organisation. The next two sections look at how serial and trigger volunteers are motivated by their beliefs, and do so in two parts. The first looks at how beliefs change, and how these changing beliefs can drive changes in volunteering alongside changes in the composition of an individual's TSOL. The second contends that while belief in the cause is often fundamental to engaging with VCOs, for some volunteers the organisation working towards something they believe strongly in is secondary to other reasons influencing decisions to volunteer. It is necessary to be clear that, while beliefs are for some volunteers closely related to having a faith, the use of the term beliefs refers here to broader identification with and support of a particular cause. This chapter, then, produced a picture that is far more nuanced than that shown in the quantitative data that Low et al (2007) produced, giving far more detail and depth to explanations of engagement in formal volunteering.

6.2.2. Constant from childhood

Constant volunteers are those who have volunteered throughout their adult lives, and continue this engagement into older age. Giving such long service to one or more VCO would seem to indicate that an individual is a strong believer in the work that the organisation does. A pattern among the eight constant volunteers interviewed for this research was that these beliefs had been important to the individual from a young age, and that their volunteering had served to reinforce the importance of the work their organisation undertakes. Olive, a first aid volunteer throughout her adult life, explains that:

...my Dad was the first aider for his employer, so you know I suppose it was there... it's just hereditary really that he did it and I was always

interested in what he was doing, looked at the books and I suppose I carried on.

Olive

The influence of parental example was also significant for Eric, who reflects on his engagement in a uniformed youth organisation that:

...I suppose from a young age I had some sort of model of a parent that gave their time... I had an example of people giving their time from an early age.

Eric

Amber too reflected on the influence of her mother, who had also been a leader in the same organisation. Believing in the work of an organisation and believing in the need to volunteer to help its work would seem, then, to have strong roots in childhood experiences and particularly the volunteering undertaken by an individual's parents.

It is worth exploring too the role that being a youth member of an organisation was significant in volunteers maintaining a lifelong commitment; five of the eight constant volunteers interviewed had been youth members of the organisation that they have given constant volunteer service to. David, like Eric, Amber, Fiona and Olive, a youth-member turned adult volunteer within an organisation, reflects that,

It's a culture that's built up in [the organisation] that you're giving service to somebody else... So it became a natural thing as I went through [the organisation] that I should go back and teach some of the children the skills I've learnt.

David

Further to this, and clearly linked to the diagrams introduced in **Chapter 5**, the stable relationships in which all constant volunteers have been have also involved mutual volunteering based around mutual beliefs: David, Eric, Nicholas, Olive and Ruth all volunteer or have volunteered alongside their spouse in an organisation whose work is underpinned by their own beliefs.

For constant volunteers, then beliefs deriving from the influence of parents, from experiences as a youth-member with an organisation and through the sharing of beliefs and activities with one's spouse are shown to be important impulses to maintaining voluntary involvement across the lifecourse.

6.2.3. How do beliefs change?

For the constant volunteers analysed in the previous section, their belief in the work of the organisation(s) to which they have given constant service has also been

constant, underpinned by childhood influences and adult relationships. For serial volunteers, however, those who have volunteered with different organisations at different times, and for whom the demands of other work roles and of household changes have necessitated breaks in volunteering, beliefs may not be so stable and may change over time. The two changing beliefs which this section looks at – one in younger age and one in older age – are closely associated to changes in household composition, as explored in **Chapter 5**, yet the impulse to volunteer was not in itself the result of the changes in TSOL and other roles. Helen, a serial volunteer, was in her 20s the victim of an abusive husband, and when she and her children moved out of the family home they had no choice but to turn to a women's refuge. While women's issues had not been important to Helen previously, following her experiences the plight of women became important to her, as she explains:

...when I left I went back to show my appreciation, I was so grateful of getting out of the situation and someone to help me, take me to a solicitor and put me on the right track.

Helen

This belief remained constant for Helen ever since then, and she has throughout her adult life volunteered with the women's refuge as and when other commitments have allowed, giving back to an organisation which helped her.

The death of an individual's spouse is something a great many older adults must endure, and for some it can serve as an impulse to begin or modify volunteering in light of new beliefs brought about by the nature of their loss. This has been the case for both Judith and Helen in older age, both serial volunteers who have experienced the loss of a spouse and have subsequently volunteered with organisations whose goals relate to their late husbands' illnesses. Helen, as before, undertaking volunteering following a highly unpleasant life event, notes that:

...you wanted to know why I got involved with the [VCO] and I suppose it was, my partner died, and it was because of [illness]... and I just said I've got to get out and do something, where some people like time to themselves when they have a bereavement, I just wanted to get out and do things.

Helen

To Helen, having previously volunteered as we saw in a women's refuge, volunteering to support an organisation undertaking research and providing support for those suffering as her husband did provided great comfort following his death. Judith too, when explaining her re-engagement with formal volunteering in older age, stated that:

It was because my husband died, and that was the main reason, and he had [illness], and that was the main reason I came to the [VCO].

Judith

Life events, then, influence individuals' beliefs and in doing so serve to provide impulses to engage in particular types of volunteering, with organisations which pursue goals related to these beliefs, and to fulfil an emotional gap that has recently emerged in a way which meets their new beliefs. The examples of Helen and Judith – both serial volunteers – show how the different types of volunteering that such individuals undertake relate to events across the lifecourse, and change as a result of these.

6.2.4. Do beliefs always matter?

The previous two sections have explored how beliefs – constant for constant volunteers and changing for some serial volunteers – have prompted individuals to begin and remain volunteering across their lives and into older age. However, some decisions to begin volunteering (or in Iain's case to reengage in volunteering) are the result of triggers quite unrelated to their beliefs or the goals of the organisation they volunteer with. These volunteers may well be 'giving alms' through the volunteering they undertake, but their impulse to volunteer is very much to get by (Hardill et al, 2007). This is not to say that these volunteers are against the goals of their organisation, but rather that these goals are not fundamental to their engagement. Iain, a serial volunteer who has taken on new roles in retirement, explains this ambivalence to the goals of the organisation,

I'm not against the things that the organisations I volunteer for are there for, indeed I'm strongly in favour of it, but I'm not doing it direct, sorry my primary motivation is not to help others, my primary motivation is for myself... I think if you're going against your natural inclinations that's something different, so I wouldn't volunteer to help the Nazi party or something, I've got to approve of what I'm doing, but my approval of what I'm doing is secondary to my wish to do it.

Iain

This theme – of the work of the organisation being secondary to other impulses to volunteer with them, was repeated by a number of trigger volunteers, for whom the trigger was not an existing belief or one which had recently emerged or changed. All three of the examples presented below had other impulses for volunteering, and were happy to express their (initial at least) ambivalence towards the goals of the organisation. Ellie was clear that her volunteering in the local office of an international aid charity was her attempt to cope in some way with the loss of her daughter, and that as far as the goals of the organisation were concerned there was

"no noble reason" for her engagement, and that while she has "great sympathy with all these people in Africa", a belief in the need to help their plight played no role in her decision to volunteer. Karen's decision to begin volunteering was rooted in her retirement, and the changes in her TSOL which this brought about. She made the decision to volunteer, and having done so sought out an organisation to volunteer with, as she explains:

...C for Cancer was quite early in the alphabet and I think that was probably one of the reasons, but I definitely wouldn't have chosen something that I didn't think was, much as I don't have anything against animals.

Karen

Similar to Iain, then, Karen wanted some volunteering to do for volunteering's sake, and was relatively unconcerned about the goals of the organisation, so long as she broadly agreed with them. For Bill, the trigger to volunteer delivering overseas aid was the result of a desire to fulfil a long-time ambition to drive across Europe. The destination of the aid or the reasons why it was required there were not of significant concern to him, at least initially:

I wasn't particularly aware of the situation until I'd been. I'd really got no concept I mean, like most people in this country have got no idea of what it's like out there, and what the issues are.

Bill

Having witnessed the "plight of the people and the conditions in which they live", Bill now feels his on-going volunteering with this organisation is driven in part by the desire to improve these conditions, yet his reasons for engagement did not – just like Iain, Ellie and Karen – derive from a belief in the cause. For volunteers with a trigger later in life, then – Iain, Ellie, Karen and Bill were all in their late 50s or 60s when these decisions were made – beliefs seem to be less of a significant impulse than for those who have been committed to the organisation for a long time or who have experienced an event which has changed their beliefs.

6.2.5. Conclusion

This section has looked at the extent to which beliefs in particular activities or causes underpin the volunteering that constant, serial and trigger volunteers undertake. **Figure 6.8**, below, summarises this.

Group of Volunteer	How beliefs impact on volunteering
Constant	Beliefs which influence volunteering decisions have been constant since younger age, often from childhood. Formative experiences appear to be important, and for a number of individuals their volunteering in older age could be linked back to parental influences. Allied to this, experiences as a child with a VCO were often significant in constant volunteers' decisions to continue volunteering.
Serial	While some beliefs are constant, others emerge or decline in importance across the lifecourse. Significant events and other experiences can change beliefs and contribute to impulses to volunteer in different ways at different times. Divorce, parenthood, widowhood and other experiences may all be significant. For some individuals, beliefs may not be all that important an influence on their choices to volunteer.
Trigger	Similar to serial volunteers, life events may result in changing beliefs which influence volunteering decisions. However, for a number of trigger volunteers, beliefs are not particularly important. The trigger which has led an individual to begin volunteering in older age may be quite unrelated to the work of the VCO volunteered with. Volunteering may not be undertaken in order to help the VCO and the recipients of its care, rather to meet some other need on the part of the volunteer.

Figure 6.8 *How beliefs influence volunteering decisions for constant, serial and trigger volunteers*

Constant volunteers, with lifelong commitment to volunteering, develop beliefs in younger age which continue to underpin their volunteering into older age, while serial and trigger volunteers have more fluidity of beliefs which influence their volunteering and may, in some cases, volunteer for reasons which do not draw on previously held beliefs. These other reasons, all of which combine with beliefs to a greater or lesser extent to influence decisions to volunteer, are explored in the sections which follow.

6.3. Skills from Lived Experience

6.3.1. Introduction

Across the lifecourse individuals learn and develop skills through the tasks they undertake and the experiences they have, both in paid employment (where engaged in) and other parts of life, and in doing so develop cultural capital, as explored in Section 3.3.1. In older age, and in particular in retirement, individuals may not attach an economic value to these skills, but the desire to utilise existing skills and to develop new ones can be an important internal motivation for undertaking formal volunteering in older age. The 'getting on' impulse identified by Hardill et al (2007) may diminish in importance in older age, but the desire to maintain and develop skills remains. Previous studies of volunteering in older age have found that individuals place significance on using existing skills (Barnes et al, 2002; Narushima, 2005; Warren and Clarke, 2009) and learning new skills (Dean, 2004; Withnail, 2006). Themes of critical gerontology in the third age of life (Laslet, 1989; Bytheway, 1997; Estes et al, 2003) underpin this, and are summed up neatly by Laura:

I mean, if you've got a capable and active brain that doesn't stop because the years click up to 60. That continues and there are only so many crosswords that you can do. I haven't finished yet, living, and living is everything about you, what you do, how you do it, what you're interested in, sitting down and having a political discussion with somebody. That doesn't stop because 60s clicked up.

Laura

From paid work, domestic responsibilities, formal volunteering and other activities, individuals learn and practice skills which they are keen to utilise. Nadia, a retired business consultant who has been married throughout her adult life and who volunteers with Squirrels Countryside Project, clearly outlines this:

I think it's important to everyone that people recognise the skills they have. I think everyone needs to feel that the skills they bring are appreciated.

Nadia

Here, I explore how formal volunteering through organisations is understood by older adults as a way in which they can use existing skills learnt across the lifecourse and can learn new skills and put these to use. First, it looks at the links between paid employment and volunteering in older age, looking at situations where individuals engage in volunteering because it allows them to continue using skills they enjoyed learning and using in paid work. In contrast to this, it then looks at those older volunteers who made a conscious choice to move away from

the types of work they undertook in their paid employment, and see their volunteering as an opportunity to do something quite different. It next looks at two further ways in which skill use was considered by the 26 older volunteers: overlap between the skills learnt and used in different voluntary roles and using skills learnt through qualifications which had otherwise not been used. In doing so, it outlines how skill development and transfer and use does not just occur between paid work and formal volunteering, but rather between many different activities across the lifecourse.

6.3.2. *Volunteering as continuity from paid work*

This section looks at how some older adults see their volunteering as a means of continuing to utilise skills acquired in paid work post-withdrawal from the paid labour market, and wish to see these skills put to a use which meets their beliefs (see Section 6.2). Davis Smith and Gay (2005), based on qualitative interviews with 21 older volunteers in England, state that,

“For the greater part, retired volunteers appeared to take on tasks that were not too dissimilar from those they were accustomed to.” (11)

As explored in Section 3.3.2, looking at why this might be, the work of Narushima (2005), in a qualitative study of 12 older volunteers in Canada, who found that individuals expressed a, *“desire to contribute their skills”*, and in particular to, *“...contribute specific skills and knowledge that they perceive as their strength”* (576). Similarly, Barnes et al (2002) in a qualitative study of adults leaving paid employment in four diverse British communities and Warren and Clarke (2009) from qualitative interviews with 23 older adults in England, found that the desire to use existing skills is an important impulse to engage in formal volunteering. Some of those individuals who participated in this research and who engaged in paid employment strongly identified with their work and in retirement express a wish to carry on undertaking work using similar skills. Two older volunteers are outlined here as examples of this – Iain, a serial volunteer and Mark, a trigger volunteer, as illustrative examples of a theme mirrored by Eric, Grace, Pam and Susie. These two examples are selected as representative of those volunteers who take on new volunteering roles in retirement to replace some of the internal rewards they gained from their paid work. By its nature, this is more applicable for serial and trigger volunteers who (re)start volunteering in retirement. However, it is also relevant for constant volunteers; in **Chapter 5** we saw that while Eric has been a constant volunteer for a uniformed youth organisation, he has in retirement also taken on new roles in business mentoring, using the skills he acquired during his paid work. Nonetheless, the two examples here concern new voluntary roles taken on in

retirement by a serial and a trigger volunteer, as these are most illustrative of this type of volunteer impulse.

Iain is in his early 60s and lives with his second wife in Jackton, a city in Northern England. He has lived in Jackton throughout his adult life, although has moved to different areas following his divorce and remarriage. He had two children with his first wife, who are now grown-up and living away from home. Around three years ago Iain retired from his full-time paid job in local government, with the intention of running a pub with his wife. However, not long after his retirement, Iain was involved in a road accident which has left him with “*quite significant disabilities*”, which meant he would be unable to run a pub. A couple of years later, and with Iain recovering – although his mobility remains impeded by his injuries – his wife suggested that he might undertake some volunteering, mainly to get him doing something. A serial volunteer who in older age has multiple voluntary roles, **Figure 6.9** shows the volunteering that Iain has done on-and-off across his lifecourse.

Iain – early 60s		
Voluntary Role	Time Period	Reasons for Involvement
School Governor	For 6 years in his 30s, then again from 6 months ago to present	First time, had a child at the school. Recently, because it was something he’d done before and knew he could do relatively easily, and he enjoyed it.
Elders’ Support Jackton	A year to present	His wife worried he was becoming idle following his accident and told him to volunteer for his sake, and she found ESJ for him. It appealed because it sounded similar in some respects to his previous paid work, which he loved.
Schools Appeal Panel	9 months to present	Experience from paid work, and thought that knowledge and skill was something he could usefully employ. And thinks he will enjoy it.
Community Hall Trustee	For around 6 months until a few months ago	A friend was the chair and asked him to volunteer, she thought he’d fit in well.

Figure 6.9 Iain’s voluntary roles

The volunteering that Iain does with Elders' Support Jackton and the Schools Appeal Panel are both roles which involve similar work to that which Iain was undertaking as a paid employee in local government. Explaining his reasons for offering to volunteer at Elders' Support Jackton, Iain states that:

I thought it appealed because it sounded to me as though it would be similar in some respects to the work I'd done previously, and the work I absolutely loved. You know, I worked there for 30 years, I wasn't sad to leave because I was going into a new and exciting environment, I thought. But I had a wonderful time working for the ombudsman's office, and I enjoyed what I did, and I thought Elders' Support Jackton probably offered similar opportunities, which turned out to be correct.

Iain

Iain draws here explicit links between his previous paid employment and the volunteering he undertakes at Elders' Support Jackton. As well as enjoying the work he did in his paid career, he also recognises that he gained a number of skills through his paid work which he is keen to continue to use:

Well, I was very experienced in dealing with local government problems, which I knew would be a significant component of Elders' Support Jackton's casework, because local government impacts, indeed it doesn't even have to be local government because you can transfer those skills over to national government and a few other things. And I felt that I had a deep knowledge of local government law and administration, I was extremely experienced in dealing with complaints, I'd work for the local government for 30 years, and I knew how to write, I knew how to write letters, I'm a skilled negotiator, can talk to people easily and I'm, I'm good at communicating I think. And that's it, that's the skills, if I've got them, that I brought to Elders' Support Jackton.

Iain

As well as volunteering with Elders' Support Jackton – using the skills he has to do the work he loves – Iain has begun volunteering on the local Schools Appeal Panel, helping to make decisions when conflicts arise over the allocation of school places. Again, this links back to his paid work,

Well, I got into that because it was something I was extremely experienced in from local government. We dealt with complains about the ways the way the appeals panels ran. And we got quite a lot of them, and they were always fraught and difficult, and I got to know the system, the law, the problems pretty well, extremely well in fact, and I thought that

that knowledge and skill was something that I could usefully transfer to go on the other side so to speak. And I thought I'd probably enjoy it.

Iain

Again, having the skills from his paid work and knowing he would enjoy it from his previous experience were key factors in Iain's choice to undertake this voluntary role – an internal motivation drawn from Iain's personal interests and skills. Iain has come to be in two roles which closely relate to his previous paid work – work that he "absolutely loved". On Iain's lifecourse map, then, the links between his paid work and his formal volunteering are more than just time-related impacts, but also links based on skills, experience and enjoyment.

The second example of an internal motivation to continue utilising skills gained in paid employment is Mark, who is in his late 70s, and lives in a gated community in the suburbs of a large city with his wife of over 50 years. His children have long left home and he has a number of grandchildren. Mark's main paid career was as an environmental health officer, from which he took early retirement in his late 50s. For the next 12 years he and his wife ran their own vineyard in the south of England, based just outside a small village. It was in this village that Mark, a trigger volunteer, had his first experience of formal volunteering, having a two year involvement in a Village History Project. This and the volunteering Mark current does is shown in **Figure 6.10**.

Mark – late 70s		
Voluntary Role	Time Period	Reasons for Involvement
Village History Project	2 years in his 60s	Someone in the village was writing a book and he offered to help research it.
Residents' Association	8 years to present	Moved to a new area and got to know people. Main reason for involvement was paid employment background in environmental health.
Squirrels Countryside Project	5 years to present	He was used to an active life and enjoyed being outside. Once work on the house was done, he wanted to do something useful. He was interested in the environment, so went to local library to look for volunteering opportunities and found details of SCP there and made contact with them.

Figure 6.10 Mark's voluntary roles

Mark and his wife sold their vineyard around nine years ago and moved to the gated community in which they now live. After around a year, Mark began volunteering with the residents' association within their community, because there was a need for a volunteer with the prior knowledge of environmental health matters, linking back to the paid employment Mark had had before running the vineyard:

I think the main reason I got involved in it was that because of my background in environmental health, and knowing about drainage and sewerage problems and things like that, one of the things the residents' association was formed for was the fact that although we were in an urban area, we were not actually connected to the mains sewers by gravity. We had specialist people to actually do the physical maintenance on it, I didn't get involved in that, but somebody had to be responsible for knowing which switches to switch and what to do, and also supervising the specialists when they came in to do the servicing and things like that. So that's how I got involved in it, because of my prior knowledge, I said well I'm au fait, I can understand what's going on, and nobody else wanted to do it.

Mark

Mark found himself using skills and knowledge he had not used in almost 15 years in order to help the community in which he lives, and to put to continued use the skills he has built up across his lifecourse. Mark and Iain both show that a desire to continue using skills developed through paid employment can be an important internal motivation for volunteering in older age.

6.3.3. A clean break from paid work

While the previous section considered a wish to maintain and utilise skills developed in paid employment as an internal motivation to volunteering in older age, a theme suggested by Davis Smith and Gay (2005), this section considers a desire to undertake volunteering which provides a clear contrast with an individual's previous paid employment. Through doing so, individuals not only experience a contrast for previous activities, but are also able to learn new skills, something which Dean (2004) and Withnail (2006) cite as significant impulses for older volunteers. To do this, this section looks at exemplar cases of two older volunteers – Nicholas and Laura – who have in older age sought to undertake volunteering which is clearly different to the paid employment they have undertaken during their working lives, and for whom this was a clear choice reflecting their internal motivations to volunteer. This was a theme that was reflected in a number of older volunteers'

stories, particularly those who in older age were volunteering in more manual roles, having had a work background in white collar work (as well as Nicholas and Laura, Nadia and Bill also reflect this pattern). Nicholas is in his early 60s and lives in a suburb of a large city with his wife of over 30 years. Their two children have grown-up and left home. He took early retirement on medical grounds in his early 50s, having previously been a senior technical officer for a multinational company. As a constant volunteer, Nicholas has been Chairman with a local carnival organising committee for almost thirty years, as well as undertaking a number of other voluntary roles, as outlined in **Figure 6.11**.

Nicholas – early 60s		
Voluntary Role	Time Period	Reasons for Involvement
Junior Sports Teams	For around 8 years in his 30s	His children were playing in the teams and so he volunteered to help coach and run them.
Village Fair	For 28 years until a year ago	Through his children he came into contact with the Fair organisers, thought it looked fun and got involved.
Old Peoples' Home	For 3 or 4 years in his 40s	He turned up and volunteered, was near home.
Squirrels Countryside Project	8 years to present	Found it through the local volunteer centre, went in and looked through the information and approach SCP.
Local Nursery	2 years, 8 years ago	His neighbour ran a nursery, and so he went to help her there, as she had asked him to.
Local School	1 year, 6 years ago	He fancied something a bit different, so volunteered with a local school.
Sawmill	6 months to present	His hobby is collecting tools and learning skills, and he started doing this through a friend so that he could learn how to do things from experts.

Figure 6.11 *Nicholas' voluntary roles*

While Nicholas has undertaken a number of different voluntary roles across his lifecourse, in order to explore how he has undertaken roles to learn new skills, I concentrate here on just two of them; Squirrels Countryside Project and the Sawmill. Due to the nature of the medical condition which led to his early

retirement – a mental health problem – he is unable to undertake any work similar to that which he previously did. He is clear though that even if he were able to, he would not be keen to undertake the type of work his previous paid work involved. In his previous paid career, Nicholas notes that, “*you’re not basically doing anything, you’re just planning*”, while with his volunteering in the sawmill and with Squirrels Countryside Project the work is all planned for the volunteers with “*no planning at all... it’s all hands on*”, allowing him to undertake manual work. Reflecting on this change, Nicholas is clear that his current volunteering “*suits me a lot better*” than his paid employment did. Nicholas has taken on the role of an apprentice carpenter at the Sawmill, and stresses the difference to his paid work, and how much more he enjoys the volunteering he does now compared to his previous employment:

I think I’m much happier as an artisan. I should have, I think that’s what I, if I’d been born 50 years earlier my great uncles were blacksmiths, my uncle was a carpenter, and I’m sure if I’d been born and not gone to university, I would have gone into an apprenticeship and I think I’d have probably been happier, I wouldn’t have had as much money, but I’d have felt a lot more satisfied.

Nicholas

Nicholas is in good physical health, and expects to be able to continue volunteering with the Project and the Sawmill for a significant period of time, noting that he “*considers it a second career really*”. While his illness means he would be unable to engage in volunteering which is similar to his previous paid work, he is relishing in his older age the opportunity to do something completely different, and something which he enjoys far more than he ever did his paid work. The volunteering that Nicholas now undertakes is rooted in the context of his TSOL across the lifecourse; the free time that enables him to volunteer now has been created by his retirement, although he had always made some time to volunteer while in paid employment. But further to this, facilitated by his retirement and his having the necessary financial resources not to need to work, but reflecting internal motivations above external facilitators, Nicholas has made a decision to do something different, a second career, based on his internal motivations and what he wants to gain from undertaking formal volunteering.

The second example explored here is Laura, who is in her mid-60s, and lives in Summerby, a city in central England, with her husband of around 15 years. She had been married and divorced previously, and has a daughter from her first marriage who is now grown-up and living away from home. She retired from her paid employment as a senior nursing sister working with severely disabled children

around 6 years ago. A serial volunteer, Laura has undertaken a number of different voluntary roles across the lifecourse, as **Figure 6.12** shows.

Laura – mid 60s		
Voluntary Role	Time Period	Reasons for Involvement
Social Work Charity	2 years in late 20s	Was based overseas with husband and recognised a need for social support for wives. Knew the legislation and standards in UK from paid work.
Local School	2 or 3 years in early 30s	Her daughter’s school, she went in to help with reading because she had free time.
Transport Heritage Society	15 years to present	Always had an interest in canal boats, and the manual labour she did initially was an antidote to the stressful and often distressing paid nursing she did.
Summerby Homeless Support	4 years to present	Went to school with the chairperson, and offered to help if they were ever short. A while later got a call and asked to come and help, which she has done since.
Summerby City Mission	18 months to present	Knows the man who runs it, was asked to come along. Likes baking but can’t eat it all so bakes for homeless people. Has always cared for street people

Figure 6.12 Laura’s voluntary roles

I concentrate here on the volunteering that Laura has undertaken for the past 15 years with a Transport Heritage Society. Her involvement in this stems from this being a hobby which she shares with her second husband. At around age 50, as she entered older age, and while working full-time with seriously disabled children, she initially volunteered to undertake manual work for the Society as a volunteer:

So I started doing that by doing things like working in lock chambers and repainting lock chambers or brick work, using a wheel barrow, anything big and heavy. It provided a lovely contrast to my work as a mental health nurse working with disabled children. It was fabulous.

Laura

It is clear from this quote that Laura saw this heavy manual work as a way of escaping from her full-time work not because she disliked it, but because it could be emotionally very tiring. She explores this further:

And at times very distressing because we used to lose children they were so severely disabled. Children died. So it was good to get out into the fresh air, get muddy, get really tired physically. And see something being constructed. It was really good.

Laura

While other volunteering Laura has undertaken reflects her background in caring – in younger age directly related to mental health and recently in particular for homeless people – it is notable that her volunteering with the Transport Heritage Society was explicitly chosen because of its contrast to her paid employment, and because of her and her husband’s interests. Laura’s volunteering, like Nicholas’, has involved engaging in roles in which the work done is deliberately different to her paid employment, and a key internal motivation for them to engage was the chance to engage in different tasks and to learn and use new skills.

6.3.4. Skill overlap between voluntary roles

Not all individuals engage in paid employment, and those who do often do so in different ways at different times in their life. While the links between skills developed (or not) in paid employment and decisions to volunteer may be strong, there are also links between different voluntary roles in different organisations often involve using similar skills. In order to explore this, the cases of Olive and Ruth (both constant volunteers) show how a lifetime of learning skills in different voluntary organisations has enabled the volunteering that Olive is undertaking in older age, representing a wish to share skills with other organisations also expressed by Nicholas and Nadia. Notably, three of these are constant volunteers, while Nadia is a serial volunteer; by definition trigger volunteers will not have previous volunteer experiences and skills to share, and it is those who have given constant commitment who are most likely to have developed a set of skills which they wish to continue to use and develop. Olive is in her early 60s and has lived in the same city in central England for all of her adult life. She was married for over 30 years, however her husband died around two years ago and she is currently single. She and her husband had no children. Olive currently works part time in administration at a large hospital, having previously worked full-time for a large communications company. Olive is a constant volunteer, and all of her volunteering has been in the area of first aid, as **Figure 6.13** shows.

Olive – early 60s		
Voluntary Role	Time Period	Reasons for Involvement
First Aid Society	On-and-off throughout adulthood. Had stopped for 10 years until resuming 2 months ago	Her dad was a first aider, so she was always interested in it. When she left school she joined FAS, undertook training. Restarted after husband's death because she was asked to.
First Aid Training	On-and-off throughout adulthood. Had stopped for a number of years until resuming 2 years ago	Initially through work. After her husband died, she was invited to accept an honour on his behalf, and while at the meeting it was suggested to her that she might like to resume the training, which she has done.
First Aid for Athletics Clubs	30 years to present	Having trained with FAS, she and her husband were approached to provide first aid cover for an athletics event. From there it "sort of built and built and built" and she now does an event nearly every weekend.

Figure 6.13 Olive's voluntary roles

For all of the three organisations that Olive has volunteered for, the basic principles of first aid have been a constant and she has transferred her skills between organisations, adapting to the particular ways in which each of the organisations operate. From a young age, Olive has been interested in first aid:

My Dad was a first aider for his employer, so you know I suppose it was there, it's sort of come through the genes, it's just hereditary really that he did it and I was always interested and I was always sort of interested in what he was doing, looked at the books and I suppose carried on. And then when I got, when I left school and went into work I took up first aid at work.

Olive

Olive's first aid volunteering has involved working with two different First Aid Society groups at different times, volunteering for over 30 years as a first aid provider at local athletics clubs and conducting first aid training at a number of local businesses over the past 40 years. Olive has used the skills that she first learnt

through First Aid Society in her 20s for her volunteering with athletics clubs, and for the provision of training. And, when she recently resumed volunteering with First Aid Society:

...I just slot in quite easily. Because at the end of the day, you always use the first aid manual. I work to the [First Aid Society] manual, so what I've done training wise is no different.

Olive

Skills have been transferred from organisation to organisation across Olive's lifecourse, as and when other circumstances – the impact of TSOL and lifecourse events, similar as a constant volunteer to that of Eric in Section 5.3.1 – permit.

While Olive has used her medical skills to benefit the work of a number of organisations working to similar goals, the example of Ruth shows that there are certain skills that individuals are able to put to use in different organisations working for quite different goals. Ruth has been treasurer for all three organisations she has volunteered with over the past 30 years, as shown in **Figure 6.14**.

Ruth – early 70s		
Voluntary Role	Time Period	Reasons for Involvement
Steeple House Shop	30 years to present	She was a church member and they appealed for volunteers to help with a new charity. She volunteered for Saturday mornings as she didn't have anything else to do then.
Church Coffee Morning	25 years to present	She was recruited within the church, and has been involved in running it since it was set up following renovations to the church.
Mother's Club	15 years to present	She was a member and the previous treasurer died and she took over, with a handful of others who felt it was their generation's turn to take on the running of the club.

Figure 6.14 *Ruth's voluntary roles*

Ruth explains that she has been treasurer in each organisation because she has the skills, while others are often reluctant to undertake the handling of money:

Well because I looked after the money for the charity shop, I thought, well you know, it wouldn't worry me to be responsible for the money. A

lot of people have got a thing about money haven't they? They think it's gonna jump up and bite them if it's somebody else's, so it didn't worry me at all, so that was why, I offered to do that.

Ruth

While Olive's are more formal skills, assessed and certified, and without which First Aid Society and the athletics clubs would not let her volunteer, Ruth's are more informal skills which she has learnt through her volunteering, to the point where she is comfortable with handling money. Both Olive and Ruth have gained skills through volunteering which they are utilising in their current volunteering in older age. Be they formal skills which organisations demand or informal skills which help to fulfil a role, these support the work that older volunteers do, and significantly they provide for the volunteer an internal motivation to maintain involvement in order to maintain these skills.

6.3.5. Conclusion

Unlike Section 6.2, which found clear differences between different types of volunteer – constant, serial and trigger – in terms of how beliefs influence volunteering, this section has not found such clear patterns. Nonetheless, there are some patterns which emerge, and these are outlined in **Figure 6.15**. For constant, serial and trigger volunteers, new voluntary roles in retirement may relate to previous experiences and skills learnt through paid employment, with the use of these skills cited as a reason for engaging. Particularly for constant volunteers, but also for serial volunteers returning to the same or similar organisations, volunteer roles in retirement often involve continuing to use skills developed through volunteering across the lifecourse.

Group of Volunteer	How volunteering relates to skills
Constant	For those who have volunteered throughout their lives, volunteering as role replacement in older age is less significant. Yet that is not to say it doesn't occur, and the contrast between Eric's role continuation and Nicholas' deliberate change suggest that no clear pattern is visible. The cases of Olive and Ruth using similar skills in a number of voluntary roles suggests that constant volunteers are likely to develop skills through volunteering which they can use elsewhere, although this may also be the case with serial volunteers.
Serial	There is evidence of serial volunteers re-engaging in

	<p>formal volunteering following their retirement from paid work, suggesting a degree of role replacement which is less significant for those who were already volunteering prior to retirement. However, other serial volunteers have re-engaged prior to retirement, so clearly volunteering to use existing skills or learn new ones in retirement is not always a significant impulse. For serial volunteers who move between different VCOs across the lifecourse there is likely to be a degree of skill-sharing, but this study did not find sufficient evidence of this.</p>
<p>Trigger</p>	<p>Where the trigger is retirement, a desire to continue using skills learnt in paid employment or to learn new skills may be significant. However, the nature of the triggers for these volunteers were highly diverse, and while using existing or learning new skills were significant for some volunteers, there was no significant pattern.</p>

Figure 6.15 *How skills influence volunteering decisions for constant, serial and trigger volunteers*

This section has looked at links between skills and volunteering in older age: through skills gained paid employment, through a wish to learn new skills far removed from those used in paid employment and through skills developed in other formal voluntary roles. In doing so, we see that existing skills and the desire to learn new ones are important internal motivations for older volunteers, and that while the ways in which they impact are clearly highly heterogeneous, they all result in individuals making a decision to volunteer in a particular way and at a particular time. This is facilitated by other – external – factors, but understanding the desires to learn and consolidate skills is clearly essential to understanding how and why older adults engage in formal voluntary and community activities.

6.4. Social Benefits of Volunteering

6.4.1. Introduction

This section continues the analysis of the previous two in considering internal motivations to engage in volunteering in older age (Lukka and Locke, 2007; Woolvin, 2011). Having looked at how individuals are motivated to volunteer by the beliefs they have, and how the learning or utilising of skills acts as an impulse to volunteer, this section looks at the social benefits that individuals derive from volunteering. We saw in Section 3.3.5 that when individuals retire they lose out on a number of the incidental benefits of paid work, and social contact is one of these (Jahoda, 1983; Barnes et al, 2002). In older age and retirement, individuals may want to develop new social networks or to engage more with their existing networks (Barnes et al, 2002; Barnes and Parry, 2004), and this may be particularly the case for those who are living alone in older age (Hardill, 2003; Dean, 2004). All of the 26 older volunteers in this study stated that they derived social benefits from their volunteering – either providing ties that contributed to continuing to bind individuals to volunteering in older age, and acting as an initial impulse to engage in formal volunteering. The two parts of this section of analysis look at different ways in which older volunteers explain the social motivations for their volunteering: for constant and some serial volunteers, continuing volunteering in older age can be a means of keeping in contact with friends made through their volunteering, while for other serial and trigger volunteers, a wish to make new social contacts can be a factor in decisions to engage in volunteering.

6.4.2. Volunteering with friends in older age

Constant volunteers – as explored in **Chapter 5** – are those who have volunteered throughout their adult life, often for the same organisation. Having been involved with the same organisation for so long, these volunteers often emphasised that the organisation was a key part of their social life. While their continued engagement with the organisation in older age is the result of a number of factors (Rochester, 2006), external and internal, significant was that a number of volunteers explained their decisions to continue volunteering in terms of the continuing social benefits. For many constant volunteers then, their reasons for continuing volunteering – albeit often in new roles and with changing time commitments – are in part derived from a wish to maintain social links developed over a lifetime of volunteering. Particular organisations and types of formal volunteering – uniformed organisations with clear progression between youth members and adult volunteers in particular – seem to attract constant volunteers more than others, and the ways in which these volunteers consider the social ties to the organisation offer an explanation for this. Amber, who has throughout her adult life volunteered with a uniformed youth

organisation having been introduced to it by her mother while a child, is clear that her volunteering with Greatown Youth Association cannot be separated from the social relations she has with others in the organisation. She states that:

I have so many friends in [the organisation] that I've made over the years and. I mean forty of fifty years' friendships, you know, they're still there...

Amber

Amber estimates that she has many hundreds of friends who she has made through her volunteering with the organisation. Having these friends plays a significant part in her life; when her husband was ill she was overwhelmed by the number of friends she had made through volunteering with Greatown Youth Association who offered support and comfort. Eric and David, who similarly volunteer with uniformed youth associations, similarly reflected on the social network that it had provided them, and David in particular was clear that these ties bind him to the organisation and, as part of a complex mix of motivations, have helped his engagement remain constant.

Olive is also a constant volunteer, and has for over 30 years provided first aid support for a number of athletics clubs in her local area. Olive considers providing such support her hobby, and as explored in the previous section, her volunteering allows her to utilise and maintain her skills. As with Amber, Eric and David, social links also contribute to Amber's continued commitment to her volunteering. Like Amber, Olive considers many of the people she has met through her volunteering to be close friends:

I mean I've still got some of the trainers there I mean I met from down there are very close friends of mine, you know.

Olive

As well as making close friends through her volunteering, her constant commitment to providing first aid for the local athletics scene meant that Olive and her late husband were made to feel a central part of a long-standing community of interest. Olive expresses this in reflecting on her continued volunteering:

I think the friendship, and the community spirit, really... And I think the fact that everybody was just like one big family to use, I think that was the thing. It was just a very, very close-knit community on the whole.

Olive

This feeling of being part of a caring community was significant in Olive's decision to continue volunteering with these athletics clubs following her husband's death. While for those who divorce – as explored in **Chapter 5** – the changes in their lifestyle and their TSOL may change, becoming widowed does not seem to have the same impact. Indeed, as Olive's case shows, constant volunteers being embedded

in the social networks provided by their volunteering can provide continuity and comfort in times of bereavement. Constant volunteers, then, place great emphasis on the social relations which their previous and continuing volunteering provides. These ties bind them to organisations, making up a part of the complex mix of factors which tie individuals to volunteering with organisations.

6.4.3. Volunteering to make friends in older age

Unlike the constant volunteers considered in the previous section who are engaged in formal volunteering as they enter older age and continue to be engaged, serial and trigger volunteers may begin or resume volunteering in older age. As with the reasons for continuing volunteering, reasons for beginning or resuming volunteering in older age are complex and draw on a wide range of impulses (Rochester, 2006). A common theme among serial and trigger volunteers was that (re)engagement with volunteering in older age was prompted, in part at least, by a wish to widen one's social circle and to be more engaged socially. This impulse can be understood using Hardill et al's (2007) heuristic of volunteering impulses as being motivated by a desire to 'get by', with individuals engaging in volunteering as a response to a change in their circumstances (Knapp et al, 1995; Barnes et al, 2002; Barnes and Parry, 2004; Hardill et al, 2007). This section looks at how the (perceived) social benefits of volunteering were highlighted by serial and trigger volunteers as factors in their decisions to (re)engage.

For those who have engaged in paid work, retirement is a significant transition in older age. For some, retirement occurs overnight – Nadia and Graham, for example – while for others it was more gradual, as was the case for Grace and Hugh. The clearing of paid-work responsibilities presents individuals with the time to engage in formal volunteering, as **Chapter 5** explored, while in the previous section we saw how some individuals view their volunteering in older age as a way of continuing to use skills developed in paid employment. However when leaving paid work individuals may find that they also miss the camaraderie and social aspects of paid employment. Trish, who for the final decade of her paid career worked in an administrative role, expressed the dual satisfaction of her new voluntary roles in older age by stating that she had looked to engage in roles where:

...you get the job satisfaction plus the meeting of new people.

Trish

Iain, who as explored in the previous section resumed volunteering in older age due to a range of different factors, outlined how his volunteered provided some of these benefits:

Interviewer – *I often talk about the incidental benefits of work, things beyond being paid...*

Iain – *Chatting about the football for half an hour, that's the sort of thing, isn't it?*

Interviewer – *That completely incidental conversation.*

Iain – *But it's part of enjoying life.*

Trish and Iain are both serial volunteers, returning to formal volunteering in their retirement. Susie, on the other hand, is a trigger volunteer; prior to retiring from her paid career in IT, Susie had not engaged in any formal volunteering. However, following her retirement, she explains that:

I found it quite hard to motivate myself at home on my own all day. Much prefer to be here and socialise doing something hopefully useful.

Susie

These clearly illustrate an impulse to volunteer which fits Trish, Iain and Susie into Hardill et al's (2007) 'getting by' category of volunteer, with her decision to volunteer very much an attempt to fill "something missing or an emotional gap in life" (Hardill et al, 2007: 207).

Also 'getting by' are those older adults who (re)engage in formal volunteering following the death of their spouse. As with retiring from paid work, although clearly emotionally quite different, widowhood necessitates social adjustment (Knapp et al, 1995; Hardill et al, 2007). Serial volunteers Helen and Judith found themselves widowed in their 60s, and both saw a return to formal volunteering as a means of coping with their loss. Judith is clear that volunteering in the aftermath of her husband's death was important to her:

...as I say, it really did help me, you know, and of course you meet people in the shop, don't you, and of course you meet all the ladies as well, so, and I've made some good friends along the way, you know. So yes, it was, I think it's helped me more than I've probably helped them.

Judith

For Helen too, a re-engagement with formal volunteering came about following her husband's death:

...my partner died... I just said I've got to get out and do something, where some people like time to themselves when they have a bereavement, I just wanted to get out and do things. I do like meeting people, and I think that's why probably a lot of people do go out and do volunteering. If you're on your own, it's a way of getting out cos you can get so isolated, especially with the old winter coming on, yes.

Helen

For both Judith and Helen, their bereavement is now a number of years behind them, and their initial reasons for engagement have evolved to become reasons for their continued engagement. For both, the social benefits of their volunteering remain important, as Judith states:

Oh yeah, it's just automatic now, you just, if I didn't come, if for any reason that you're ill or anything, you really miss coming, and you miss the company and friends and that, you know.

Judith

For trigger and serial volunteers then, decisions to (re)engage in volunteering in older age often include a consideration of the social benefits which the individual will acquire from their engagement. As with all of the impulses to volunteer, they are only part of a complex mix of reasons for engaging in formal volunteering (Rochester, 2006), but in some cases – such as feelings of loneliness in retirement or of widowhood – perceived social benefits become particularly influential factors in volunteering decisions.

6.4.4. Conclusion

This section has considered social impulses which contribute to decisions to engage in formal volunteering. It has identified that these vary between those volunteers who have been in a role for a long time – mainly constant volunteers – and those who (re)engage with formal volunteering in older age – serial and trigger volunteers. **Figure 6.16** shows the ways in which the different categories of volunteer expressed social impulses to begin or continue volunteering.

Group of Volunteer	How social benefits impact on volunteering
Constant	For those who have volunteered throughout their adult life and into older age, the VCOs with which they volunteer are often central to their social lives, and have been for many years. While these individuals may not have engaged in volunteering initially for social reasons, the social networks that they develop can be significant in binding individuals to organisations and therefore in providing an impulse for continued voluntary engagement. Organisations which have youth members who go on to become adult volunteers seem to inspire lifelong commitment and such organisations seem to help create strong social ties between their volunteers.

Serial and Trigger	Serial and trigger volunteers who list making social links as significant impulses in their decisions to (re)engage in volunteering seem to consider them in similar ways. Common for both serial and trigger volunteers is that decisions to (re)engage in formal volunteering is motivated in part by social impulses, by a wish to meet new people and extent one's social network. For both groups, there was evidence that those individuals who have engaged in paid work may in retirement volunteer in order to replicate the social benefits that engaging in paid work brings. For some serial volunteers, being widowed had pushed them to re-engage in formal volunteering to make new social contacts.
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Figure 6.16 *How social benefits influence volunteering decisions for constant, serial and trigger volunteers*

For constant volunteers, social benefits were discussed in terms of social links between existing members creating a bond which ties the volunteers to the organisation in older age. For serial and trigger volunteers, the prospect of making such bonds may act as an impulse to (re)engage in volunteering in older age, and may too bind those volunteers to organisations where social links have been made. In **Chapter 7**, communities are considered as an external impulse to volunteer, and here again it is social links, and the benefits that individuals derive from these, which emerge as significant.

6.5. Other Internal Impulses to Volunteer

6.5.1. Introduction

So far this chapter has looked at the three key areas of internal motivation which influence decisions to volunteer: belief in the cause which the VCO supports, a wish to use existing and/or develop new skills and, social impulses to volunteer. These impulses are shown to be significant in the list of internal impulses identified in the Helping Out survey (Low et al, 2007), as shown in **Figure 6.2**. This section looks at those other impulses which were identified by a number of volunteers from the three categories. To do so, it looks at the different impulses that emerged as significant for each of the three categories of older volunteer explored in **Chapter 5**. This section, and indeed this chapter, provides far from a conclusive list of all of the impulses to volunteer identified by the 26 older volunteers who participated in this research. As we have already observed, decisions to volunteer draw on a complex mix of impulses (Rochester, 2006), and no two volunteers will have exactly the same mix and balance of factors influencing their volunteering decisions. Some impulses to volunteer are extremely personal; all of the internal impulses considered in this chapter have been suggested by more than one older volunteer, and in many cases by many other older volunteers. For each of the other impulses for each category of volunteer outlined in this chapter, the experience of one volunteer is outlined, and these are those whose cases best illustrate each impulse. For each instance, how this mirrors the experience of other volunteers in that category will be briefly considered. This section is divided into three subsections, considering in turn the three categories of older volunteer: constant, serial and trigger.

6.5.2. Other internal impulses for constant volunteers

6.5.2.1. Introduction

For constant volunteers, those who have volunteered throughout their adult lives and continue to do so in older age, impulses to volunteer tend to be with regard to continuing their volunteering. This has been the case throughout the internal motivations considered in this chapter, and remains so for the three other significant internal impulses which are considered here: a desire to remain active, the satisfaction which individuals derive from their formal volunteering and formal recognition of voluntary service.

6.5.2.2. Wanting to keep active

In Section 6.3, we saw how individuals often chose voluntary opportunities in older age as a way of maintaining existing skills and learning new ones. Linked but separate to this was a wish among constant volunteers to remain active in a more

general sense – to keep doing something which kept body and mind active. Eric, Olive and David all spoke explicitly about how they saw their continued volunteering as a way of staying active, as the latter explains:

It's a case of being able, I think, at the moment. If for any reason I'm no longer mobile it would make it difficult... but while I am able I feel as if I want to do it, and I believe it helps me stay young as well.

David

This way of talking about keeping active and continuing volunteering – by seeing it in terms of how long one can go on, rather than of (re)engaging in volunteering to maintain an active lifestyle – was common for constant volunteers. For individuals who have volunteered throughout their adult lives, to stop would be a step towards a less active lifestyle, and the wish to put off this change is a contributing factor in decisions to continue engaging in formal volunteering outside of the home.

6.5.2.3. Getting satisfaction from volunteering

Those who are already engaged in volunteering and have been so throughout their adult lives are likely by the time they reach older age to be well aware of the personal satisfaction that they can derive from volunteering. Among serial and trigger volunteers, gaining satisfaction from the outcomes of volunteering undertaken was rarely mentioned, but for constant volunteers it was a commonly stated reason for continued engagement. David, Eric, Amber and Olive all discussed how over the years they have volunteered in situations which have given them great satisfaction, as David's example illustrates:

I think it's the satisfaction of a child who can't do it doing it, be it swimming, be it climbing or whatever... But that's the satisfaction I think, it's you do something for somebody, sometimes you struggle with people, but then the penny drops, great.

David

It is this satisfaction that these individuals derive from helping people through their volunteering which motivates them to continue their engagement in older age. If the satisfaction derived were to change, either because of changes in the organisation or in the nature of the volunteering, there was a feeling among constant volunteers that they would reconsider their involvement, suggesting that this is a significant factor for constant volunteers in their continued volunteering.

6.5.2.4. Awards and recognition

Many organisations have formal systems to reward volunteers for long service, and as a result a number of constant volunteers have received recognition of their long service, as identified by Hardill and Baines (2009) from their qualitative research

with 19 volunteers in the English midlands. This was explained with a great deal of pride; while all were keen to state that they had never volunteered in order to receive an award, for the organisation to recognise them in such a way meant a great deal and served to confirm further their commitment to the organisation. Liam, Olive and Amber all spoke of having been given awards for their long service, and while Amber was keen to downplay the significance of her decorations, it was clearly a source of pride for her, as she explains when describing a trip to a garden party at Buckingham Palace:

When I went down to the garden party, you know, it said 'decorations to be worn' so I wore it down there... Mine is something that's very personal but it's not something I show off. I've got a cloth badge which is on my uniform which tells people I've got the [highest award the organisation gives], but I don't actually wear the award.

Amber

Being presented an award, or the possibility of being so in future, does not in itself act as an impulse for continued participation. Rather, it helps build affinity and a sense of belonging in an organisation – like the social ties discussed in the previous section – and this contributes to constant volunteers' on-going commitment to their organisation(s).

6.5.2.5. Conclusion

This section has considered three other internal impulses to continue volunteering for the constant volunteers who participated in this research. It has shown how a desire to keep active within an organisation, a wish to continue to experience satisfaction from the voluntary tasks undertaken and how the pride and loyalty created by the presentation of awards all contribute to keeping constant volunteers volunteering in older age. Along with the other internal motivations discussed in this chapter and the external motivations discussed in the previous chapter, these contribute to the complex mix of volunteer impulses identified by Rochester (2006). A simplified account of the impulses considered in this section can be seen in **Figure 7.12**.

6.5.3. Other internal impulses for serial volunteers

6.5.3.1. Introduction

Serial volunteers are those who have started, stopped and restarted volunteering across the lifecourse and into older age. As we have seen in the previous two chapters, decisions to volunteer or to stop volunteering are often the result of factors outside of individuals' control. As all of those serial volunteers interviewed are currently volunteering, they have obviously made a decision to re-engage with

formal volunteering, often making this decision in older age. So far in this chapter, we have seen how internal impulses regarding beliefs, skills and social benefits contribute to decisions to re-engage. This section looks at two further impulses which were significant to serial volunteers: volunteering to provide a framework and pursuing interests. Both of these are also considered in Section 6.5.4, as they are also significant for trigger volunteers.

6.5.3.2. *Volunteering to provide a framework*

In **Chapter 5** it was explored how serial volunteering – in effect volunteering with disruptions – was linked to serial engagement with paid employment – a paid career with disruptions. Indeed, of the eight serial volunteers in this study, only two – Iain and Trish – worked full time until retirement. Nonetheless, of the eight, only Pam was not working full time at the time of retirement, and for a number of these, re-engagement with formal volunteering occurred at around the time of their retirement. This clearly relates to the clearing of other commitments, as **Chapter 5** explored, but the decision to re-engage at that time was explained by a number of serial volunteers, including Grace, Judith, Trish and Iain, as being in part motivated by a desire for volunteering to provide them with a similar framework for their time to that which paid employment had provided. Jahoda (1983), Savishnsky (2000) and Barnes et al (2002) all note that older adults may engage in formal volunteering in order to provide routine and structure to their time. Iain explains how it does so for him:

The word framework is crucial. Work provides a framework, you may not like it, but it provides it, and you work round it and your day has, your days your life has structure as a consequence. And I'm trying, I am succeeding I think, I building a structure back into my life.

Iain

Part of the complex mix of impulses to volunteer for serial volunteers is, then, the wish to have a fixed commitment around which their life can be organised. Formal volunteering, rather than other forms of giving, is explained as helping to create this framework.

6.5.3.3. *Pursuing interests*

Common for serial volunteers who engaged in formal volunteering in younger and middle ages was that it often involved engaging with organisations which their children attended or benefitted from. Mother and toddlers groups, sports teams, school activities and other child-related tasks all feature prominently in serial volunteers' volunteering lifecourses. In older age, with children grown up and often left home, these individuals come to a decision to re-engage in formal volunteering

and are now in a position to engage with organisations in which they can pursue roles which relate to their interests. We can reflect back here on the serious leisure approach (Stebbins, 1982; 1992; 2000; 2006), where individuals pursue their interests through volunteering in organisations, participating in order to derive enjoyment and satisfaction through the exploration of things that interest them (Rochester, 2006). Nadia and Helen in particular explained how their volunteering is as much hobby as anything else, with Helen describing how:

Because I've got a canal boat, it's one of my hobbies. And I was really wanting to help preserve and restore the waterways because it is such a fabulous national asset.

Helen

A central part, then, of Helen's impulse to engage in volunteering has been to pursue her interest in canal boats, and while this alone does not explain her decision to volunteer, it has played a significant role in where and how Helen has chosen to re-engage in formal volunteering in older age.

6.5.3.4. Conclusion

Aside from the three groups of internal motivation considered in previous sections of this chapter, only two others were regularly described by the serial volunteers who participated in this study: volunteering to provide a framework and volunteering to pursue one's hobbies and interests. While for serial volunteers these impulses contribute to decisions to re-engage in formal volunteering, the next section will show that for serial volunteers these same impulses contributed to decisions to engage in formal volunteering for the first time. It is possible then to argue that, as with the social benefits considered in Section 6.4, serial volunteers are not particularly different to trigger volunteers in terms of the different impulses to engage in formal volunteering which individual's decisions draw upon. A simplified account of the impulses considered in this section can be seen in **Figure 7.12**.

6.5.4. Other internal impulses for trigger volunteers

6.5.4.1. Introduction

Trigger volunteers – those whose first decisions to engage in formal volunteering are made in older age – have like all volunteers made a decision based on a complex mix of impulses (Rochester, 2006). While constant volunteers' other impulses (beyond beliefs, skills and social benefits) related to impulses to remaining volunteering, for trigger volunteers they relate more to initial decisions to engage. As with serial volunteers, engaging in volunteering to provide a framework for one's time and to pursue activities related to one's interests were

significant, as was a more general desire to keep busy and active. Beyond the initial decision to engage, a feeling that their volunteering was being appreciated also appeared to be significant for trigger volunteers who had only been with organisations a short time. This section considers these four other types of internal motivation to engage in formal volunteering in older age.

6.5.4.2. *Volunteering to provide a framework*

As with serial volunteers, a number of trigger volunteers were engaged in full-time paid employment until their retirement; seven out of the ten trigger volunteers in this study had done so, while of the remaining three one had been principal carer of her seriously disabled daughter and the other two had engaged in full-time paid work until becoming part-time in older age. Again, this resonates with the findings of research by Johoda (1983), Savishinsky (2000) and Barnes et al (2002). Therefore, for similar reasons as serial volunteers a number of trigger volunteers, including Karen, Susie and Betty – all engaged in full-time paid employment up until retirement – explained that their decisions to engage in formal volunteering in older age had been motivated in part by a desire to impose a framework on their time, as Karen explains:

I just wanted something, the volunteering gives a structure to the week as well, so even to get up, you know, something to build the week around.

Karen

As with serial volunteers, a wish to provide a structure for one's time in older age is for trigger volunteers a part of the complex mix of impulses which influence decisions to engage in formal volunteering in older age.

6.5.4.3. *Pursing interests*

Trigger volunteers were also similar to serial volunteers in explaining the importance of being able to pursue their own interests through their formal volunteering, again linking back to ideas of serious leisure (Stebbings, 1982; 1992; 2000; 2006). While serial volunteers may have in younger age volunteered around the interests of their children, for trigger volunteers their first experience of volunteering is often influenced by their own interests. As **Chapter 5** explored, serial volunteers often explained that their other commitments – to paid work, to their family or elsewhere – as having been a barrier to their volunteering in younger age. However, the clearing of these responsibilities does not in itself explain decisions to begin volunteering, as we have seen, and a wish to explore something related to their interests was significant for a number of trigger volunteers;

- **Bill** wished to drive a HGV across Europe, and volunteering with an international aid organisation allowed him to do so
- **Ellie** describes herself as a “*computer freak*” and her volunteering has given her the opportunity to work with different computer systems
- **Graham** has a keen interest in the workings of the law, and has volunteered in two different roles which allow him to explore and experience the legal system
- **Mark** is a keen walker, and is passionate about public rights of way being well looked after, and volunteers for a charity which does so

For Bill and Graham in particular, that their volunteering allowed them to explore something of interest to them was probably the most significant influence on their decision to volunteer. In describing his decision to volunteer for an advocacy organisation and a victim support group in his retirement, Graham mentioned five separate times how this related to his interest in law:

Before I retired my mind was clear that I was interested in legal things.

I’m interested in the law and that’s a sort of legal aspect but there’s a lot of legal in it anyway... people buying crap stuff, you know, and there’s neighbourhood disputes. In fact you could say there’s a whole lot of law in there.

...I’m interested in the law as a pure thing... in the law per se... so victim support is the same kind of idea, you know.

I’ve been interested in victim support... I’m interested in the law, done a lot of law courses.

Everything is guided by the interest in law, you see.

Graham

For Graham, being able to explore his interest in law is clearly demonstrated by this group of quotes as being the principal impulse which pushed him to engage in formal volunteering. For Bill too, other external and internal factors will have been significant in the decision to volunteer, but their interests were central. While for other trigger volunteers interests may play a smaller role in their mix of volunteer impulses, it is nonetheless a significant factor for a number of trigger volunteers.

6.5.4.4. Wanting to be busy and active

We saw in Section 6.5.2 that constant volunteers often describe their continued engagement in formal volunteering in terms of a desire to stay active. For trigger volunteers, who have not previously been engaged in formal volunteering, a number explained that their decisions to participate was in part motivated by a wish – following retirement from paid work and/or other commitments – to remain active. What is considered here is not a specific wish to continue using certain

skills, but rather a more general wish to engage in a voluntary role which keeps an individual active. This is closely related to some of the other internal impulses identified in this chapter: the aforementioned skills, but also to social benefits and to volunteering in order to provide a framework. Yet a number of trigger volunteers identified a desire to keep busy and active as an impulse to volunteer in itself: Mark, Susie and Betty all refer to it, and it can be part of the complex mix of impulses to volunteer. Shortly after her retirement from paid employment, Betty moved from a large city to a smaller one and explains that:

...I thought I'm going to have to do something, so I came to the hospice to offer my services to volunteer... it wasn't until we moved here and I wasn't working that I thought, this sitting at home and cleaning every day is not a good thing, you need to be doing something else.

Betty

Similar to serial volunteers, then, trigger volunteers often find that when their paid commitments cease and domestic responsibilities become less consistently demanding of their attention, they find that volunteering helps them to (re)build an active lifestyle in their older age. As such, it is a part – sometimes a small one, but often significant – of the complex mix of impulses which contribute to decisions to volunteer (Rochester, 2006).

6.5.4.5. Being thanked

In Section 6.5.2.4, it was noted how the presentation of awards to constant volunteers who have given long commitment to organisations was part of helping to create a sense of loyalty and belonging. For trigger volunteers, who by definition have not been with organisations for such long periods, the giving of formal awards is rarer. However for some trigger volunteers, more informal ways of recognising the contribution they make can be important in encouraging continued participation. For those who are making their first steps into volunteering in older age, their being thanked by the organisation can be important to reassure them that their volunteering is worthwhile and is being appreciated. Betty and Susie in particular emphasise this, with Susie describing how:

...when you come here everyone bends over backwards and at the end of the day working as a volunteer they're all saying thank you very much, you know, how would we manage without you, they just make you feel so worthwhile, and you are part of the team.

Susie

That the organisation goes out of its way to make clear to the volunteer how grateful it is for their time and effort helps volunteers to know that what they are doing is helping. For those taking a step into the unknown by volunteering for the

first time in older age, this can be important in ensuring their longer-term engagement.

6.5.5. Conclusion

This section has looked at the other internal factors impacting on older adults' decisions to volunteer, and has presented for each of the three categories of older volunteer outlined other common reasons which were cited for engaging in formal volunteering in older age. **Figure 6.17**, below, outlines these for the three groups of volunteers.

Group of Volunteer	What other internal factors influence volunteering decisions?
Constant	Constant volunteers speak in terms of wishing to continue volunteering in order to stay active by maintaining their past volunteering. Stopping volunteering is felt to be a step towards a more sedentary lifestyle, and as such something to be avoided. Having volunteered for long periods, volunteers know the satisfaction that can be derived from their work, and so are keen to continue this. Many organisations reward long-term volunteers, and while not an impulse in itself, this can foster further loyalty to organisations and so further motivate constant volunteers to remain engaged.
Serial	While serial volunteers often also have periods inside and outside of the paid workforce over the lifecourse, the majority in this study were working full-time for the decade prior to retirement. For a number of them, their decision to re-engage in volunteering in retirement was explained in part by a wish to impose some structure on their time. Much of the volunteering serial volunteers undertook in younger and middle age was oriented towards the needs of their families, and their volunteering in older age offered the opportunity to explore organisations and roles which linked more clearly to their own interests than their previous volunteering.
Trigger	Similar to serial volunteers, a number of trigger volunteers had been in full-time paid employment prior to retirement, and view volunteering in retirement as a way of imposing a framework on their time. Similar too to serial volunteers is

	<p>the importance of interests, and indeed for trigger volunteers this would seem to be even more significant; for many trigger volunteers it would seem that their volunteering allowing them to explore a new or longstanding interest was a central impulse to their decision to begin volunteering. A desire to do something which enables individuals to stay busy and active was also expressed, with individuals explaining decisions to begin volunteering in terms of having meaningful things do in older age. Finally, while not an impulse for beginning volunteering, being thanked and appreciated by the VCO emerged as important in terms of decisions to remain volunteering as time goes by. For those individuals whose first experiences of volunteering are in older age, being told that their time and effort is appreciated means they are more likely to continue to engage in volunteering.</p>
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Figure 6.17 *How other internal impulses influence volunteering decisions for constant, serial and trigger volunteers*

For volunteers across all three categories, a desire to keep active and/or to maintain a framework for one's time emerged as important factors in continued or new engagement in formal volunteering. For serial and trigger volunteers, taking on new voluntary roles in retirement allowed individuals to explore their interests – old or new – in a setting where support was provided and where their interests could be put to good use. Being appreciated in some way, be it formal recognition through awards and certificates or informally through the giving of thanks to volunteers, emerged as factors which tie volunteers to organisations, particularly constant and trigger volunteers in this study. These findings conclude the analysis of internal impulses to volunteer explored in this chapter.

6.6. Conclusion

This chapter has looked at how internal impulses to volunteer impact upon how and why individuals engage in formal voluntary and community activities across the lifecourse and into older age. Using the heuristic established in **Chapter 5** – of constant, serial and trigger volunteers – it has built upon the existing research in this area by exploring how the nature of an individual's volunteering across the lifecourse influences why and how they engage in formal volunteering at different times across the lifecourse.

Each of the four sections which make up this chapter – on beliefs, skills, sociability and other internal impulses – has concluded with a table which outlines how the influence of that particular set of impulses differs across the three categories of older volunteer. **Figure 6.18** is the conclusion of the analysis undertaken in this chapter. It is produced from analysis of the 26 older volunteers who participated in this study. Throughout this chapter we have explored case studies and observed patterns which illustrate how engagement in formal volunteering occurs and changes across the lifecourse. From these case studies, each section has built towards a set of observations about how that group of internal impulses impacts upon the engagement of the three categories of older volunteer. And from these sections comes the analysis contained in **Figure 6.18**. **Figure 6.1**, at the start of this section, demonstrates how internal impulses – the will to volunteer – is central to volunteering decisions. As was explored in **Chapter 5**, individuals can only volunteer when they feel that their paid work (when relevant) and their household composition allows them the time to do so. We saw that this is the basis of the pyramid of volunteering decisions that **Figure 6.1** presents. If individuals have the time, they next need to have the will, the desire to engage in formal volunteering. **Chapter 5** explored the differences between the three categories of volunteer in terms of TSOL composition across the lifecourse. This chapter, as summarised by **Figure 6.18**, has explored the differences between the three in terms of internal impulses. We now, then, have the second layer of the pyramid in place.

The analysis shown here, when added to that summarised in Figure 5.18, at the end of the previous chapter, moves us closer to understanding how the ways in which constant, serial and trigger volunteers engage in formal volunteering varies across the lifecourse. The next chapter develops this further by looking at the third and final component in our model of volunteering decisions: external impulses to volunteer.

	Beliefs	Skills	Social Benefits	Other Rewards
Constant	Often constant from childhood, reflecting the influence of parents. Experiences as a child/young person often influence volunteering.	Role replacement from paid work is not significant in general. Some constant volunteers transfer skills between VCOs, as do some serial volunteers.	Constant volunteers make friends through volunteering, and these help bond them to VCOs. Certain types of VCO in particular have strong social ties.	Continued volunteering is part of keeping active. Volunteers want to continue to derive satisfaction from the work they do. Awards can help foster loyalty.
Serial	Beliefs may be constant, but may also change over time as a result of life events. Beliefs do not always matter as much as the tasks in making decisions to volunteer.	A degree of role replacement following retirement from paid work, both in similar roles and in different ones, but not for all serial volunteers. Some skill transfer between roles.	For both serial and trigger volunteers, a wish to expand one's social network in older age is a common reason for (re)engaging in formal volunteering. Often serial and trigger volunteers who	Volunteering can be a way of giving a structure to one's time in retirement. In older age, serial volunteers can follow their own interests, rather than those of their children/family.
Trigger	Similar to serial volunteers, with new beliefs often influencing volunteering. Even more so than for serial volunteers, beliefs are often not central to decisions to engage in volunteering.	If trigger is retirement, role replacement and continued skill use is sometimes significant. However, triggers are very diverse and often skills are not a significant impulse.	have been in paid employment wish to replicate the social benefits that this has provided. Widowhood can act as a trigger to volunteer to make new social contacts.	Volunteering may be a way of structuring time, and of staying busy. Following interests is often significant, in some instances the main trigger. Being thanked helps retention.

Figure 6.18 *How internal impulses influence volunteering decisions for constant, serial and trigger volunteers*

7. External Reasons for Volunteering

7.1. Introduction

In **Chapter 5**, a framework was developed for understanding the ways in which older adults engage in formal volunteering. In **Chapter 6** we looked at what internal impulses push the three different categories of older volunteer to begin, resume or continue volunteering in older age. The previous two chapters, then, have explored two of the three sections of the diagram shown in **Figure 7.1**, as introduced in **Chapter 5**.

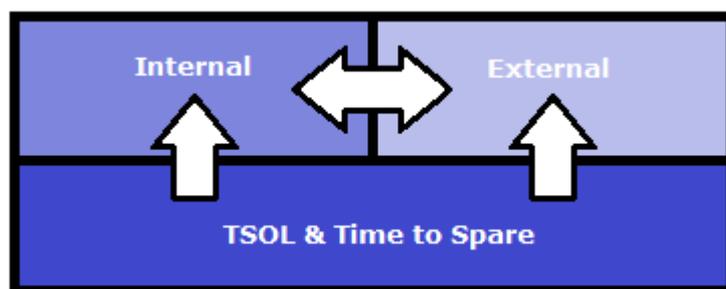


Figure 7.1 *Factors influencing volunteering decisions*

This chapter builds on this further by exploring how reasons for volunteering may come from factors external to the individual; they help pull individuals into engaging in volunteering. In doing so, it explores the third and final section of **Figure 7.1**, explaining the different factors which make up volunteering decisions across the lifecourse and into older age. It will look at how decisions to volunteer are motivated by what Lukka and Locke (2007) in their qualitative study of religious volunteering in England and Woolvin (2011) in his qualitative study of informal volunteering in Scotland, have conceptualised as external motivating factors. In doing so, it answers the third and final research question posed in the introduction to this thesis:

When older adults reflect on their volunteering, what external factors do they cite for participating, and how do these reflect their experiences across the lifecourse?

External impulses are situational factors which provide the context in which decisions to volunteer are made. Decisions to engage, or not to engage, in formal volunteering may be influenced by external factors and events (Elder et al, 2003; Bäckman and Nilsson, 2011). Decisions which individuals make, facilitated by free time and based on internal impulses, cannot be separated from the social context in which they occurred (Musson, 1998; Hardill et al, 2007), and this chapter explores these external impulses. As in the previous chapter, **Figure 7.2** shows those impulses to volunteer from Helping Out (Low et al, 2007) which can be considered external in light of the definition proposed in **Figure 3.5**, and how relevant each are for individuals of all ages.

Reason for Volunteering	Percentage of all Volunteers
Connected to family/friends' interests	29%
There was a need in the community	29%
Family/friends do it	21%
No one else to do it	13%

Figure 7.2 *External reasons for volunteering* (Low et al, 2007)

As with internal motivations, many external motivations remain broadly constant across the lifecourse, although some do change in importance as individuals age (data from Low et al, 2007). Volunteering in activities connected with the interests of family and/or friends understandably peaks in importance in middle age before declining in older age (**Figure 7.3**), responding to a need in the community increases gradually through middle and into older age (**Figure 7.4**), family and friends being involved remains relatively stable across the lifecourse (**Figure 7.5**) and there being no one else to fulfil the role increases in importance in late-middle age, before declining slightly post-65 (**Figure 7.6**). This section explores how the impulses raised as significant by the constant, serial and trigger volunteers who participated in this research reflected these reasons, and how these differed between the three categories of older volunteer.

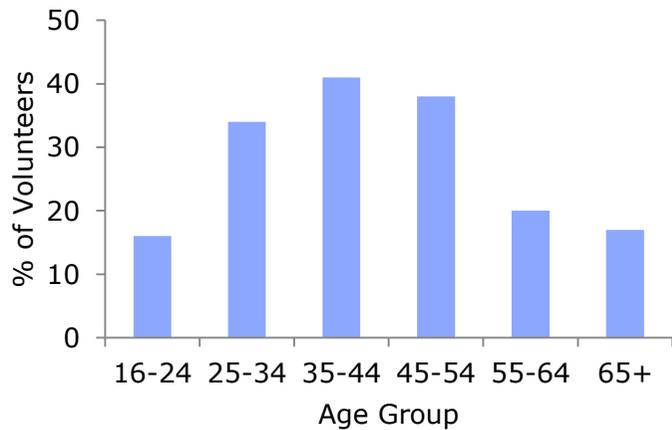


Figure 7.3 *Connected with needs, interests of family or friends*

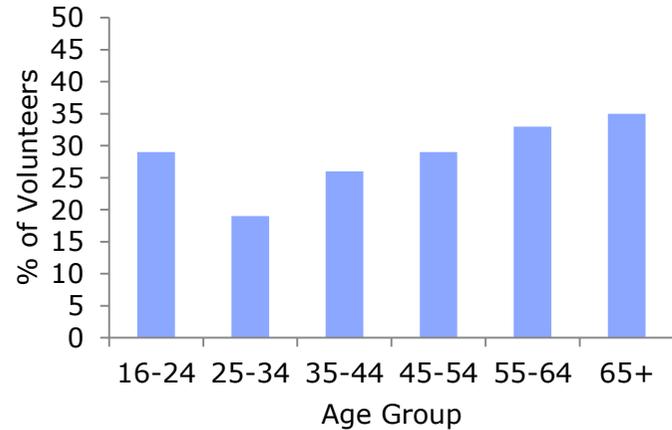


Figure 7.4 *There was a need in the community*

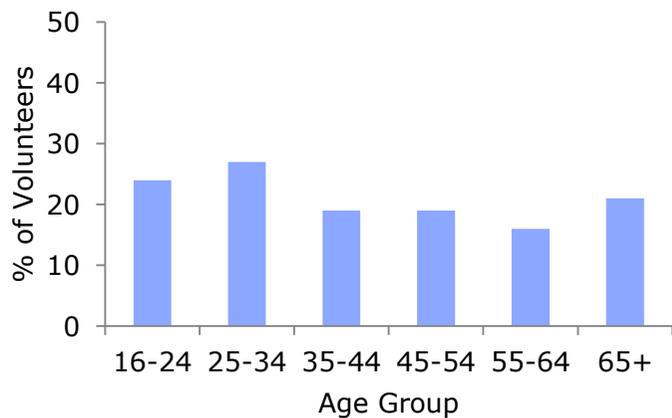


Figure 7.5 *Family, friends did it*

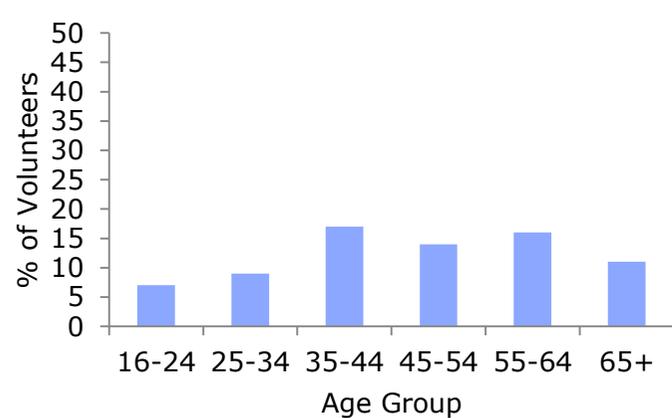


Figure 7.6 *No one else to do it*

By the conclusion of this chapter, and therefore of the three analysis sections, we will have seen how the circumstances – the TSOL – that paid work and domestic responsibilities provide facilitate volunteering, how an individual’s internal motivations push them to volunteer in certain ways at certain times, and how external impulses contribute to volunteering decisions across the lifecourse and into older age. In order to do so, this chapter first looks at how family – where relevant – impacts upon engagement in formal volunteering, particularly looking at how an individual’s child(ren) impact upon what volunteering they engage in. It next looks at how individuals come to be approached by their peers within communities of place and/or of interest, and how the nature of the approach and the response to it differs between constant, serial and trigger volunteers. It lastly looks at when individuals engage in a voluntary role because they feel, or are made to feel, that there is no one else to do it. Each chapter uses the same heuristic established in **Chapter 5** and utilised throughout **Chapter 6**: constant, serial and trigger volunteers experience these external impulses in different ways, and this chapter explores these ways, building towards a picture of how external impulses impact upon the three categories of volunteer.

7.2. Volunteering with and for Family Members

7.2.1. Introduction

Volunteering connected to the interests of an individual's family or friends was the joint most commonly cited external impulse volunteer identified by Low et al (2007), with 29% of all volunteers citing it. As well as this, 21% of all volunteers reported engaging in volunteering because their family and friends were doing it (Low et al, 2007). This section looks at the ways in which the activities, needs and interests of family members influence how and why individuals volunteer across the lifecourse and into older age. In **Chapter 5**, household composition was explored as a significant factor in facilitating or constraining engagement in formal voluntary and community activities. Nearly all constant and serial volunteers engaged in volunteering to some extent while they had dependent children living at home, while the majority of trigger volunteers did not. In Section 2.4, in which the concept of the lifecourse was explored, it was observed that different elements of life needed to be understood together, and that transitions such as parenthood had significant impact on volunteering (Dykstra and van Wissen, 1999; Mayer, 2004; Bailey, 2009). As such, this section looks not at how household composition affects an individual's ability to engage (which **Chapter 5** covered), but how the activities, needs and interests of family members influence how and why individuals engage. It takes a similar format to that adopted in **Chapter 6**, looking in turn at how family and friends' interests and hobbies impact upon how and why constant, serial and trigger volunteers' engagement across the lifecourse and into older age. Before beginning, it is necessary to state that not all individuals have a nuclear family or children, and for these the impact of family on volunteer decisions may be different or not so relevant; of the 26 older volunteers who participated in this study, 23 were parents and all bar one had been married at some stage in their lives.

7.2.2. Constant volunteers: children attend where parents volunteer

As explored in **Chapter 5**, constant volunteers are those individuals who have given very long, often lifelong, service to a particular organisation or organisations. **Chapter 6** outlined how constant volunteers' engagement in VCOs often begins at a young age, in many cases before the volunteer marries and starts a family (if indeed they do at all). The pattern that emerges from the constant volunteers who participated in this research is that volunteering began before the interests of family became relevant, and as such engaging in formal volunteering because of the interests of one's children is less relevant. This is not to say, though, that constant volunteers did not volunteer for organisations that their children and/or spouse attended. Indeed, given that many of the constant volunteers who

participated in this research were engaged with organisations either wholly aimed at young people (Amber, David, Eric and Fiona) or with a branch of the organisation aimed at young people (Nicholas, Olive and Ruth), it is no surprise that of those to whom this applies who have had children (all bar Olive) have encouraged their children to attend the organisation with which they volunteer.

Eric and Amber, both volunteers with a uniformed youth organisation, introduced their own children to their respective organisations. In both cases, the example that they set to their own children by volunteering led to some of their children transitioning from youth members to adult volunteers, just as they had previously. Both of Amber's daughters attended her organisation as youth members before going on to be leaders, while one of Eric's three children – all of whom were youth members – has gone on to be an adult leader:

My two daughters, because they came with me so often, both got involved and they became leaders; and they both married [organization] people. So, we're a [organization] family...

Amber

In my own case we've got a boy and a girl and a boy, and the boy was in [the organisation], did ok, did pretty well, then joined young farmers and then followed a route that developed from there. The daughter was in [the organisation] and she's followed things from there. Our youngest son was in [the organisation] and then when he got to the age of 14 15 whatever it was he said to hell with it, I don't want anything to do with it.

Eric

Rather, then, than children encouraging their parents to volunteer in organisations they attend, as we will see in the next section, for constant volunteers it is common for their children to participate in organisations because their parents are volunteering for them. Having their children also involved in the organisation, the family sharing their participation in it, often subsequently as adult volunteers themselves, is part of the ties which continue to bind constant volunteers to organisations across the lifecourse and into older age.

When a constant volunteer's child begins attending the organisation at which the parent volunteers, the parent volunteer is faced with a decision as to whether to volunteer alongside their child, or to move to a different role in the organisation in which they do not come into direct contact with their own child. Fiona made the decision to temporarily volunteer with younger children when her own were babies, as she explains:

I always used to deal with the 5 to 7 year olds way back when and I liked the 5 to 7 year olds. But then different churches do things at different ages. And I had a spate of working in the crèche when my children were babies.

Fiona

Once her children were older, Fiona returned to volunteering with her preferred age group. Ruth, on the other hand, made the decision to avoid her children when they were attending the organisation she volunteers with, as she explains:

I made sure that they were too old to be in my group, and I made sure my youngest, I've got two children, I made sure the youngest one moved up before I took over trying to teach them.

Ruth

A constant volunteer's family members attending their organisation may, then, result in them choosing at that time to change roles, either to be with or avoid their own kin. This change may be temporary, as in Fiona's case, or more permanent, as in Ruth's.

Constant volunteers, as shown in **Figure 5.6**, may also have patterns of serial and trigger volunteering across their volunteer lifecourses, and here Nicholas – a constant volunteer on a local carnival committee – demonstrates how a constant volunteer can as a result of his family's activities, needs and interests also be a serial volunteer at a certain time. As he explains:

...our two sons, for about 10 years I basically had no weekends because I used to run the boys' football team.

Nicholas

Nicholas ceased this once his children had grown up and no longer played in youth sports teams, a serial volunteering pattern which ran alongside his constant volunteering. While his constant volunteering did not directly relate to his family's activities, interests or needs, he took on other roles that did for a period of time.

This section has shown that constant volunteers rarely begin volunteering because of their own children's interests, but that children participating in organisations with which their parents volunteer is more common. In some cases, children will go on to become adult volunteers themselves, and this can serve to add further to the ties that constant volunteers have to their organisations. When an individual's child(ren) begin volunteering with the organisation with which they volunteer, the individuals have to make decisions of whether to volunteer alongside their own children, or whether to deliberately avoid working with them. There is no significant pattern to these decisions, and from how constant volunteers explain

them, they often relate to the specific context and character of the individuals involved. Some constant volunteers take on new roles in other organisations, based on what their family are participating in at that time.

7.2.3. *Serial volunteers: parents volunteer where children attend*

Serial volunteers are those who have volunteered intermittently across the lifecourse, engaging for periods of time and then disengaging, before re-engaging in older age. Davis Smith and Gay (2005), when proposing the threefold typology of older volunteers on which this research is based, note that serial volunteers typically may have first engaged in formal volunteering when their children were born. This is supported by the literature explored in Section 3.2.4, with research from both England (Halfpenny and Reid, 2002) and from the USA (Morrow-Howell, 2010) finding that individuals with young children are likely to be embedded in social networks with other parents which often lead to engagement in formal volunteering. As such, it is unsurprising that for serial volunteers, many of the first decisions to volunteer came about as a result of the activities, needs and interests of an individual's child(ren). This section looks at the two main types of organisation in which individuals may be encouraged by their children's activities, needs and interests to volunteer: school and out of school clubs. It concludes by looking at how the impact of family member's activities, needs and interests wanes as children grow and enter older age whether or not engagement with these organisations continues.

Volunteering at the school which an individual's children attend emerged as a common way by which serial volunteers engage in formal volunteering, in many cases for the first time. Laura, Iain and Nadia all volunteered at their children's school, in three quite different roles. Laura and Nadia provided hands-on support to paid staff, during a period when they were not engaged in paid work, as explored in Chapter 5. Laura explains that she:

...did some volunteering at my daughter's school, listening, that sort of thing...

Laura

Nadia similarly volunteered at her children's school by giving cookery lessons:

...I used to take, at primary school I used to take children for cookery classes, which was also voluntary

Nadia

Iain's volunteering, while also at the school which his children attended, was constrained by his paid work, as explored in **Chapter 5**, which meant he was unable to volunteer during school hours. Instead, Iain volunteered as a school

governor at his children's primary school for six years, becoming chairman of governors by the end of his time volunteering with them. Laura, Nadia and Iain all ceased volunteering as their children became older. For Laura and Nadia, whose ability to volunteer in their children's schools had been facilitated by their not being in paid work at that time, their stopping this volunteering was in part the result of returning to paid work. The return to paid employment does not alone explain the decision to cease volunteering around their children, though, as Nadia explains:

...I suppose, yes, there was the secondary school, still fairs and that type of thing, but not so much. It tails off, as my children got older it tailed off. The children never really had to say anything [to make us stop]. We just did that.

Nadia

Iain's ceasing to be a governor at his children's school coincided not just with them moving on to secondary school, but also with his divorce from his first wife. His reasons for stepping down as a governor were therefore more complex than simply his children leaving the school, but that he was no longer volunteering in support of his children was a factor in his decision to cease at that time.

Out of school clubs also emerged as a significant site for serial volunteers engaging in order to support their children's activities, needs and interests. While volunteering at one's children's school tended to be undertaken when children were very young, volunteering with clubs and organisations which they belong to tends to be more common as children grow older and develop interests outside of school. In the previous section we saw how Nicholas, a constant volunteer, has also volunteered with his children's sports clubs. Similar to this, serial volunteers Grace, Judith and Trish all engaged in volunteering with organisations which at that time their children were participating in. Grace and Trish both volunteered at swimming clubs their children attended, volunteering while their children were members there and ceasing to do so as a result of a mix of reasons, including their children leaving the organisation and a return to paid work, and for Grace the added disruption of divorce. Judith volunteered at the same organisation (in a different area) as constant volunteers Amber, David and Eric, but whereas they had been volunteers with the organisation since before they themselves had children, for Judith it was her daughter's participation in the organisation as a youth member which led to Judith's engagement as a volunteer:

When my daughter was in the [uniformed youth organisation] I became a [youth leader], and, oh yeah, we spent quite a lot of time in [that organisation]... Of course my [daughter] says oh my mum will do that sort of thing, so I gave them a lift there and a lift back, that's how it all

started. And then [the leader] said, came up to me one day and she said, I'm sure you'd like to go into uniform and blah blah blah, you know.

Judith

Judith's daughter only attended the organisation for two years, but Judith remained volunteering there for a further six years after her daughter had moved on. While Judith's initial reason for engaging in volunteering at this time in her life was her daughter, her continued volunteering with them after her daughter had left was because she found that she enjoyed the volunteering because of the internal impulse of enjoyment:

I loved it. And they, as I say, I was a [leader] and I've still got my badges and my tie and my hat and everything. Yeah, and I loved it, you know.

Judith

This serves to highlight the complex mix of impulses which contribute to decisions to begin and continue volunteering: Judith's initial decision was based on the external influence of her daughter's participation and her being asked by an existing volunteer, while her continued volunteering after her daughter leaving was based on her enjoyment of the role. Her eventual decision to cease was not based, therefore, on her daughter leaving but on another factor, her return to paid employment following her husband's early retirement due to ill health.

This discussion of how family – in particular young children – acts as an external impulse to engage in volunteering has mostly concentrated on younger and middle age, when the individuals who participated in this research were most likely to have young children. We have seen from the cases looked at in this section that all of these volunteers have subsequently ceased volunteering in the organisations they joined thanks to their children, more often once their children moved on but sometimes later. These, then, are in general fairly transient voluntary roles, and the serial volunteers considered here have all taken on new voluntary roles in older age linked more to their own internal impulses, as considered in [Chapter 6](#). For Iain, though, the volunteering he did connected to his children in younger age has impacted significantly on one of the roles he has taken on in older age: he has returned to his children's old school. He explains that when he started looking for new voluntary roles in his retirement, his initial motivation was simply to be a school governor again, and that he did not mind which school he volunteered for. However, once he started looking:

...I eventually narrowed it down with the local authority as to where there might be a vacancy, I said look I'd love to go back to [his

daughter's school], and they said well there will be a vacancy, and that really solidified by commitment, cos I love that school and I was really committed to it, I thought it was a great school, my daughter had a terrific time there and I thought I'd like to catch up with it, see how things are going and contribute again.

Iain

Iain's second spell volunteering as a governor was not motivated by his daughter being at that school, unlike the first time he volunteered there, but their positive experiences at the school played a part, alongside a complex mix of other internal and external impulses, in his decision to re-engage in volunteering there.

Serial volunteers, then, often engage in formal volunteering in younger and middle age to support, or indeed at the behest of, their children. There are two principle types of organisations in which such volunteering is undertaken: in schools and in out-of-school clubs. In general, this volunteering is fairly short-term; the majority of the serial volunteers considered in this section ceased their volunteering with these organisations after their children had left, with only Judith an exception to this. An individual's child leaving the organisation is not generally the only reason for ceasing volunteering there, but is often a contributory factor. Of the serial volunteers discussed here, only Iain has returned to the same organisation to volunteer in older age. All of the serial volunteers considered here have taken on new roles in older age which are unrelated to the children or family's interests, and which reflect other internal and external impulses to volunteer.

7.2.4. Trigger volunteers: volunteering comes after children leave home

Trigger volunteers are those individuals whose first experiences of volunteering have come in older age. For the trigger volunteers in this sample, none of these triggers in older age related to the activities, needs or interests of the individuals' family, be that children or spouse. Other sections in **Chapters 6** and **7** have explored the complex mix of impulses which lead individuals to engage in formal volunteering, and for trigger volunteers, supporting the activities, needs or interests of family were not relevant. Susie, who began volunteering in older age as an administrative assistant for a large ecology organisation, explains why she did not engage in volunteering when she had a young family:

I think it's, if your partner or, the people who matter to you, if they were involved in something, if it was a family thing and you all went off and did your thing together or your, I don't know, your charity shop stuff, whatever someone had an interest in, or you helped run the football club. If you're all doing it it's ok, but when you don't have a lot of spare

time cos you're working full time, you want to spend that time with the people you like, and if they're not committed to the same things you are, or you're not committed, you tend not to do those because you think, me, I'd rather be at home with them, or out with them or whatever.

Susie

It is not, then, that Susie's children did not engage in hobbies or interests, but that these were not things she was interested in, and so she spent the little time that her paid work afforded her doing the things which she and her family could all share. Volunteering was not a part of this. Trigger volunteers, unsurprisingly, rarely explained why they had not volunteered when their children were young, but Susie's explanation is clearly distinct from those seen in the previous section for serial volunteers.

In **Chapter 5** we saw how trigger volunteering is often facilitated by the clearing of other responsibilities and tasks – paid work, household tasks – and therefore children are unlikely to be present in the home when decisions to volunteer in older age are being made, and so their activities, needs and interests do not emerge as significant factors in determining how, where and why to volunteer in older age.

7.2.5. *Conclusion*

The principal distinction which this section has presented is that constant volunteers generally encourage their child(ren) to volunteer in organisations in which the parent is already active, while serial volunteers generally are encouraged by their child(ren) to volunteer in organisations in which the child(ren) are already active. Decisions to volunteer by trigger volunteers tend not to be related to the activities, needs and interests of family members. The analysis that this chapter has undertaken is simplified in **Figure 7.7**, which takes the same approach to summarising the different nature of impulses to volunteering for the three categories of older volunteer as was used in **Chapters 5** and **6**.

Group of Volunteer	How family activities impact on volunteering
Constant	Constant volunteers tend to be volunteering before they have children, and in many cases before they marry (if applicable). As a result, constant volunteers tend to encourage their children to attend organisations at which they already volunteer. In doing so, some constant volunteers have found that their children themselves subsequently become volunteers with that organisation, and as a consequence further bind their parent to the

	<p>organisation through the family ties. Another consideration occurs when an individual's children begin attending an organisation, with the parent forced to consider whether to volunteer directly with their children, or to avoid their children and volunteer in a different part of the organisation. Both of these options may require a change of role, and this change may be temporary or permanent. Constant volunteers may also engage in periods of serial volunteering connected to the interests of their children, which they cease when their children cease the activity.</p>
Serial	<p>Serial volunteers tend to begin volunteering in organisations and roles related to the activities, needs and interests of their children. Their family acts as the impulse to volunteer at that time, and generally the family member(s) ceasing that activity leads to the adult volunteer also ceasing to be involved. This is not always the case though, and the volunteer may return to this organisation and/or role in older age. Having a child involved in the organisation is a very significant impulse for serial volunteers in younger age, but it does not seem to continue to impact significantly into older age.</p>
Trigger	<p>Trigger volunteering tends to be facilitated by the clearing of other responsibilities (see Chapter 5), and central to these is children leaving home. As such, the activities, needs and interests of family tend to not be important for trigger volunteers. Indeed, none of the trigger volunteers who participated in this research reported that the activities, needs and interests of their children impacted how, where and why they volunteered in any way.</p>

Figure 7.7 *How beliefs influence volunteering decisions for constant, serial and trigger volunteers*

The experiences of individuals from the three categories of older volunteer are, then, quite different in terms of how family members influence decisions to engage in formal volunteering across the lifecourse and into older age. This reflects when individuals from each of the three categories have first engaged in formal volunteering; for constant volunteers who have engaged prior to starting a family children are likely to attend organisations where their parents volunteer, for serial volunteers whose first volunteering occurred when they had young children the

needs and interests of their children were often central to volunteering decisions, while for trigger volunteers for whom first experiences of volunteering came in older age children were not significant influences on volunteering decisions.

7.3. Community

7.3.1. Introduction

Volunteering in a response to a need in the community is an external impulse to engage in volunteering identified by 29% of all volunteers (Low et al, 2007), and this rises in older age, as shown by **Figure 7.4**. The term 'community', as discussed in Section 3.4, is a contested concept, with multiple meanings, beyond the designating of individuals who inhabit a particular geographical area (Crow and Allen, 1994; Hardill and Baines, 2011). Putnam (2000) highlights the wide range of communities – embedded to a greater or lesser extent in some geographical locality – which give their members a sense of belonging and of shared experiences, norms and values. In Section 3.4, we saw how two different forms of community have been identified; communities of place and communities of interests. While these two concepts of community are not exclusive – place and community groups can coincide (Hardill and Baines, 2011) – this chapter looks at external impulses to volunteer in terms of communities of place and communities of interest. The members of these communities – of place and of interest – may become active as volunteers within them, giving time and effort to support them (Hardill and Baines, 2011), having been invited by word of mouth and other forms of peer invitation (Davis Smith and Gay, 2005).

The heuristic that this analysis has used – of constant, serial and trigger volunteers – declines in significance for community-based impulses to volunteer. Volunteers of all three categories reside in communities of place and although they may be engaged with them to a greater or lesser extent, an invitation or request to volunteer from a member of one's territorial community can play a significant role in an individual engaging in a formal voluntary role. Similar, the vast majority of individuals are engaged to some extent in a community of interest, be it a church community, a sports club or some other interest-based group or organisation. This section considers, then, how older adults come to be invited and/or asked to volunteer through communities of place and/or of interest. The first section looks at communities of place, and briefly details case studies of a constant, a serial and a trigger volunteer who have been encouraged to engage in volunteering by others within a community of place. The second section takes the same format, looking again at brief case studies of individuals from each of the three categories of volunteer and how they have come to be engaged in formal volunteering through invitations/requests from those in a community of interest in which they are engaged.

7.3.2. *Communities of place and volunteering*

In Section 3.4.3, we saw how Phillipson (1998) and Hardill (2003) note that older people are more likely to have lived in the same community of place for a number of years, and as such may have a large social network in that community. Indeed, it is noted that older adults are often the 'social glue' which binds communities together, and as such this section's analysis of how older adults come to be engaged in voluntary roles through external impulses rooted in communities of place is necessary. While Lowe and Speakman (2006) note that retirement is often a trigger for migration, of the 26 older volunteers in this study, only one made a significant migration in older age, with the remainder staying in the same geographical area and remaining in the same communities.

7.3.2.1. *Constant volunteers and communities of place*

In **Chapter 5** we explored the case of Eric, a constant volunteer with a uniformed youth organisation, both at a local level in his home village and at a county level. Eric has, along with his wife, lived in the same village for over 30 years, having moved there with his wife early in their marriage, noting that after that length of time "*you're almost accepted as local*". Around 5 years ago, prior to his retirement from full-time paid work, he was asked by the trustees of his village's hall committee if he would join the board of trustees, to help with raising funds and to be a keyholder. Eric notes that:

As far as the connections with the village community are concerned, I've been living at the same place for 30 odd years, and I suppose because of connections with [uniformed youth organisation] locally that's led to connections with other organisations and so I've often been invited to get involved in other things, and that's led to things within the village

Eric

By being visible as a volunteer in his community, Eric has found himself being invited to take on other voluntary roles. He notes that, "*...it's daft when you do things that you get asked to do other things as well...*" but it is nonetheless the case that by being visible in the community has led to Eric being asked to take on new roles.

7.3.2.2. *Serial volunteers and communities of place*

Trish is a serial volunteer, having engaged with a range of organisations over her lifecourse, her engagement changing in response to other commitments, consistent with the analysis in **Chapter 5**. Two years after her retirement from her paid employment, and having lived in the same village with her husband for around 20

years, Trish came to be involved with an organisation which collects and delivers gift packages overseas at Christmas. Her involvement came about due to a Methodist Church in her home village – a church which Trish herself does not attend, and therefore a community of interest to which she did not belong in a community of place in which she did – appealing for help, as she explains:

The people in the village at the Methodist Church were involved and told villagers about it, and the woman who was collecting the boxes was, is, older than me and lived in an old people's bungalow and found she hadn't got room, she was the collecting point for other people. Yes, so I had room to store and just got involved from there really.

Trish

Rather than being invited to engage because of an existing profile as a volunteer in her local community of place, Trish responded to a request for help from a group within her local community. Unlike Eric, for whom being embedded in the community for a long period was crucial in his being asked to take on a new role, Trish becoming involved did not reflect so much her embeddedness in the community (although she was) as her responding to a need in the community and her history of volunteering when able to do so.

7.3.2.3. Trigger volunteers and communities of place

The example of Ellie proves that it is not necessary to be visible as a volunteer in a community, as in Eric's case, or with a lifetime of engagement in volunteering, as in Trish's case, for being embedded in communities of place to lead to invitations and requests to volunteer. Ellie has also lived in the same village for a long period – in her case over 40 years – but has until recently been unable to be involved to any great extent in village activities, due to her caring responsibilities for her seriously disabled daughter. It was explored in Section 6.3 how using skills acts as an internal impulse to engage in volunteering, and Ellie's decision to accept an invitation to edit the village magazine was motivated by a wish to use her computing skills. She was invited – and thus given the chance to use these skills – by a fellow member of her local community, as she explains:

...we have a newsletter, the [Village] Newsletter, and I've been the editor for the last 15 years... the person that was doing it, she'd taken over a shop in the village, and she couldn't carry on any more. And she asked if I'd like to take over, which I did.

Ellie

While Ellie had up until this invitation not undertaken any formal volunteering, her being part of a community of place meant she had social contacts who invited her to engage. That it was a small community of place meant that the contact who

invited Ellie to edit the magazine was fully aware of her home situation and caring commitments, and therefore to invite her to take on a role in the village which she could do from home while caring for her daughter.

7.3.3. *Communities of interest and volunteering*

Also in Section 3.4.3, we saw how being part of a social group or organisation – a community of interest – was often a way in which individuals come to be engaged in voluntary roles in older age (Davidson et al, 2003). It explored that not only do individuals often stay involved, or become involved, with these organisations in older age and retirement, but they are often also able to give more time to them, because of the free time created by the changing of circumstances explored in **Chapter 5** (Gergen and Gergen, 2003). This section, then, explores how being a part of communities of interest in older age can present an individual with external impulses to volunteer.

7.3.3.1. *Constant volunteers and communities of interest*

Liam and his wife are members of a national heritage organisation, frequently attending properties owned and maintained by the organisation and participating in events organised by the organisation. At one of these at a properties near to their home, a few years after his retirement from paid work, Liam and his wife were approached and asked if they would, as a long-time members of the organisation, be prepared to volunteer at this property:

And we went to an evening at [the property], when it's normally not open, for a walk around to see the specimen trees and whatever. And they mentioned there that they were looking for volunteers in all sorts of spheres, like in the kitchen, in the shop, on the kiosk... And then they said they wanted this garden looked after, as they only had a couple of full-time staff, and I volunteered really at that meeting.

Liam

As a member of the organisation, it was clear that Liam and his wife supported the work that it did, and when this invitation was made, and with the free time afforded by retirement and the internal motivations of a belief in the cause and a wish to learn new skills, they took up the invitation to volunteer within a community of interest for which for many years they had been members but not volunteers.

7.3.3.2. *Serial volunteers and communities of interest*

A serial volunteer, Laura was active in volunteering when her daughter was young – as explored in the previous section – but had to cease volunteering once she returned to paid work following her divorce and as her daughter grew older. She

re-engaged in formal volunteering by engaging with a canal heritage society once her daughter had left home. Laura was a member of the canal heritage society because she and her second husband own a canal boat, and it is one of their hobbies. In Section 6.3.3 we saw how Laura has used some of the volunteering she does with the society as an antidote to her paid work. However, following her retirement, Laura took on other roles within the organisation – a community of individuals with a shared interest in canals and canal boats – as a result of being asked by others within the organisation:

I went onto the committee of [canal heritage society], I was asked to become a director of the [organisation] and I ran it as volunteer project manager for about three years.

Laura

Again, Laura's ability to accept this request was the result of her being retired from paid work, and her being in a position to be asked to take on the role the result of her interest in canal heritage. Nonetheless, it took an invitation from within Laura's community of interest for her to take on the role of volunteer project manager with the organisation.

7.3.3.3. Trigger volunteers and communities of interest

While he is a trigger volunteer, Jack and his wife have throughout their married life been members of a church community in the city in which they live. During his time in paid employment, Jack had turned down opportunities to volunteer for and through the church, wanted to spend what free time he had with his adopted children (**Chapter 5**). In retirement, Jack was able to accept a request from a fellow member of his church to take over his place on the rota for helping at a homeless shelter run by a group of churches in the city. Since this, Jack has been invited to take on further roles within the church, and has been in a position to accept, and alongside the homeless shelter he also volunteers through the church on a number of committees.

7.3.4. Conclusion

This chapter has looked at how being part of a community can lead to individuals being invited to engage in formal volunteering. It has looked at the two broad definitions of community; communities of place and communities of interest (Hillery, 1955; Webber 1964; Lee and Newby, 1983; Willmott, 1986; 1987; 1989). The six brief case studies presented in this chapter suggest that, while being asked by a fellow community member can be a significant external impulse to engage in formal volunteering, individuals will only accept the invitation if they have the free time (**Chapter 5**) and have internal reasons for participating (**Chapter 6**);

- Eric had turned down a number of requests to volunteer in the village before he agreed to be a village hall trustee.
- Trish could only offer to help collect Christmas shoebox donations because her children had left home, leaving her with the space at home to store the boxes.
- Ellie was invited, and able, to edit the village magazine because a peer in her community knew she would be able to fit the role in with her caring responsibilities.
- Liam and his wife have for a long time been members of a national heritage organisation, but had not engaged with it as volunteers until they were invited to do so during a members-only event at a nearby preserved property.
- Laura has a passion for canals and canal boats, and had volunteered as a manual worker while still in paid work. In retirement she was asked to become a volunteer project manager by a peer within the organisation.
- Jack and his wife have been attending a church in their home city throughout their married life, but only since retirement has Jack been in a position to accept invitations to volunteer through and for the church.

Communities are, therefore, an important way in which individuals become aware of opportunities to engage in formal volunteering. In the case of communities of place and of interest, an individual's decision to accept an invitation to volunteer depends on whether they have the time to do so, and whether they have sufficient internal impulses to push them to undertake that role. Nearly all of those interviewed for this thesis reported having engaged in informal volunteering in their local community across their lifecourses. Common examples of this were visiting neighbours and clearing litter from communal land: informal activities which are less reliant on a regular or large time commitment. However, as this falls outside of the parameters of this study, this informal voluntary engagement has not been considered here.

Group of Volunteer	How community impacts on volunteering
Constant	Constant volunteers are often recognised in their communities as being active volunteers, and as a result may be approached by people who see them as 'active' individuals. As such, constant volunteers may have to turn down a number of invitations to volunteer with different organisations in communities of place or interest, and those that they do take up will be the result of their having the time and internal impulses to engage in that role and that

	time.
Serial	Serial volunteers may, like constant volunteers, be recognised in the communities of place and of interest as individuals who are likely to be open to requests to volunteer. However, if they have not volunteered for some time this may not be relevant, and it may be that their membership of communities of place and/or of interest may offer the social links which lead to them being invited to re-engage in formal volunteering.
Trigger	Non-volunteers are still often embedded in communities of place and of interest, yet for a variety of reasons have not previously engaged in formal volunteering. When a request is made of them to volunteer they must weigh up whether they have the necessary time to undertake the role. If they do, they must next decide if they wish to take on that role and that time.

Figure 7.8 *How community influences volunteering decisions for constant, serial and trigger volunteers*

While the analysis in this section has been undertaken in terms of the framework of constant, serial and triggers volunteers, it is not possible to observe significant differences between the three groups in terms of how communities of place and interest influence decisions to engage in voluntary roles. For all three groups, individuals may have been a part of a community of place and/or of interest for many years prior to their beginning volunteering with it: they will only do so when they have the time and inclination to engage. Nonetheless, some broad differences can be observed between the different groups, as **Figure 7.8** has outlined.

7.4. No one else

Sometimes individuals are asked to volunteer because there is no one else – in an organisation or a community – to do that role. Low et al (2007) report that 13% of all volunteers report that there being no one else to do a role was a factor in their decision to engage in a voluntary role. **Figure 7.6** suggests that the importance of this as an impulse to engage in volunteering peaks during middle age, although it remains relatively significant for volunteers in older age. Of those volunteers who participated in this research, individuals from all three categories of volunteer lifecourse – constant, serial and trigger – reported initially engaging with an organisation or changing roles within one because there was nobody else prepared to do the role. However, there are not significant patterns from this data in terms of whether the different categories of volunteer experience this external impulse differently; although individuals who cited this as a reason for volunteered tended to already be volunteering with that organisation, but this could apply to all three categories of older volunteer.

Two constant volunteers – Nicholas and David – discussed taking on roles in older age because there was no one else to do them. Nicholas was all set to step down from one voluntary role – chairman of the local carnival committee – but was persuaded to continue the role:

So I did it, but basically I just knew people really and you can't let them down really cos it's sort of nobody wants to do it...

Nicholas

David's experience was that he felt forced to take on a role because its previous incumbent moved away, and he had to do the role on an interim basis until a permanent replacement was found. These two examples are connected by the request having come from within an organisation with which the individual was already volunteering, albeit coming in quite different circumstances. However, this was also the case for serial volunteer Iain, who as a school governor was asked to sit on the finance committee, "*because no other bugger would go on*". It is perhaps interesting that Iain, like Nicholas, describes this taking on of a new role in negative terms. This maybe also explains why few volunteers in this study discussed there being no one else to do a role as a reason for engaging in volunteering. Indeed, Ruth too when discussing why she became treasurer of a women's group notes that she took on the role because, "*it was either that or close it down*". Clearly to be asked to take on a role from within an organisation because there is no one else to do it only applies to those individuals already volunteering. Only one trigger volunteer noted it as an impulse for engaging in a role, and in Mark's case it was

because nobody else in his small community of place had the necessary skills (see Section 6.3) to take on that role.

There being nobody else to do a role, then, may be a relatively commonly cited reason for engaging in formal volunteering (Low et al, 2007), but among the volunteers in this survey it was rarely discussed. When it was considered part of the complex mix of motivations which come together to influence the decision to volunteer, it was generally considered in broadly negative terms, something which an individual had to do, rather than wanted to do. This section does not conclude with the table which the previous sections in this and the preceding two chapters have concluded with, as there is not enough data to draw any conclusions as to the differences between constant, serial and trigger volunteers with regards volunteering because there was no one else to do that role.

7.5. Conclusion

This chapter has looked at how external impulses to volunteer impact upon how and why older adults engage in formal voluntary and community activities. This section, then, has explored the third section of the diagram shown in **Figure 7.1**. Having the space to volunteer among commitments (where relevant) to paid work and to the household (**Chapter 5**), having the desire to engage in formal volunteering (**Chapter 6**) and external impulses to engage (this chapter) combine to make up decisions to volunteer. The latter are often central to the “why now” of volunteering decisions. All decisions to engage in volunteering occur in a context beyond simply having free time and wanting to get involved. Individuals are embedded in family relations and in communities of place and of interest, and into social relations in which they may be asked – in some cases quite persuasively – to engage in a particular role. This chapter has analysed the nature of these relations and how they impact upon how, when and why constant, serial and trigger volunteers engage with formal volunteering. As in **Chapter 6**, this chapter concludes with a table which summarises the analysis contained within this chapter and how it has explored the ways in which individuals from the different categories of volunteer are influenced by external impulses. **Figure 7.9** summarises the analysis contained in the three sections of this chapter. Individuals who respond positively to these external impulses – who go on to volunteer for the first time, to return to volunteering or to take on new roles – must have the lower two layers of the pyramid in place in order to do so. They must have the space, and the desire, if they are to accept the invitation to volunteer.

	Family	Community	No one else to do it
Constant	Tend to be volunteering before they start a family, with children likely to participate where parents volunteer. Often children of constant volunteers become constant volunteers themselves. The parent must decide whether they want to volunteer with their child or not.	Constant volunteers are often recognised in their communities of place or interest as being 'active' individuals, and are therefore likely to be asked to volunteer. They may turn down invitations to volunteer, and those they do accept will be the result of their having the time and will to engage.	Generally these are expressed in quite negative terms as reasons to volunteer, with some individuals from all three categories of volunteer engaging for these reasons. The way in which they were discussed suggested individuals were often to an extent unhappy at being compelled to take on roles in this way, but nonetheless did so out of a sense of obligation to an organisation and/or community.
Serial	Often begin volunteering journeys in organisations related to their children's activities. The child acts as the impulse to volunteer, and often an individual will cease volunteering with that organisation once their own child outgrows it.	Serial volunteers may also be recognised as active individuals in their communities of place or interest. However it may be that their membership of communities of place and/or of interest may present the social links which lead to their being invited to re-engage in formal volunteer.	
Trigger	Trigger volunteers tend not to engage in roles which reflect the needs, interests or activities of their families, as often children will have moved out of the family home prior to the individual beginning volunteering.	Non-volunteers are still embedded in communities of place and/or of interest, yet for a variety of reasons have not previously engaged in formal volunteering. They may have turned down requests from within these communities in the past, and now feel they have the necessary time and internal motivations to engage in the role.	

Figure 7.9 *How external impulses influence volunteering decisions for constant, serial and trigger volunteers*

The needs and interests of family members, **Figure 7.9** outlines, clearly impact upon individuals in the different categories of older volunteer in different ways. This reflects the stages of life at which individuals from the different categories first volunteered: constant before marriage and starting a family, serial while they have young children and trigger in older age once children have left home. Distinctions between the different categories are less clear for community impulses to volunteer, although differences exist where some individuals are visible within communities as active volunteers, while others are not. Volunteering because there was no one else to do it, when expressed, seemed to be considered a relatively negative reason for volunteering, and was cited across all three categories of older volunteer. This now concludes the analysis chapters of this thesis, and the next chapter draws together this analysis to conclude the thesis.

7.6. Reflecting on Analysis

Research, and the writing-up of research, is a series of compromises and choices regarding the best possible method or term to use. At the end of the analysis sections presented in this thesis, it is worth reflecting on the terms used through this analysis and how suitable they are for the phenomena they seek to describe (Schön, 1983; Rolfe et al, 2001). In terms of describing why individuals come to engage in formal volunteering, the words 'motivation(s)' and 'impulse(s)' have been used in this work. While motivation(s) and impulse(s) have both been used they have not been used interchangeable. Rather, motivation(s) has been used to refer to a broad set of reasons for engaging in volunteering, while impulse(s) has been used when referring to a particular trigger or set of triggers to volunteer at a given time. This terminology, though, is far from perfect. All that I can claim is that they are the best terms I have so far come up with – while this PhD thesis is written the work contained in it remains a work in progress and if I can find a better way of expressing the reasons why people volunteer, I will. Perhaps the most challenging terminology in this thesis is the dichotomy between what Lukka and Locke (2007) call 'internal' and 'external' impulses to engage in formal volunteering. I found this framework very useful in understanding why and how individuals go about engaging in formal volunteering, but the terms and the arbitrary distinction they make still troubles me. I have sought to recognise this by heeding Rochester's (2006) call to view decisions to volunteer as being made up of a large and unique range of impulses, but still the rigidity of Lukka and Locke's (2007) remains very simple for what is a very complex issue. Again, though, it is the best framework and terminology I could find for looking at what I very simply saw as reasons for volunteering which come from within a person and reasons which were prompted by something or someone other than the volunteer themselves. Consistent with the feminist epistemology drawn on throughout this thesis, I have sought to be reflective on my use of terminology and the impact it has on the data presented. I hope I have done that here, and have reflected on the troublesome nature of all terms and language, and how all I can aspire to is to use least troublesome terms I can find.

8. Conclusion

8.1. Introduction

There is no single answer to the question of why and how older adults engage in formal volunteering; different experiences across the lifecourse result in unique patterns of engaging in formal volunteering. The experiences of the 26 older volunteers interviewed for this thesis, while each unique, can nonetheless be placed into three broad patterns of volunteer journey. These patterns, proposed by Davis Smith and Gay (2005), allow for an exploration of the differing volunteering histories of older adults who are engaged in formal volunteering in older age. However, the model which Davis Smith and Gay proposed did not take into account the wide range of circumstances across the lifecourse which impact upon individuals' engagement in formal volunteering. This research makes an original contribution to knowledge by adopting a lifecourse perspective (Hareven and Adams, 1982; Katz and Monk, 1993) and employing the Total Social Organisation of Labour conceptual framework (Glucksmann, 2000; 2005) in order to develop Davis Smith and Gay's heuristic to take into account the wider circumstances which influence decisions to engage in volunteering across the lifecourse and into older age. The research questions that the analysis in this thesis has sought to answer take the development of Davis Smith and Gay's (2005) heuristic as their starting point, and use the understanding that this brings to explore the reasons why individuals engage in formal volunteering across the lifecourse and into older age.

In **Chapter 5**, the first research question was considered;

What is the impact of the mix of different work commitments across the lifecourse on individuals' participation in formal voluntary and community activities, and does this change in older age?

The data collected allowed a heuristic to be developed which explored differences in volunteer engagement to be within a wider context of individuals' experiences, across the lifecourse and into older age. The heuristic established and explored in **Chapter 5** provided the framework for the second two research questions being

answered. In **Chapter 6**, the data collected in this thesis enabled the second research question to be explored:

When older adults reflect on their formal volunteering, what internal impulses do they give for participating, and how do these reflect their experiences across the lifecourse?

When making decisions to begin or continue volunteering, individuals consider not just their internal reasons for engaging, but are also subject to external factors which encourage them to engage in formal volunteering. In order to explore this, **Chapter 7** considered the third and final research question using the gathered data;

When older adults reflect on their formal volunteering, what external factors do they give for participating, and how do these reflect their experiences across the lifecourse?

These three chapters together have helped to produce an overview of the volunteering experience across the lifecourse and into older age from constant, serial and trigger volunteers. In doing so, it has explored each of the three sections shown in **Figure 8.1**, which together produce the volunteering decisions that individuals make across the lifecourse.

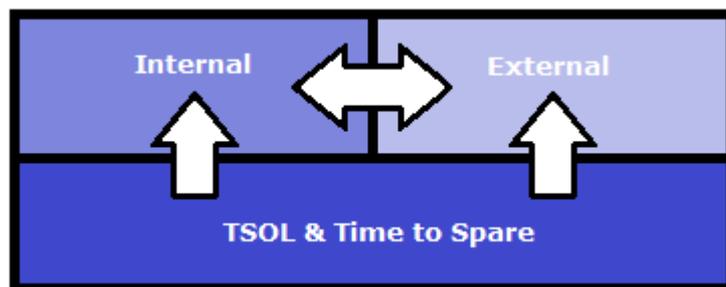


Figure 8.1 *Factors influencing volunteering decisions*

At the base of the diagram, and fundamental to any decision to volunteer, is the composition of an individual's and household's TSOL. Without the free time to engage in formal volunteering, individuals will not engage and this can be seen from the experiences of serial and trigger volunteers in particular. If the time to engage is available, individuals will then only volunteer if they have the internal impulse to do so, and in all likelihood some external factor(s) guide them(s) towards a particular role or organisation.

8.2. Previous Research and Gaps

This research draws from a wide range of social science literature, from across a range of disciplines including, but not limited to, sociology, social policy, psychology, human geography and social anthropology. Although this research is multi-disciplinary in terms of the conceptual base it draws upon and contributes to, it is situated primarily within the sociology discipline, drawing on and contributing to a body of work which is concerned with the actions of individuals and groups. Previous literature was reviewed in order to produce a theoretical framework for this research to be conducted and analysed, and to review what has already been researched and presented about volunteering in older age, and what has not. Therefore, through this thorough review of existing literature, gaps were identified in the literature on volunteering in older age, with these gaps guiding the research design.

This thesis is situated within and has drawn consistently from a feminist body of social science research, and the theoretical framework proposed is consistent with this. In **Chapter 2** I explored the two fields of literature which underpin this research by situating volunteering in older age within wider work relations across the lifecourse and into older age. In their 2005 qualitative research and report on volunteering in older age for the Joseph Rowntree Foundation, Davis Smith and Gay introduced a heuristic of older volunteer types, based on volunteering history. This approach of situating older age volunteering within patterns of engagement across the lifecourse is consistent with the lifecourse approach outlined in **Chapter 2** (Hareven and Adams, 1982; Katz and Monk, 1993). However, while Davis Smith and Gay (2005) propose this heuristic, they do not develop it significantly in their work, leaving a gap in terms of understanding how and why these patterns of volunteering engagement occur, and how they continue to impact on volunteering engagement in older age. The lifecourse approach and Davis Smith and Gay's (2005) heuristic provide a framework for understanding these patterns of engagement, but in order to understand how other work and non-work activities undertaken by the volunteer and other members of their household impact on participation in formal volunteering TSOL conceptual framework was adopted (Glucksmann, 2000; 2005; Taylor, 2004; 2005). This approach calls for different work activities to be considered relationally, rather than in isolation. The work of Taylor in particular has been central to the research presented in this thesis, calling as it does for volunteering to be situated within wider work relations. This research, then, has sought to expand significantly on the heuristic proposed by Davis Smith and Gay (2005), drawing upon lifecourse and TSOL approaches to look at how the wide range of work relations in which an individual is embedded across

the lifecourse – not just their own, but those of their household too – impact upon the extent and nature of their engagement in formal volunteering.

Also in **Chapter 2** a simple dualism for understanding was introduced which has been central to the way in which the wide range of reasons that individuals give for participating in formal volunteering are understood. Lukka and Locke (2007) and Woolvin (2011) distinguish between internal and external factors which impact upon whether individuals engage in formal volunteering at a particular time. Internal factors draw upon personal interests, beliefs, skills and abilities, while external factors are the context in which volunteering decisions are made, in terms of the household and the communities in which an individual is embedded. Rochester (2006) calls for recognition that each volunteering decision involves a complex combination of different internal and external factors; this research has sought to explore how these internal and external factors are influenced by experiences in volunteering and other roles across the lifecourse and into older age. **Chapter 3** reviewed a range of different internal and external factors which influence volunteering which previous research has identified, and also identified gaps in the existing body of literature. There is a tendency in previous research on reasons individuals give for engaging in formal volunteering towards quantitative studies which establish relationships but not causality. Missing from bodies of work on the links between parent and child volunteering, between parenthood and volunteering and, between the nature of paid employment and the nature of volunteering undertaken are rigorous qualitative pieces of research which investigate the causal links between volunteering and other factors. This research has sought to take a lifecourse approach to investigate these gaps, looking at links between different roles across the lifecourse. **Chapter 3** established the factors influencing volunteering decisions and the contexts in which they occur; in relation to the family and the household, linked to paid employment and other work roles and linked to communities of place and interest in which an individual is embedded. These allowed for the analysis undertaken in this thesis to compare some findings with previous research, and for other findings to work towards explaining links made in previous research but not supported by rigorous qualitative data.

8.3. Reflecting on Gender

In Chapter 2 I set out how this thesis draws on feminist epistemology in order to explore volunteering across the lifecourse and into older age. Analysis of the lifecourse drew on the work of Hareven and Adams (1982), Katz and Monk (1993) and others to argue that studying life stages in isolation fails to recognise the rich diversity of experience, a recognition which initially arose from the rejection of women's assumed roles and life stages and the call for a more fluid understanding. Also calling for a broader understanding is the work of Glucksmann (1995; 2000) and Taylor (2004; 2005), which argues that traditional analyses of work have prioritised paid employment (traditionally the domain of men) over unpaid employment in the home or elsewhere (traditionally the domain of women). Glucksmann argues that this should rather be seen as a complex complementary mix in which different work roles – paid and unpaid, public and private – interrelate and depend upon each other. The bringing together of these two feminist frameworks for understanding volunteering across the lifecourse can be seen most obviously in Chapter 5, with the lifecourse diagrams visually representing lifecourses and the mix of work roles across them, while the analysis in Chapters 6 and 7 builds on this within the same feminist framework. However, the analysis undertaken in this thesis, while explicitly feminist, does not dwell extensively on gender. While there is a gender bias in volunteering – the 2007 Helping Out survey (Low et al) found that 43% of women and 35% of men were regular formal volunteers – this work did not seek to explore this or the reasons behind it.

However, some gender-related issues have emerged in the analysis. In terms of the categories of older volunteer – constant, serial and trigger – it emerged that constant volunteers were much more likely to be men and serial volunteers more likely to be women. This reflects how the nature of these volunteers' journeys mirror gender-specific patterns across the lifecourse; for serial volunteers first volunteering often occurs when young children are attending crèches or pre-school, but may cease when children are older and the mother resumes full-time paid employment. Childrearing would appear to have less impact on men's volunteering, and therefore the mainly male constant volunteers were able to carry on volunteering before and during parenthood. This pattern is also seen in terms of the impact of family, children in particular, on volunteering. For the mostly male constant volunteers, the volunteering often comes before children are old enough to be involved, and so children are likely to attend as users the activities at which their parents volunteer. For mostly female serial volunteers, children can be a trigger, with parents often volunteering with organisations which their children attend, or volunteering to form organisations for their and other children if none

exist. These observed gender patterns, though, are tentative. They are observations rather than clear patterns, and the extent to which gender is the primary cause of these differences has not been explored here. No clear gender patterns were found in terms of the way beliefs, skills and role replacement or community affect volunteering across the lifecourse and into older age – in all cases both women and men engaged for a wide range of reasons. Feminism in this thesis has provided a framework for understanding, but gender has not been at the centre of what I was seeking to understand.

8.4. Developing a Heuristic: Constant, Serial and Trigger

The first research question posed by this thesis prompted investigation of the ways in which formal volunteering is facilitated and constrained by other work commitments across the lifecourse and into older age. Through in-depth qualitative interviews with 26 older volunteers, ranging in age from mid-50s to mid-80s, 16 female and 10 male, the data gathered supported Davis Smith and Gay's (2005) heuristic of constant, serial and trigger volunteers. The 26 classified using these three categories, with eight constant volunteers (four women and four men), eight serial volunteers (seven women and one man) and 10 trigger volunteers (five women and five men). For each volunteer, volunteering engagement was mapped across the lifecourse alongside household composition (represented by marital status and dependent children) and engagement in paid employment. The patterns which emerged for the three categories of older volunteer are outlined in the three sub-sections which follow.

8.4.1. Constant volunteers

Constant volunteers are those individuals who have been engaged in formal volunteering throughout their adult lives, usually – but not always – with the same organisation. This engagement continues into older age. These individuals may change roles within the organisation across the lifecourse, depending on their circumstances, and may join and/or leave other voluntary organisations. For most constant volunteers, voluntary engagement is often mirrored by constant engagement in paid work across the lifecourse, and while this was not the case for all constant volunteers, it was the case for seven of the eight constant volunteers in this sample. Across the lifecourse, the demands of paid work sometimes impact upon the extent and nature of formal volunteering for constant volunteers, causing periods of decreased activity, but never causes volunteering to cease completely. Domestic stability also emerged as significant for constant volunteers, with none in this sample having been divorced and only one widowed. This stability was explained as having helped create the conditions for constant engagement in formal volunteering, often for both partners in the relationship. Children living at home, for those constant volunteers who were parents, did have some impact on the extent or nature of engagement in formal volunteering, but do not cause it to cease. For all constant volunteers who had been in paid employment, retirement from this and the clearing of day-to-day childcare responsibilities had allowed for an increase in the time given to formal volunteering, and had in some cases led to new roles being taken on.

8.4.2. *Serial volunteers*

Serial volunteers are those individuals who have engaged in formal volunteering intermittently across the lifecourse, engaging when circumstances allow, but also having periods when they do not engage. Some may stop engaging with an organisation at some point and later re-engage with the same organisation, while others may engage with different organisations at different points across the lifecourse, related to other lifecourse events occurring at that time. Engagement in paid work is also serial for some serial volunteers, with periods out of the paid workforce often being periods when formal volunteering can be undertaken. Even though most had spent some time out of the paid workforce across their working lives, due in part to all but one serial volunteer in this sample being women with children, the majority of serial volunteers in this sample were working full-time in early-older age, prior to retirement from paid employment. Serial volunteers first engagement in formal volunteering often occurs while they have young children, their engagement ceasing for a period when children are teenagers but then recommencing when children leave home, and in the years before or after retirement. Significant for serial volunteers was the impact of divorce, which led a number of serial volunteers to cease volunteering in the immediate aftermath of their separation, as they dealt with adapting to a new household structure and a new routine.

8.4.3. *Trigger volunteers*

Trigger volunteers are those individuals whose first experiences of volunteering come in older age. Among the ten trigger volunteers who participated in this thesis, there was a significant variation in the number of volunteer roles they had undertaken since their initial engagement in older age, and the time commitment they gave to those roles. Therefore, while trigger volunteers are all individuals who have not engaged in formal volunteering prior to older age, there is a large diversity in volunteering experiences in older age among them. Many of the trigger volunteers who participated in this research were in full-time paid employment throughout their adult lives, or had full-time domestic commitments. Trigger volunteers explained that these activities had placed limits on their time such that they had been unable to give up what free time they had in order to engage in formal volunteering in younger age. Retirement, then, was frequently cited as a trigger to engage in formal volunteering for the first time. There is little pattern of household structure having a particular impact on this category of volunteers; trigger volunteers come from stable households, divorced couples and from single-person households. What is relevant instead is that these individuals feel that their

paid work and/or domestic responsibilities have, until the trigger, prevented them for engaging in formal volunteering.

8.5. Why Volunteer?

The second and third research questions sought to build upon the heuristic developed in **Chapter 5** to examine the reasons why individuals engage in formal volunteering in older age, and how this reflects experiences across the lifecourse. This was consistent with the broad approach advocated throughout this thesis, arguing that individuals' volunteering in older age is subject to influence from experiences in all spheres of life – family, paid employment, leisure activities and more – across the lifecourse. **Chapter 6** dealt with the second research question posed in this thesis, looking at how internal factors – as conceptualised by Lukka and Locke (2007) and Woolvin (2011) – impact upon decisions to engage in formal volunteering, and how these differ between the three categories of older volunteer explored in **Chapter 5**. Internal factors explored in this chapter were the link between beliefs and volunteering, how skills developed across the lifecourse influence volunteering decisions and, the extent to which the perceived social benefits of volunteering acted as factors for initial or continued participation. **Chapter 7** dealt with the third research question, looking at how external factors impact upon decisions to engage in formal volunteering, and again at how these differ between the three categories of older volunteer. External factors explored in this chapter were the influence of family members – particularly those in the same household – on engagement in formal volunteering, how embeddedness in communities influences volunteering decisions and, how individuals may feel – or be made to feel – that they must undertake a voluntary role because there is no one else to do it. This section of conclusion looks in turn at internal and external factors influencing volunteering decisions, concluding the answers proposed in this thesis to the second and third research questions.

8.5.1. Internal impulses to volunteer

8.5.1.1. Constant volunteers

For constant volunteers, the beliefs which influence volunteering decisions have generally been constant since younger age, often from childhood. Formative experiences emerge as important and for a number of individuals their volunteering in older age could be linked back to parental influences and from activities undertaken and organisations engaged with in childhood. Linked to this, organisations which have youth members who go on to become adult volunteers seem to inspire lifelong commitment and such organisations seem to help create strong social ties between their volunteers. For those who have volunteered throughout their adult life and into older age, the organisations with which they volunteer are often central to their social lives, and have been for many years. While these individuals may not have engaged in volunteering initially for social

reasons, the social networks that they develop can be significant in binding individuals to organisations and therefore in providing an impulse for continued voluntary engagement. For those who have volunteered throughout their lives, volunteering as role replacement in older age is less significant. Yet that is not to say it doesn't occur, and the contrast between Eric's role continuation and Nicholas' deliberate change suggest that no clear pattern is visible. The cases of Olive and Ruth using similar skills in a number of voluntary roles suggests that constant volunteers are likely to develop skills through volunteering which they can use elsewhere, although this may also be the case with serial volunteers. Constant volunteers speak in terms of wishing to continue volunteering in order to stay active by maintaining their past volunteering. Stopping volunteering is felt to be a step towards a more sedentary lifestyle, and as such something to be avoided. Having volunteered for long periods, volunteers know the satisfaction that can be derived from their work, and so are keen to continue this. Many organisations reward long-term volunteers, and while not an impulse in itself this can foster further loyalty to organisations and so further encourage constant volunteers to remain engaged.

8.5.1.2. Serial volunteers

While some beliefs for serial volunteers are constant, others emerge or decline in importance across the lifecourse. Significant events and other experiences can change beliefs and contribute to impulses to volunteer in different ways at different times; divorce, parenthood, widowhood and other experiences may all be significant. For some individuals, beliefs may not be all that important an influence on their choices to volunteer. There are suggestions of a degree of role replacement for serial volunteers who re-engage in volunteering in the aftermath of retirement, and decisions to re-engage in volunteering in retirement were also explained in part by a wish to impose some structure on one's time. Other serial volunteers, though, have re-engaged prior to retirement, so clearly volunteering to use existing skills or learn new ones in retirement is not always a significant impulse. For serial volunteers who move between different voluntary organisations across the lifecourse there is likely to be a degree of skill-sharing, but this study did not find sufficient evidence of this. Serial volunteers' decisions to re-engage in formal volunteering in older age were in some cases motivated by social impulses and a wish to meet new people and extend one's social network, and there was evidence for those individuals who have engaged in paid work, that in retirement they may use volunteering to replicate the social benefits that engaging in paid work brings. For some serial volunteers, being widowed has pushed them to re-engage in formal volunteering to make new social contacts. Much of the

volunteering serial volunteers undertook in younger and middle age was oriented towards the needs of their families, and their volunteering in older age offered the opportunity to explore organisations and roles which linked more clearly to their own interests than their previous volunteering.

8.5.1.3. Trigger volunteers

For trigger volunteers, similar to serial volunteers, life events may result in changing beliefs which in turn influence volunteering decisions. However, for a number of trigger volunteers, beliefs are not particularly important, with other factors being described as more significant in making decisions to volunteer. Indeed, volunteering may not be undertaken in order to help the VCO and the recipients of its care, rather to meet some other need on the part of the volunteer. Where the trigger is retirement, a desire to continue using skills learnt in paid employment or to learn new skills may be significant. However, the nature of the triggers for these volunteers were highly diverse, and while using existing or learning new skills were significant for some volunteers, there was no significant pattern across the ten trigger volunteers in this sample. Similar to serial volunteers, initial engagement in formal volunteering in older age is motivated in part by social impulses, by a wish to meet new people and extend one's social network and there was evidence for those individuals who have engaged in paid work that in retirement they may use volunteering to replicate the social benefits that engaging in paid work brings. Linked to this, for a number of trigger volunteers who had been in full-time paid employment prior to retirement view volunteering in retirement as a way of imposing a framework on their time. A desire to do something which enables individuals to stay busy and active was also expressed, with individuals explaining decisions to begin volunteering in terms of having meaningful things do in older age. Undertaking volunteering to pursue one's own interests emerged as particularly significant impulse for trigger volunteers: for many it would seem that their volunteering allowed them to explore a new or longstanding interest and that this was a significant factor in their decision to volunteer. Finally, while not an impulse for beginning volunteering, being thanked and appreciated by organisations was cited as important in terms of decisions to remain volunteering. Particularly for those individuals whose first experiences of volunteering are in older age, being told that their time and effort is appreciated means they are more likely to continue to engage in volunteering.

8.5.2. *External impulses to volunteer*

8.5.2.1. *Constant volunteers*

For those constant volunteers with a spouse and children, they are often, but not always, volunteering before they have children, and in many cases before they marry. As a result, constant volunteers often encourage their children to attend organisations at which they already volunteer. In doing so, some constant volunteers have found that their children themselves subsequently become volunteers with that organisation, and as a consequence further bind their parent to the organisation through the family ties. This in some cases presents a situation when an individual's children begin attending an organisation, with the parent forced to consider whether to volunteer directly with their children, or to avoid their children and volunteer in a different part of the organisation. Both of these options may require a change of role, and this change may be temporary or permanent. Constant volunteers may also engage in periods of serial volunteering connected to the interests of their children, which they stop when their children move on from that activity. Individuals in this category are often recognised in their communities as being active volunteers, and as a result may be approached by people who see them as 'active' individuals. As such, constant volunteers may have to turn down a number of invitations to volunteer with different organisations in communities of place or interest, and those roles that they do take up will be the result of their having the time and internal impulses to engage in that role and that time.

8.5.2.2. *Serial volunteers*

Serial volunteers often begin volunteering in organisations and roles related to the activities, needs and interests of their children. Their family acts as the impulse to volunteer at that time, and generally the family member(s) ceasing that activity leads to the adult volunteer also ceasing to be involved. This is not always the case though, and the volunteer may return to this organisation and/or role in older age. Having a child involved in the organisation is a very significant impulse for serial volunteers in younger age, but it does not seem to continue to impact significantly into older age. Serial volunteers may, like constant volunteers, be recognised in the communities of place and of interest as individuals who are likely to be open to requests to volunteer. However, if they have not volunteered for some time this may not be relevant, and it may be that their membership of communities of place and/or of interest may offer the social links which led to them being invited to re-engage in formal volunteering.

8.5.2.3. *Trigger volunteers*

Trigger volunteering tends to be facilitated by the clearing of other responsibilities, as this section has previously explored, and central to these is children leaving home. As such, the activities, needs and interests of family tend to not be central to volunteering decisions for trigger volunteers. Indeed, none of the trigger volunteers who participated in this research reported that the activities, needs and interests of their children impacted how, where and why they volunteered in any way. However, non-volunteers are still often embedded in communities of place and of interest, yet for a variety of reasons have not previously engaged in formal volunteering. When a request is made of them to volunteer they must weigh up whether they have the necessary time to undertake the role. If they do, they must next decide if they wish to take on that role and that time, and if so then community may be their trigger.

8.6. How can this contribute to policy?

This section briefly looks at three findings arising from this research which may be of use to policy makers in both voluntary organisations and at different scales of government. These three recommendations are intentionally quite general; they make broad comments on where efforts could be directed and give evidence for this, rather than making specific recommendations to specific actors about what could and should be done.

8.6.1. All volunteers are different

In **Chapter 5** we saw how all volunteers have different histories of engagement in formal volunteering, but also how these different histories fall into three distinct groups of volunteer lifecourse, consistent with the heuristic proposed by Davis Smith and Gay (2005) and developed in this thesis. **Chapters 6** and **7** then looked at how patterns of volunteer engagement across the lifecourse relate to the reasons why individuals engage in formal volunteering at a particular time. Policies and schemes to encourage participation in formal volunteering by older adults need therefore to recognise that individuals engage in different ways and for different reasons. For constant volunteers, then, organisations may need to find ways to allow more flexible volunteering post-retirement, when an individual's time may not be structured so rigidly but when they might be keen to give more time than previously. Further, the nature of the volunteering – within the same organisation – that a constant volunteer wishes to undertake may change in older age, and organisations need to be sensitive to this. For serial volunteers, policies and schemes need to be designed to get individuals who have stopped volunteering to re-engage. This involves recognising the events that can push individuals back to volunteering and sensitively making individuals aware of volunteering opportunities around these times; children leaving home, retirement and the death of a spouse all emerged from this research as times when serial volunteers re-engage. For trigger volunteers, it is also about recognising the changes in individuals' lives which may make them able and/or keen to engage in formal volunteering for the first time, and making sure that at these stages in the lifecourse individuals are aware of the volunteering opportunities available and of the benefits of volunteering that other individuals have experienced.

8.6.2. Family and older age

As was explored in **Chapter 6**, the impact of family members and the household context varies for volunteers in the three different categories; while not all of the 26 older volunteers in this sample were married with children, all except three have children and all except one are married, divorced or widowed. For constant

volunteers, often engagement has begun before parenthood, even before marriage, and a common theme was that children attend as members the organisations at which their parents volunteer, strengthening both parent and child's attachment to the organisation. For serial volunteers, this is reversed; parents are likely to begin volunteering because their children attend an organisation, and through their attendance, an approach is made asking the parent to volunteer. For trigger volunteers, who have not engaged in formal volunteering prior to older age, the activities of children are less relevant. However, for two of the three groups, the activities of individuals' children are an important factor in maintaining or initiating engagement in formal volunteering in younger age. For older adults, though, the needs and interests of individuals' children decline in importance as children grow-up and leave home. While the majority of the 26 older volunteers interviewed for this research spoke of caring responsibilities for their grandchildren, not one had done volunteering related to the needs and interests of their grandchildren. While there is a household dimension to this – grandchildren did not live in the same household as any of the older volunteers interviewed – it still would seem to represent an untapped resource of volunteers, given the time and effort many have given to activities around their children in younger age. This research has shown that older adults do a wide range of voluntary roles, but none motivated by their grandchildren. Organisations and policy might seek to investigate why this is the case and to see if more can be done to encourage grandparents to volunteer in organisations relevant to their grandchildren, particularly youth organisations. More research, however, is needed to explore the potential effectiveness of such efforts.

8.6.3. Paid work, skills and volunteering

The 26 older volunteers interviewed for this research came from a wide range of professional backgrounds, and none. Former white-collar professionals volunteer alongside blue-collar manual workers, each contributing time, skills and effort to the organisations they volunteer with. In Section 6.3, we saw that volunteering in older age may be closely linked to the paid employment an individual has undertaken, or may be deliberately different. Organisations need to be sensitive to this and have strategies for attracting volunteers who can and will contribute useful skills and experience. Using existing skills, developed through paid employment, other voluntary roles and through life experiences, emerged as a motivating factor for a number of older volunteers. For others, a desire to learn and develop new skills is a motivating factor in decisions to engage in volunteering in older age. Some of the older volunteers interviewed for this research felt that the existing skills they had, or the desire they had to learn new ones, was appreciated,

accommodated and utilised. By auditing their volunteers' skills and what they wished to learn, some organisations are getting maximum value from their volunteers. Other older volunteers though felt that they had skills which they had offered to organisations and which were not being utilised, or that they were not given opportunities to develop new skills which would help them undertake their voluntary tasks more effectively. In some cases volunteers acknowledged that organisations were poorly resourced to offer training, but in others it was felt that volunteer managers were not recognising and utilising the diverse range of skills that their volunteers had. Guidance to organisations, therefore, on how to best utilise the existing skills that older volunteers bring would help both the work of voluntary organisations and individual volunteers feel that their skills are being used and developed.

8.7. Where next for this research?

In this research, three research questions have been answered and an analysis has been undertaken of how experiences across the lifecourse affect the nature of engagement in formal volunteering in older age. Some of the methods adopted and the findings recorded have wider resonance and pose further questions for future research to answer. Equally, some factors influencing the extent and nature of engagement in formal volunteering in older age have been outside of the scope of this research, but would be potential topics for further study. This section deals first with the findings from this research which could inform further research, then with the areas which this research has not explored which future research could.

This research has taken a theoretical approach, rooted in feminist scholarship, which applies the theories of the lifecourse (Hareven and Adams, 1982; Katz and Monk, 1993) and the Total Social Organisation of Labour (Glucksmann, 2000; 2005; Taylor, 2004; 2005). The model proposed in **Chapter 5** allows us to represent individuals' engagement in formal volunteering across the lifecourse, in the context of household composition and of participation in paid employment. This model could be applied to the study of other activities across the lifecourse. Just about any recurring activity could be included and its relationship with other commitments and life events studied. These maps are useful because as they highlight trends for further exploration through qualitative analysis, in the case of this thesis in terms of the difference between different patterns of engagement and the other similarities within the three categories: stable households for constant volunteers, more unstable households for serial volunteers, for example. The diagrams show which factors are worthy of further consideration. How an individual's family impact on volunteering in older age is worthy of further study; this research has shown the impact of family members within the household on volunteering prior to older age (Section 7.2), but while the impact of an individual's spouse has been considered in older age, there remain questions around the impact of grown-up children and of grandchildren. Section 7.3 looked at the extent to which communities – of place and of interest – impact differently on the ways in which constant, serial and trigger volunteers engage in formal volunteering. There is potential here for more research into causality: whether it is embeddedness in communities which affects the extent and nature of volunteering across the lifecourse, or the extent and nature of volunteering which affects how embedded an individual is.

There are also a number of areas for possible research which have fallen outside of the parameters set by this research. The sample 26 older volunteers who

participated in this research were all white, and as such this research tells us nothing about the nature of older adults' volunteering in minority ethnic communities. It would be interesting to investigate whether the patterns of volunteering found here are replicated among different ethnic groups, or whether the heuristic proposed by Davis Smith and Gay (2005) and developed extensively here is particular to white communities. This research has also not looked at the social class of older volunteers and looked at any differences in the nature of participation across the lifecourse and into older age between individuals from different social classes. Woolvin's (2011) research is more sensitive to class differences, but unlike this research looks mainly at informal volunteering. Extending the research in this thesis to include more informal forms of voluntary activity, and to link this to formal volunteering, may enable comparisons of the nature of activity between individuals from different social classes to be examined. Among the older adults interviewed for this research, there exists a large heterogeneity of experience, as outlined in **Chapter 2**. Fundamental to some of this difference is that in any age-category spanning many decades, there are individuals from a number of cohorts: interviewees in their 80s would have been teenagers during the Second World War, while interviewees in their 50s were born during the baby-boom in the 20 or so years following the Second World War. While this research has been sensitive to differences of experience between individuals, it has not considered the potential impact on attitudes and opportunities to volunteer between individuals from different cohorts, and this is something that future research could explore. Finally, this research has come too soon to examine the impact of the recession and the abolition of state pension age on experiences of older age. If pension provision changes, so too will the opportunities available to older adults, and future research should look at how these changes to experiences of older age affect the extent and nature of volunteering by older adults.

8.8. Conclusion

This chapter has brought to a conclusion the analysis presented in this thesis. By returning to the research questions first proposed in Section 1.5, it has explored how the literature review sought to gather all relevant literature and identify how it enabled the answering of the research questions. It also looked at the gaps in the existing literature and which of these gaps this thesis could fill in the course of answering the three research questions. This conclusion next looked in turn at how this research has answered these three research questions, by first establishing a heuristic of volunteer engagement by older adults and then exploring the reasons for engagement – internal and external – in the context of this heuristic. This chapter, and therefore the thesis, concluded with a brief look at the possible policy recommendations which arise from this research, for both voluntary organisations and policy makers at local and national levels, and at where future research on this topic should look, in light of what has been presented here. This chapter, then, has concluded this thesis by situating this research within a tradition of sociological scholarship, outlining the findings of the research and briefly looking at the possible applications of these findings. In doing so, this conclusion and this thesis have explored and analysed volunteering in older age from a lifecourse perspective, by looking at older adults' volunteering from a Total Social Organisation of Labour and lifecourse perspective.

Appendix 1

Requirement	Referenced by	Solution
<i>Considerations for all questionnaires</i>		
Clear instructions, as online leaves no scope for immediate clarification.	Dix and Anderson (2000), Binbaum (2004)	An introductory explanation page and guidance next to questions which needed specific instructions.
Clear language, again because there was no opportunity for clarification.	Hague (1993), Aldridge and Levine (2001), McNeil and Chapman (2005) Sapsford (2007)	The language used in questions was clear, precise, concise, and unambiguous. During piloting, questions were worded in a number of different ways, to explore which is easiest for respondents to understand.
The need to define terms used so as to ensure consistency.	(McNeil and Chapman, 2005)	Key terms – ‘volunteer’, ‘older adults’ and ‘your organisation’ were all defined at the beginning.
That participants know how long the questionnaire will take to complete.	Bowers (1998), Umbach (2004)	In both invitation emails and at the start of the questionnaire participants told that it would take no longer than 10 minutes.
Complexity of analysing answers to open questions.	(Hague, 1993)	All questions were closed, with a predefined set of answers, for ease of responding and data analysing.
With closed questions, there needs to be an option to not answer.	Levine (2001), Birnbaum (2004)	Each set of responses included a “Don’t know” option, so as to avoid ambiguity or forced answers.
<i>Considerations particular to online questionnaires</i>		
Having all questions on the same page will be too much text and require too much scrolling.	Dix and Anderson (2000), Zimitat and Crebet (2002)	Only one question was on each page, small enough to fit even a small computer screen without the need for scrolling.

Respondents are unable to see the whole questionnaire at same time, unlike a paper questionnaire.	Dix and Anderson (2000), Umbach (2004)	On each page there was a progress bar, showing respondents how much they have completed and how far they have left to go.
Presentation needs to be clear and simple, so respondents can easily understand on screen.	Dix and Anderson (2000), Aldridge and Levine (2001), Umbach (2004)	Questions were numbered, justified, well-spaced and used clear and readable text. Response buttons were clearly linked to the questions and logically ordered. Design was simple and aesthetically clear.
Pre-selected responses risk biasing the results.	Birnbaum (2004)	No pre-selected responses, respondents had to select one or none would be checked.
Respondents should be allowed to decline to answer any question.	Dix and Anderson (2000), Umbach (2004)	Respondents could pass any question without having to answer.
Different computers have different set-ups and load at different speeds.	Dillman et al (1998), Dix and Anderson (2000), Umbach (2004)	As the design was simple it loaded quickly in all browsers and at different internet speeds. It was piloted on a number of different computers, on different connections and with different sized screens, and refined as a result.

Appendix 2

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AGE Concern NOTTINGHAM TRENT UNIVERSITY E.S.R.C. ECONOMIC & SOCIAL RESEARCH COUNCIL

Older Volunteers in England

Introduction

6%

Thank you very much for agreeing to complete this questionnaire on the extent to which organisations engage with older volunteers in England. Your responses will be tremendously helpful in supporting research into volunteering, and in supporting the research and campaigning of Age Concern England and Help the Aged.

The questionnaire which follows is made up of multiple choice questions, and will take no longer than 10 minutes of your time.

If you have any questions, comments or requests for further information, do not hesitate to contact me;

Eddy Hogg
Email: edward.hogg@ntu.ac.uk
Post: NTU, Burton Street, Nottingham, NG1 4BU

If you wish, you can also contact my Director of Studies, Prof Irene Hardill, at irene.hardill@ntu.ac.uk

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Older Volunteers in England

Consent

11%

Before beginning, please confirm that you have read the following ethical statements and are happy to participate;

- I understand that my participation in this work is completely voluntary, and that I am free to withdraw from participating at any time before, during or after completing the questionnaire, up until 1st November 2009.
- I give my permission for the responses I give in this questionnaire to be used, completely anonymously, for the purposes of a PhD project and to support the work of Age Concern England and Help the Aged.
- I understand that all the responses I give while completing this questionnaire will be treated totally anonymously, will be stored in a protected file and will never be passed on to anyone other than the researcher and Age Concern England and Help the Aged.
- I understand that no effort will be made to correlate questionnaire responses with individuals or organisations. Email addresses will be stored in a separate file, with no link to the responses given here.
- I am aware that if I wish to discuss my participation in this questionnaire, I can contact Eddy Hogg at edward.hogg@ntu.ac.uk or on 07983 605947.

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Older Volunteers in England

Section A. Your Organisation (1/5)

28%

Which of the following options best describes the work your organisation undertakes?

(check one box)

- Education (of any age group)
- Religious activities
- Sports/exercise
- Health/disability care
- Children/young people
- Local community/neighbourhood/citizens group
- Hobbies/recreation/social club
- Overseas aid/disaster relief
- Animal welfare
- Support of older people
- Other (please specify)

- Arts/museum provision
- Conservation of the environment/of heritage
- Social welfare
- Politics
- Safety/first aid provision
- Justice/human rights
- Trade Unions
- Don't know
- Prefer not to say

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Exit without completing survey

Older Volunteers in England

Section A. Your Organisation (2/5)

33%

Which of the following best describes the age groups your organisation regularly works with?

(check one box)

- Only young people (younger than 18)
- Only working-age people (16-65)
- Only older people (older than 50)
- Mostly young people, some others
- Mostly working-age people, some others
- Mostly older people, some others
- All ages
- Don't know
- Prefer not to say

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Older Volunteers in England

Section B. Your Staff (2/7)

61%

What would you estimate is the proportion of your staff who are volunteers?

(check one box)

- Fewer than 20%
- 20% - 40%
- 40% - 60%
- 60% - 80%
- More than 80%
- Don't know
- Prefer not to say

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Older Volunteers in England

Section B. Your Staff (3/7)

67%

What proportion of your organisation's voluntary staff are aged over 50?

(check one box)

- Fewer than 20%
- 20% - 40%
- 40% - 60%
- 60% - 80%
- More than 80 %
- Don't know
- Prefer not to say

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Older Volunteers in England

Section B. Your Staff (4/7)

72%

How many of your organisation's volunteers aged 50+ have paid jobs elsewhere?

(check one box)

- Fewer than 20%
- 20% - 40%
- 40% - 60%
- 60% - 80%
- More than 80%
- Don't know
- Prefer not to say

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Older Volunteers in England

Section B. Your Staff (5/7)

78%

Which of the following best describes the gender distribution of your voluntary staff?

- All women
- All men
- Mostly women, some men
- Mostly men, some women
- A broadly equal mix of men and women
- Don't know
- Prefer not to say

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Exit without completing survey

Older Volunteers in England

Thank you very much!

94%

The next stage of my research will involve speaking with a number of voluntary organisations about the extent to which they engage with older volunteers, and why. I am interested in speaking both to organisations which do and those which do not engage with older adults.

If you would be interested in helping further with this research, and with furthering the work of Age Concern England and Help the Aged, please enter your name, your organisation name and your email addresses into the boxes on the next page. This information will be stored separately to your questionnaire responses, and no attempt will be made to correlate the two.

Should you wish to discuss this further, please do not hesitate to contact me;
 Eddy Hogg
 Email: edward.hogg@ntu.ac.uk
 Post: NTU, Burton Street, Nottingham, NG1 4BU

If you wish, you can also contact my Director of Studies, Prof Irene Hardill, at irene.hardill@ntu.ac.uk

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AGE Concern NOTTINGHAM TRENT UNIVERSITY E.S.R.C. ECONOMIC & SOCIAL RESEARCH COUNCIL

Older Volunteers in England

Please enter your contact details

100%

Your Name

Your Organisation

Your Email Address

Should you wish to discuss this further, please do not hesitate to contact me;

Eddy Hogg
 Email: edward.hogg@ntu.ac.uk
 Phone: 07983 605957
 Post: NTU, Burton Street, Nottingham, NG1 4BU

Previous Page Finish!

15:35 13/06/2012

Appendix 3

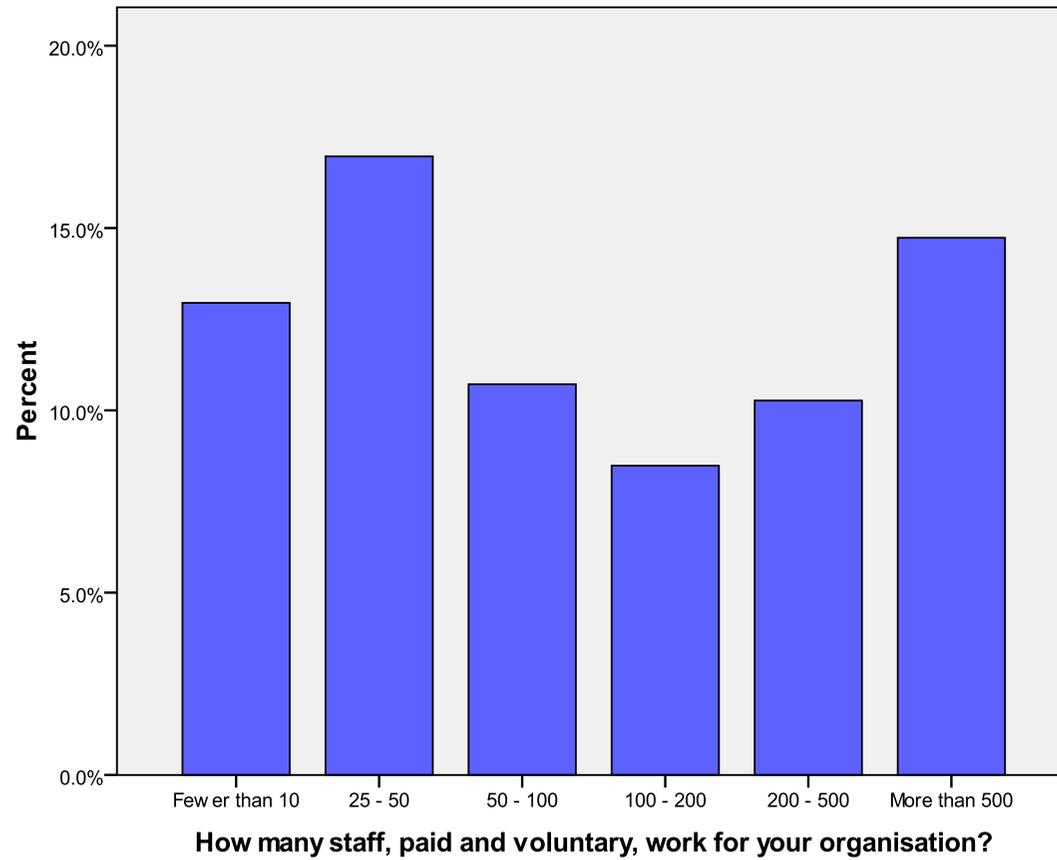


Figure A.1 *Sizes of organisations participating in questionnaire*

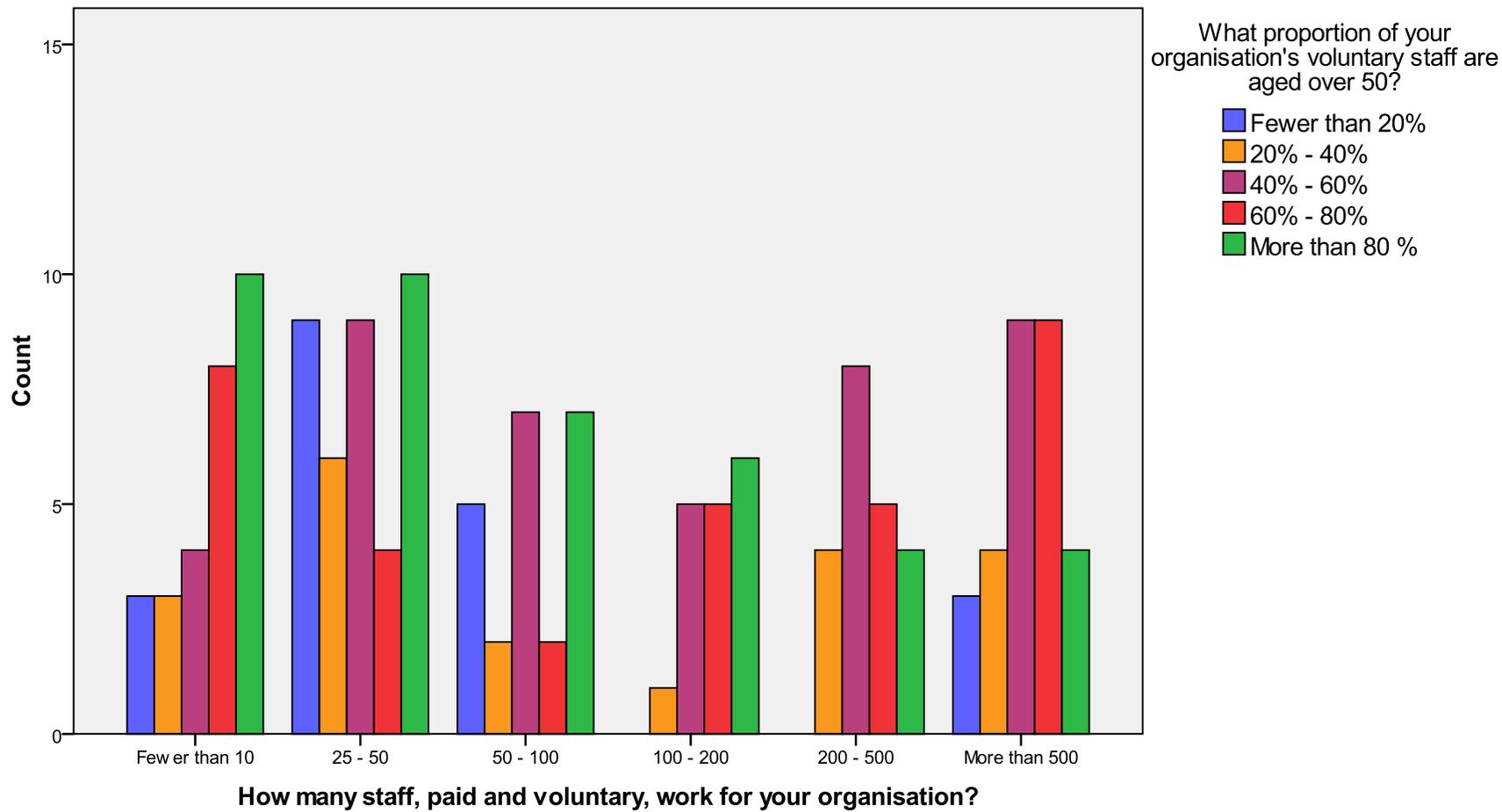


Figure A.2 Size of organisation and the proportion of older volunteers, most detail

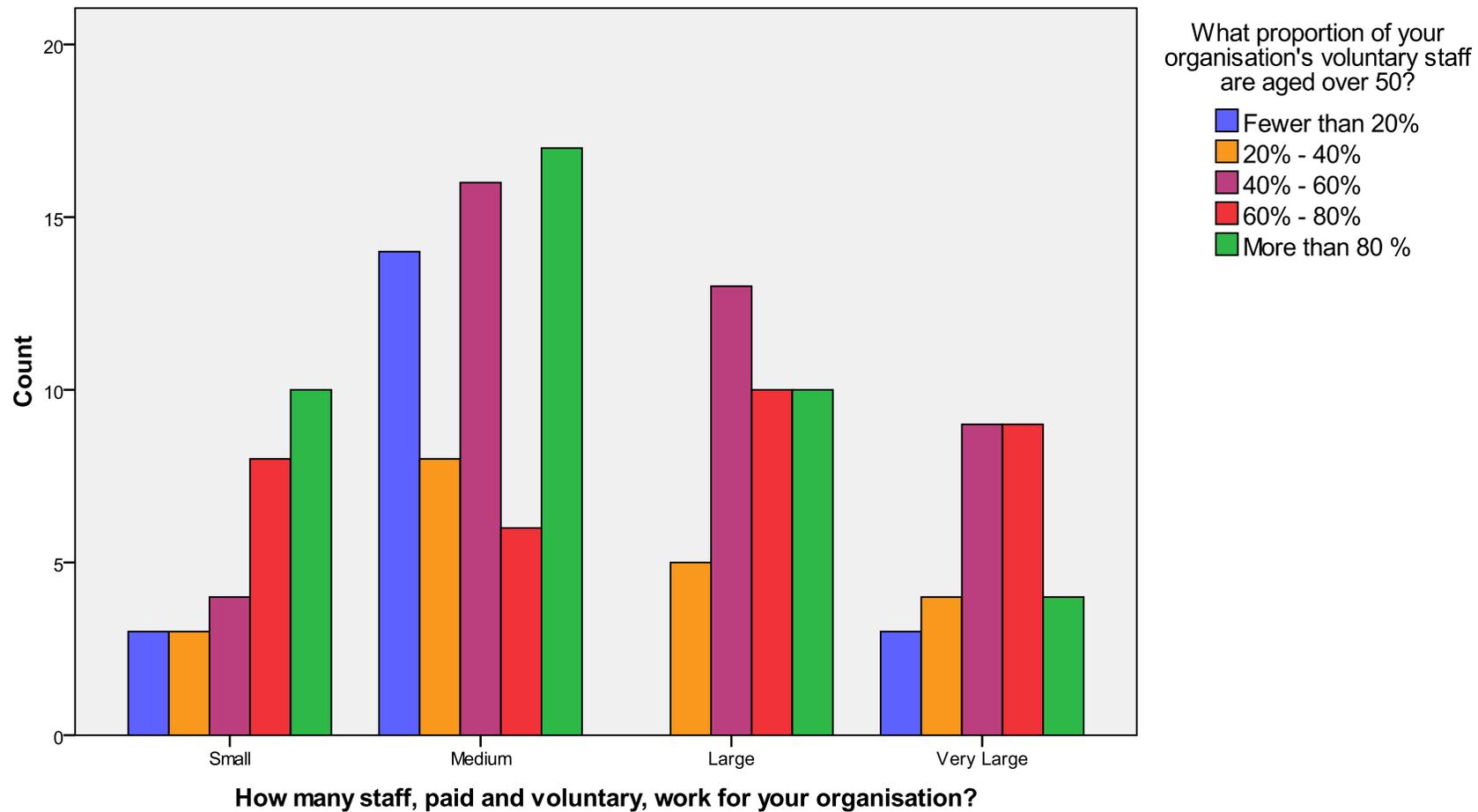


Figure A.3 Size of organisation and the proportion of older volunteers, sizes standardised

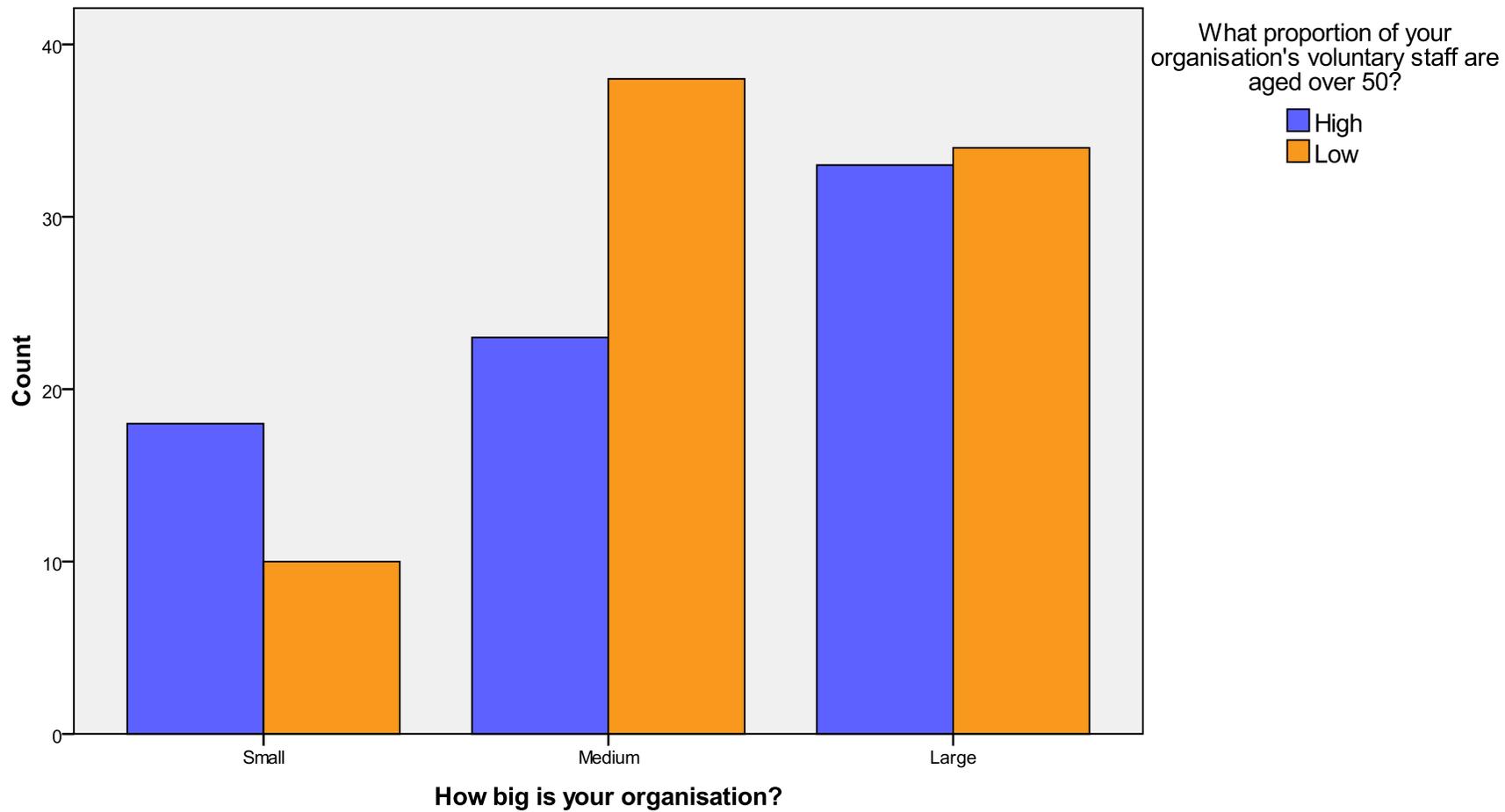


Figure A.4 Size of organisation and the proportion of older volunteers, sizes and proportions standardised

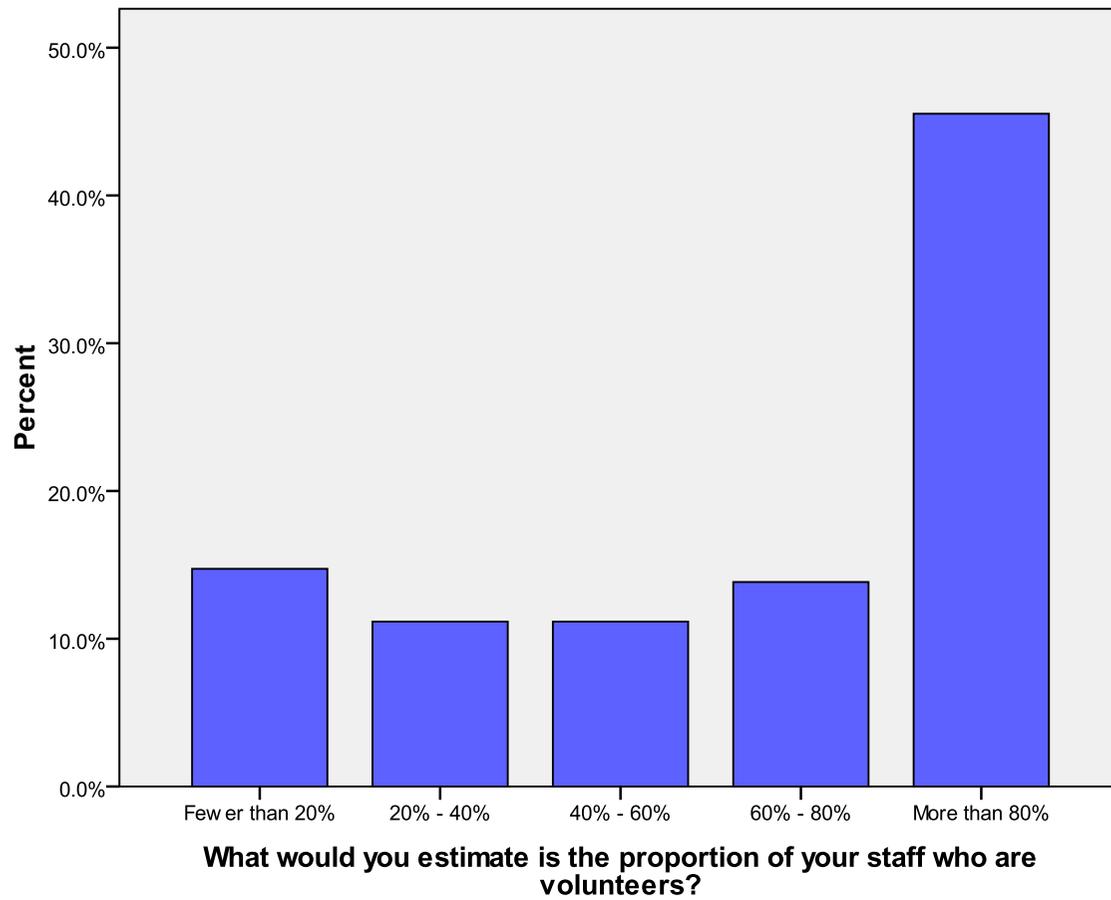


Figure A.5 *The proportion of an organisation's total workforce who are volunteers*

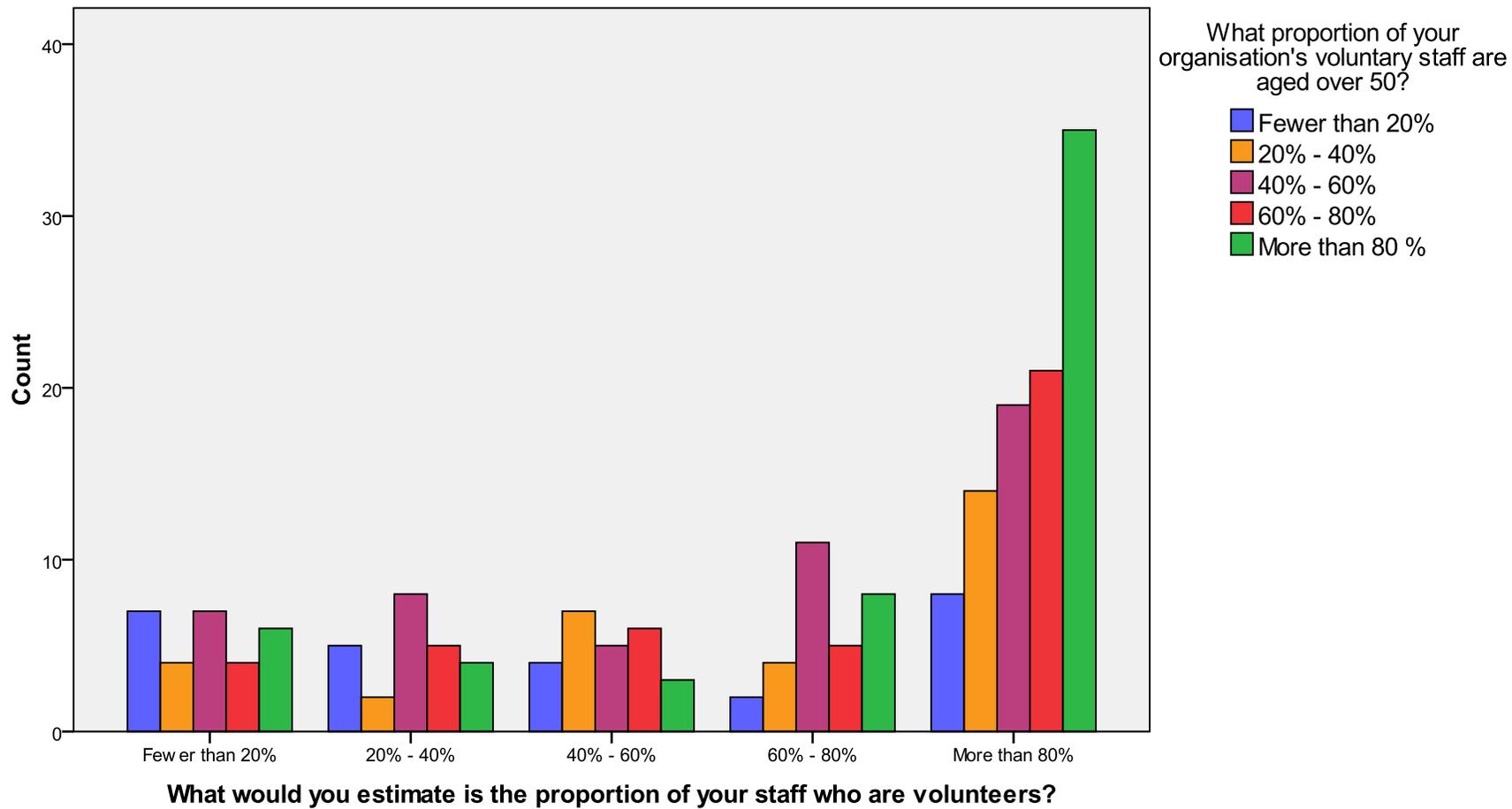


Figure A.6 *Volunteers as a proportion of workforce compared to proportion of volunteers aged over 50*

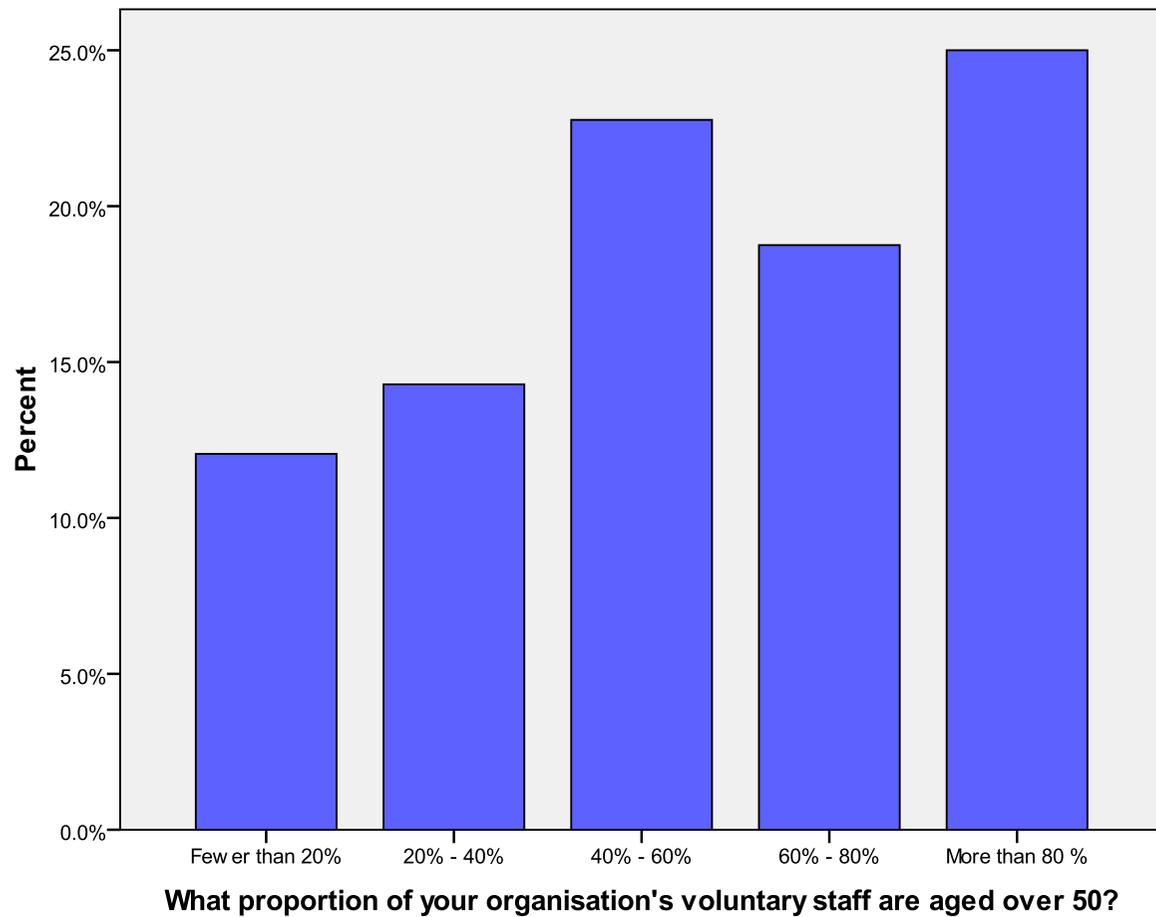
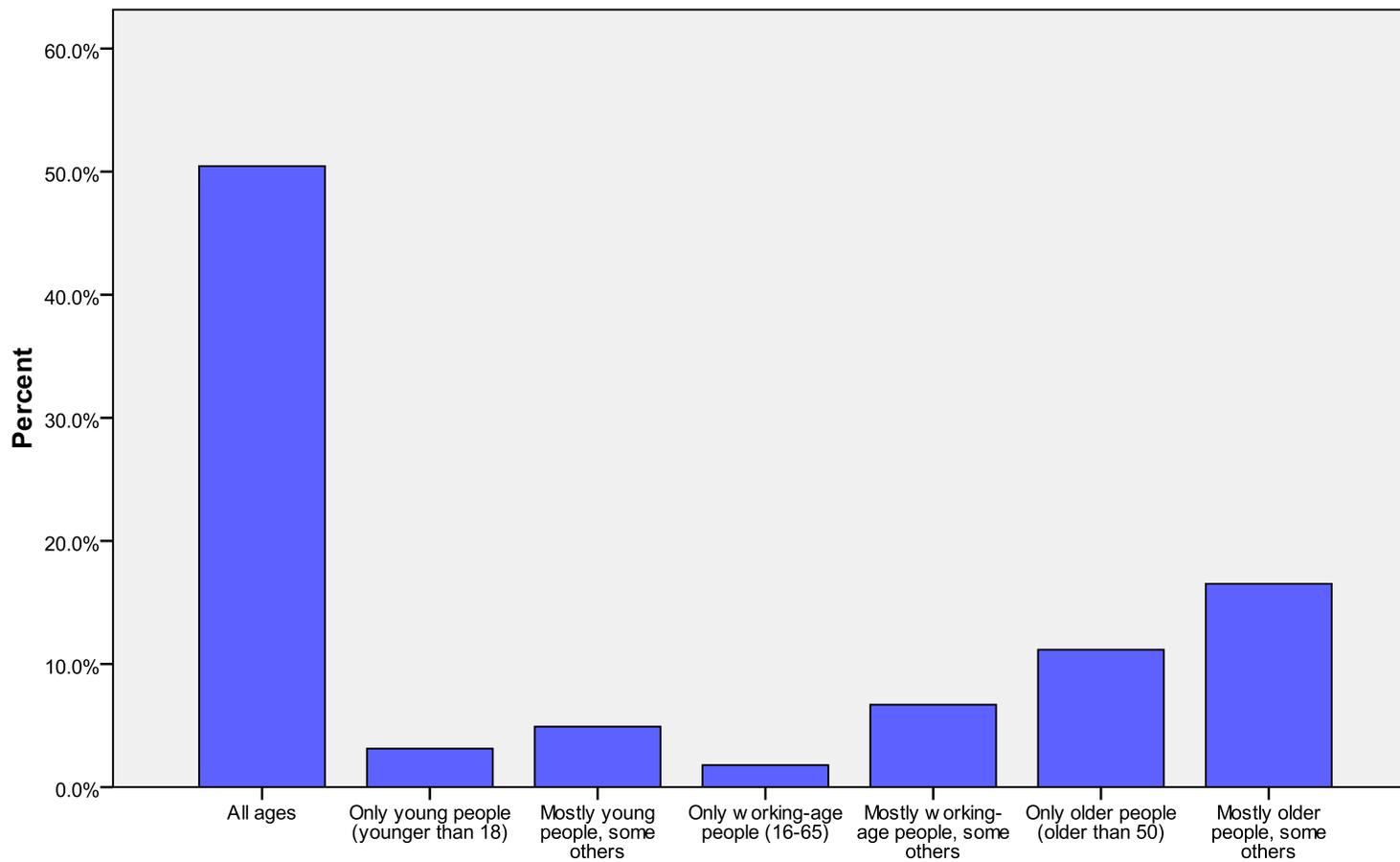


Figure A.7 Breakdown of organisations by the proportion of volunteers aged over 50



Which of the following best describes the age groups your organisation regularly works with?

Figure A.8 Breakdown of age groups with which the organisations work

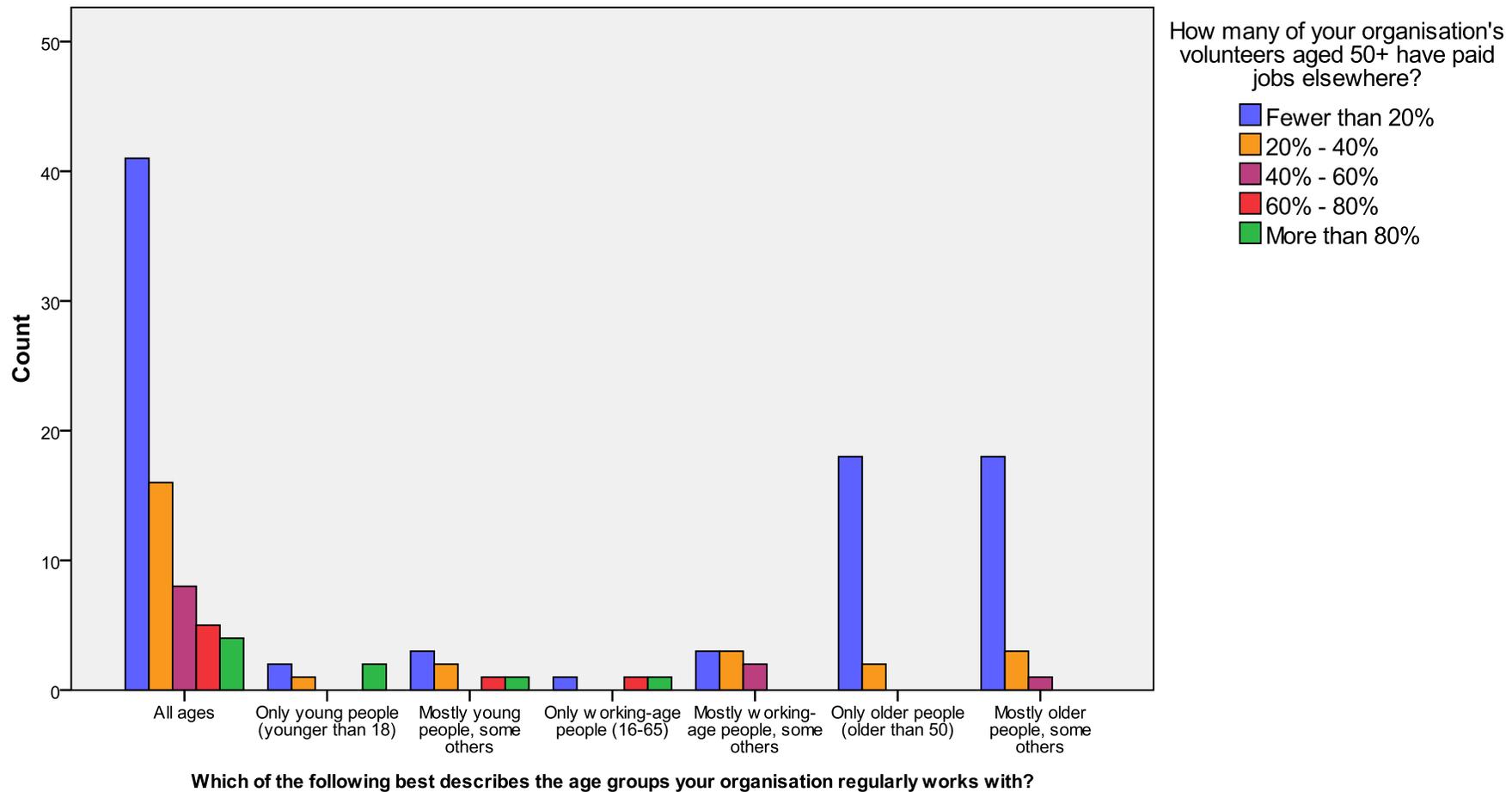


Figure A.9 Age groups with which organisations work compared to proportion of volunteers aged over 50

Appendix 4

Older volunteers – interview guide

Checklist
Watch
Dictaphone
Pen

Introductions (*up to 5 minutes*)

- Explain who I am and what my research is interested in. It is hoped that this interview will enable me to understand further the meanings and motivations that underpin older adults' participation in, and attachment to, voluntary work.
- Outline and emphasise informed consent, confidentiality/anonymity and the right to withdraw. Get signed form.
- Check if it's ok to record the interview and explain how it will be transcribed. Offer to show the interviewee a copy of that transcription once completed, and suggest that I post/email them a copy.
- Explain that there are lots of different definitional issues, but that for the purpose of this interview the following definitions have are being used;
 - 'Older people' are all of those aged over 50, regardless of whether they are in paid employment or not, or whether they are 51 or 99.
 - A volunteer is defined as any individual who gives their time and effort for no financial payment, of their own free will and to provide for the needs of those beyond their close family.

Setting the Scene (*up to 10 minutes*)

- Tell me about all of the volunteering you do at present, at all the organisations you volunteer for?
 - *What is the organisation you volunteer for?*
 - *How long have you been volunteering here?*
 - *Roughly how many hours a week do you volunteer here?*
 - *Do you volunteer for any other organisations?*
 - *What roles do you fulfil at this and other organisations?*
 - *Do you do any paid work?*

Biographical (*up to 25 minutes*)

I'd like to now explore how you have come to be volunteering in the organisation(s) we have talked about. In order to do this I'd like to spend the next 30 minutes or so talking through the key events and themes in your life up to now which have lead you to the volunteering you do today.

Be flexible here

If they want to tell it all as an autobiographical story, fine. If they prefer to be prompted and guided through the key points I want, that's fine too.

There are two key issues that I want to learn here – **why volunteer** and **why volunteer here**.

Prompts (if needed) for why volunteer:

- *When did you first undertake voluntary work?*
- *What do you remember as being the driving force or catalyst for your volunteering at that time?*
- *Talk through the volunteering history from then to now...*
- *Have you volunteered ever since then?*
- *Have the roles you fulfil changed in the time you've been volunteering? Why?*
- *If yes, have the reasons why you volunteer changed during that time?*
- *If not, what events caused you to stop volunteering previously, and what prompted you to begin volunteering again?*

Prompts (if needed) for why volunteer here:

- *What promoted you to start volunteering for this organisation?*
- *To what extent were the aims and goals of this organisation a primary motivating factor in your decision to volunteer here?*
- *Would you say that the issues which this organisation addresses were close to your heart before you started volunteering here, and if so, why?*
- *Link back to roles fulfilled – to what extent is the motivation to volunteer linked to these roles?*

Conclude this section with the following (if not covered):

- *Is there anything about your volunteering that you particularly enjoy?*
- *What rewards do you feel you get from volunteering?*
- *What effect on your volunteering would there be if you felt that these rewards were changing or disappearing?*
- *Do you feel that volunteering gives you a sense of identity?*

Issues (up to 10 minutes)

- Are there any things about volunteering, your organisation or the context in which your organisation works which bother you?
 - *What do you like the least about your voluntary work?*
 - *Do you feel that more could be done to attract older adults to volunteer and to retain the services of existing older volunteers?*
 - *Does the nature of the work in your organisation always fit with your reasons for undertaking voluntary work, and if not how do you cope with this?*

Retirement (if not covered) *(up to 10 minutes)*

- If retired; what impact has retirement had on your volunteering?
 - *If volunteering prior to retirement has the amount or type of volunteering changed since retirement?*
 - *If not volunteering prior to retirement, how long after retirement did you begin to volunteer?*
 - *In what ways is your volunteering similar or different to your previous paid occupation?*
 - *Does volunteering provide a similar structure for your day to your previous paid employment?*

- If still in paid employment; do you anticipate continuing volunteering in retirement, and what impact do you anticipate volunteering having on your retirement?
 - *Have you thought ahead to your retirement, and if so do you see volunteering having a role to play as you move from paid work to retirement?*
 - *What do you see this role as being?*

Finish *(up to 5 minutes)*

- Thank you very much!
- Re-explain the right to withdraw.
- Re-explain that the interview will be transcribed and then posted/emailed to them. Make sure you have a postal or email address!

Make sure they have my address, email and phone number should they wish to follow anything up.

Appendix 5

Interview #

Thank you for agreeing to take part in this interview!

Before beginning, it is necessary to agree to the following ethical statements;

- I understand that my participation in this work is completely voluntary, and that I am free to withdraw from participating at any time before, during or after completing the interview.
- I give my permission for the responses I give in this questionnaire to be used, completely anonymously, for the purposes of a PhD project and to support the work of Age Concern England.
- I understand that all the responses I give while completing this questionnaire will be treated totally anonymously, will be stored in a protected file and will never be passed on to anyone other than the researcher.
- I understand that no effort will be made to correlate interview responses with individuals or organisations.
- I am aware that if I wish to discuss my participation in this interview further, or to withdraw from the study at any point up until four months after this interview (/ /), I can contact Eddy Hogg;

Email: edward.hogg@ntu.ac.uk

Phone: 07983 605957

Post: NTU, Burton Street, Nottingham, NG1 4BU

Signed

Date

Appendix 6

Older Volunteers Interviews	
Category	Number of References
Age Discrimination in Paid Work	5
Applications	6
Balancing Voluntary Roles	15
Being Listened Too	7
Being Thanked	4
Belief in the Cause	69
Belief in the Cause due to Life Events	20
Benefits Problems	3
Big Organisations: Remote from Recipient	19
Bureaucracy	26
Challenging Oneself	11
Changes Since Retirement	25
Changing Circumstances	39
Changing Organisations	15
Changing Roles	23
CRB Checks	10
Differences to Paid Work	21
Discussing Volunteering	11
Doing Something Useful	26
Enjoyment	52
Experience	3
Family	30
Financial Implications	6
Flexibility	64
Formal Recognition	6
Formality	13
Frustrations	48
Giving Something Back	4
Health	28
Interests	27

Intergenerational Mixing	3
Keeping Active	15
Lack of Opportunities	4
Local Community	39
Loyalty to Clients	4
Loyalty to the Manager	8
Management	52
Meetings	3
Motivations: Self Interest	12
Other Time Commitments	24
Pre-retirees	9
Projects Closing	12
Quitting	38
Recruitment: Nobody Else To Do It	8
Recruitment: General	7
Recruitment: Being Asked	40
Recruitment: Offering Services	34
Recruitment: Social	13
Responsibility	11
Retirement: General	39
Retirement: Free Time	32
Rewards From Volunteering	22
Roles	34
Sense of Worth	10
Similarities to Paid Work	41
Size of Organisation	5
Skills: Learning New Ones	12
Skills: Maintaining Them	14
Skills: Overlap Between Voluntary Roles	14
Skills: Useful Ones	20
Skills: Using Existing Skills	46
Small Organisations: Close to Client	10
Social Benefits	62
Something Meaningful To Do	24
Stepping Down	7
Structure to Time	18
To Be Needed	3
Too Old For This	4

Training	24
Triggers	13
User to Volunteer Swapover	4
Variety of Tasks	23
Volunteering to try to get a Paid Job	23

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