Research Report DFE-RR188

Barriers and facilitators to pro-social behaviour among young people: a review of existing evidence

Lucy Lee and Gareth Morrell (NatCen)

Annalisa Marini and Sarah Smith (University of Bristol)

Department for Education

Contents

Tables

Figures

Executive Summary

This report presents an overview of current evidence on pro-social behaviour among young people aged 16-19, drawing together a review of existing literature and analysis of existing secondary data.

Aims and objectives

The main objectives of the research were:

- To describe overall levels and patterns of engagement in pro-social activity amongst young people, together with differences by socio-demographic characteristics
- To identify underlying motivations for engaging in pro-social activities among young people, as well as potential facilitators and barriers.

In addition, the Steering Group asked the researchers to consider the association between participation in pro-social activities by young people and their later education and employment outcomes.

Methods

This study comprised two strands of research:

- A literature review focusing on facilitators and barriers to pro-social behaviour amongst young people. This involved a systematic search for literature across the UK and relevant international literature published within the last ten years.
- Secondary analysis of the Citizenship Survey 2001-2008 and the British Household Panel Survey 1996-2008.

Pro-social engagement amongst young people

The evidence sheds a positive light on young people's engagement in pro-social activities (defined in this report as formal volunteering, informal volunteering, civic activity and group membership). Young people are more likely to engage in these activities than the rest of the working-age population (Section 2.1). 83.9 per cent of people aged 16-19 are involved in at least one of these activities, compared to 79.7 per cent of 20-24 years olds, 76.6 per cent of 25-29 years olds and 81.0 per cent of those aged 30-55.

Trends in levels of engagement in these activities over the last decade are also generally more positive than among older age groups (Section 2.4). Traditional differences in participation across gender and ethnic groups appear to be narrowing among the young, compared to older age groups (Sections 3.1 and 3.3). The literature suggests that recent interventions focusing on attracting a more socially mixed profile of young people to pro-social activities are having some impact on this (NatCen et al 2011).

Motivations and facilitators

The data analysis reflects the literature in identifying that instrumental motivations are an important category for young people. Many young people are motivated to engage in volunteering and group activities because they perceive that these activities help with developing skills, confidence and career-building (Section 4.2). These are relatively more

important for young people than for older age groups. The evidence comparing young people's engagement with their later education and employment outcomes is consistent with these motivations. There is generally a positive association between young people's formal volunteering and group activities and their later education and employment outcomes. The secondary analysis also found that engagement is associated with obtaining better qualifications and higher wages (Section 5). However, this may capture something about the type of young people who choose to engage – and not necessarily any direct effect of the activities themselves.

Barriers to pro-social activity

Our analysis also shows that traditional differences across demographic groups are narrower among young people. For example differences by gender and ethnic background, which are present among older age groups, tend to be smaller among those aged 16-19. Perhaps surprisingly, we also found little evidence that health or disabilities are major barriers to pro-social activity among young people. However, barriers to pro-social activity remain for some young people. A lack of education or employment amongst young people would appear to be a barrier to pro-social activity. The literature suggests that NEETs lack the social networks or other routes in, as well as the self-esteem and confidence that can be gained from employment, education or training. In our analysis, pro-social behaviour was found to be significantly lower amongst young NEETs (compared to those in education or employment).

Challenges for policy

The evidence suggests that there are two challenges for policy and the sector – to sustain engagement as young people move from education into employment and to reach the minority who are not currently engaged.

Sustaining engagement

Young people are less likely to persist in engagement in pro-social activities than older age groups (section 2.2). Further analysis shows that levels of formal volunteering and group membership decline as young people move from education to employment (Section 2.1 and 3.2). It is clear that education institutions play a key role in providing information about and opportunities for pro-social activities (Section 4.2). The fact that many young people have instrumental motivations for engagement may mean that volunteering and group activities seem less relevant once they have reached the next life stage (Section 4.2) – i.e. there may be a natural life-cycle to pro-social behaviour. However, it would seem worth exploring how to keep young people engaged as they move into employment. This may involve employers thinking about flexible volunteering opportunities for new employees or voluntary organisations focusing on engendering sustained mission-motivated engagement among younger volunteers (Section 5).

Reaching the minority

There is a minority of young people who remain persistently disengaged. This includes an over-representation of those who are not in employment, education or training (NEETs) – in spite of the fact that they may have a lot to gain from such activities (Section 3.2). There may be lessons to learn from recent policy initiatives, such as `v' that have appeared to closed traditional participation gaps. Given the importance of family and friends in encouraging and sustaining engagement, there are also potentially big gains to be had from reaching out to excluded social networks (Section 6).

1 Introduction

This report presents findings of a study into the motivations, barriers and facilitators of pro-social activity amongst young people. The research was intended to establish the existing evidence base in this area and comprised a review of the literature and analysis of available national survey data.

The research was conducted by members of the Centre for Understanding Behaviour Change (CUBeC). The Centre exists to deliver evidence and insight into the drivers of behaviour change to inform and improve policy-making. It combines expertise across a wide range of academic disciplines: economics, psychology, neuroscience, sociology, education, and social research. The centre has members at the University of Bristol, IFS, NatCen, Institute of Education, UCL, LSE, Oxford, and Imperial College, and is funded by the Department for Education (DfE).

1.1 Policy context

In the last decade, a range of policy initiatives have aimed to create opportunities for young people to become involved in volunteering and other activities with a positive social or community focus. These initiatives are an acknowledgement of the perceived benefits for young people and society more generally of engaging in these kinds of activities. Evaluations of the Millennium Volunteers' programme and, more recently, v – the National Young Volunteers' Service have demonstrated positive links between involvement and improved confidence and civic mindedness for the young people involved (NatCen et al 2011).

Current policy, manifested most clearly in National Citizen Service (NCS), continues to promote the virtues of young people engaging in these kinds of activities. NCS is an experimental residential programme in which young people aged 16 spend their summer learning new skills to put to use in a local social action project that is of benefit to the community. The programme aims to demonstrate the benefits of this pro-social behaviour and foster a culture of volunteering and community action among those taking part. It is hoped that young people will learn the skills to develop links with local community partners and generate further opportunities for pro-social activity.

In the challenging economic climate, policy is likely to focus increasingly on removing barriers to participation, rather than on actively seeking to increase levels of such behaviour through direct policy interventions. For successful activation of pro-social behaviour among young people the underlying motivations that trigger this behaviour need to be understood, stripped of external factors contingent upon resources and infrastructure. This is the aim of this review.

1.2 Aims and objectives

The main aim was to review the existing evidence on pro-social behaviour among young people and to identify the main motivations, facilitators and barriers to such behaviour. This overall aim was broken down into the following objectives:

- To describe overall levels and patterns of engagement in pro-social activity amongst young people, together with differences by socio-demographic characteristics
- To identify underlying motivations for engaging in pro-social activities among young people, as well as potential facilitators and barriers.

In addition, the Steering Group asked the researchers to consider the association between participation in pro-social activities by young people and their later education and employment outcomes.

1.3 Methodology

Two strands of research were undertaken for this study: a literature review and secondary analysis of existing data sets.

The literature review focused on facilitators and barriers to pro-social behaviour amongst young people with a focus on identifying evidence on the underlying motivations rather than practical or instrumental factors. A systematic search was carried out for literature across the UK and relevant international literature published within the last ten years. A thematic framework was developed within which to summarise the relevant content of each piece of literature, creating a matrix of key findings. These findings are integrated throughout this report with the findings from the secondary analysis.

The secondary analysis draws primarily on data from the Citizenship Survey from 2001 – 2008. Commissioned by the Home Office, this survey has been run every two years from 2001 (and continuously since 2007). Approximately 10,000 adults in England and Wales were asked questions covering a wide range of issues, including race equality, faith, feelings about their community, volunteering and participation. The survey collects detailed information on a range of pro-social behaviours.

The analysis also draws on data from the British Household Panel Survey (BHPS) from 1996 – 2008 (focusing on data from England and Wales for comparison with the Citizenship Survey). The BHPS is a general household survey which has more limited information on pro-social behaviours, compared to the Citizenship Survey. However, we can exploit the panel nature of this dataset to study the dynamics of engagement over time and also to look at the link between engagement in pro-social activity among young people and their later education and employment outcomes.

1.4 Definitions

Pro-social activity

Pro-social activity has been defined by Eisenberg & Mussen (1989) as 'voluntary actions that are intended to help or benefit another individual or group of individuals'. While this clearly encompasses informal and formal volunteering, for the purposes of this study, a wider definition was sought. Pro-social behaviour can also be seen as the antithesis of anti-social behaviour which lacks consideration for others and according to the Home Office definition manifests itself in aggressive, intimidating or destructive activity that damages or destroys another person's quality of life or has a negative impact on a local community. Consequently, pro-social behaviour also includes activities that are community or civic-minded, that have the effect of helping society, community and institutions function effectively. In this study, we operate within this broader definition but restrict our focus to four distinct areas of pro-social behaviour. These were agreed with the research Steering Committee from a wider set of potential indicators available in the Citizenship Survey.

- Formal volunteering – volunteering for an organisation or as part of a specific programme and within an agreed structure and timeframe
- Informal volunteering – helping out friends, family or local people
- Civic participation – involvement in decision making processes or elected positions
- Group membership – involvement in local and community organisations

Young people

The policy definition of young people has altered with the change of government in 2010. The previous government used the term to describe 16-24 year olds, hence the focus of the opportunities created by v. The current definition of young people within DfE is 13-19. For purposes of this study we adopted practical definitions for the two different strands of work as follows:

For the literature review, the widest possible definition of young people was used, 13-24. The relevant literature for this wider age group could still provide useful evidence for the current policy definition.

The secondary analysis focused on 16-19 year olds – partly for practical reasons since the adult modules of the surveys take 16 as the lower age limit. This is a narrower age range than the current policy definition, but is arguably the group that the National Citizens Service is targeted at. Looking at the group of 16-19 year olds is a distinctive feature of the analysis in this report compared with previous studies which have tended to look at a wider age range up to 24.

Throughout the report we present comparative information for older age groups (aged 20-24, 25-29 and 30-55) in order to understand what is distinctive about pro-social activity

among young people. We exclude anyone older than 55 since people may begin to move into retirement from this age and may experience a further change in their level of pro-social activity. For example, Smith (2010) shows that retirement from the labour force is associated with increased engagement with local groups.

1.5 Structure of the report

The two strands of the research – the literature review and the quantitative analysis – have a common focus and are consequently reported together, with findings from the analysis set in the context of the wider literature. The next chapter provides an overview of the evidence on pro-social behaviour amongst young people, with Chapter 3 drilling down further to display the available evidence on socio-demographic sub-groups of young people. Chapter 4 explores motivations, facilitators and barriers to pro-social behaviour with Chapter 5 providing a brief review of evidence on the potential impacts on young people's later outcomes. Finally, chapter 6 draws together some key conclusions from the research and makes suggestions for policy and practice around changing behaviour to increase levels of pro-social activity amongst young people.

2 Pro-social activities amongst young people

This chapter provides an overview of the evidence on young people's engagement in pro-social activity. Overall levels of engagement are described and compared with other age groups, followed by evidence on the dynamics of this engagement based on analysis of the British Household Panel survey, a description of the types of activities young people are involved in and an illustration of trends over time.

2.1 Overall levels of engagement

This section presents evidence on the overall level of engagement in pro-social behaviour among young people. The main source of data is the Citizenship Survey from 2001 – 2008.[1] We also draw on data from the British Household Panel Survey (BHPS) from 1996 – 2008, exploiting the panel nature of this dataset to study the dynamics of engagement.[2]

As with any survey data, the reliability of the responses is a potential issue. In this case, potential non-representativeness of the sample may come from two sources. The first is standard response bias. The sampling designs of both the Citizenship Survey and the BHPS are designed to yield representative samples of the population, but may suffer from non-response bias in that a selected sample of people actually respond to the survey. Arguably, those who are more civic-minded may be over-represented within the sample of respondents, suggesting that reported levels of pro-social activity may be higher than in the population. However, without any reliable population estimate of the incidence of pro-social activities among the population to use as a valid benchmark, it is hard to gauge the extent to which this is the case.

A second potential bias may arise from the fact that there is a degree of "fuzziness" about the nature of the activities being asked about (eg compared to whether someone is working or not). People's definitions of formal volunteering or civic activity may vary and they may report the same underlying activity in different ways. Certainly, the way in which information about these activities is collected has an observable effect on their reported level. This is clear from differences between the two surveys. The differently worded and more detailed questions in the Citizenship Survey result in a higher reported level of pro-social activities compared to the British Household Panel Survey. This is shown in more detail in Appendix A1.

These issues of response bias and reporting bias may affect the overall levels of the activity that are reported in the surveys, making it hard to claim complete accuracy about the estimated overall levels of activity in the population. However, these issues should not affect the validity of comparisons made over time, or across groups at any point in time. Here, the survey analysis should accurately reflect genuine differences in the population.

[1] http://www.communities.gov.uk/communities/research/citizenshipsurvey/

[2] http://www.iser.essex.ac.uk/bhps

The focus of the analysis in this report is on such comparisons – our analysis of pro-social behaviour among young people looks explicitly at how levels of activity, motivations, barriers and facilitators compare with those among older age groups.

Table 2.1 provides summary statistics showing the proportions of each age group engaged in the four different types of pro-social activity – formal volunteering, informal volunteering, civic participation and group membership – together with information on the frequency of engagement where it is available.

The most common type of pro-social activity among the young is being a member of a local or community group (68.2%). This is similar to the level reporting some informal volunteering (67.9%) and higher than the proportions reporting formal volunteering (51.9%) and civic participation (24.8%). Civic participation is the least common form of pro-social behaviour among all age groups – and particularly low among young people. This may reflect the fact that involvement in decision-making bodies may require a greater degree of commitment and/or responsibility.

Table 2.1 Percentage engaged in pro-social activity, by age group

	Age 16-19	Age 20-24	Age 25-29	Age 30-55
Formal volunteering				
Proportion doing any	51.9%	37.8%	37.3%	45.3%
Of which…				
At least once a month	65.6%	63.2%	61.9%	63.1%
Several times a year/ less	34.4%	36.8%	38.2%	36.9%
Informal volunteering				
Proportion doing any	67.9%	66.5%	63.5%	67.0%
Of which…				
At least once a month	63.8%	60.6%	56.9%	54.2%
Several times a year/ less	36.2%	39.4%	43.1%	45.8%
Civic participation				
Proportion doing any	24.8%	28.4%	31.4%	37.4%
Of which…				
At least once a month	11.4%	10.5%	9.2%	8.3%
Several times a year/ less	88.6%	89.5%	90.8%	91.7%
Group Membership				
Proportion doing any	68.2%	57.3%	56.8%	61.8%
Proportion doing any activity	**83.9%**	**79.7%**	**76.6%**	**81.0%**
N	2,312	3,504	5,336	32,523

Source: Citizenship Survey
For activity definitions, see Appendix A1

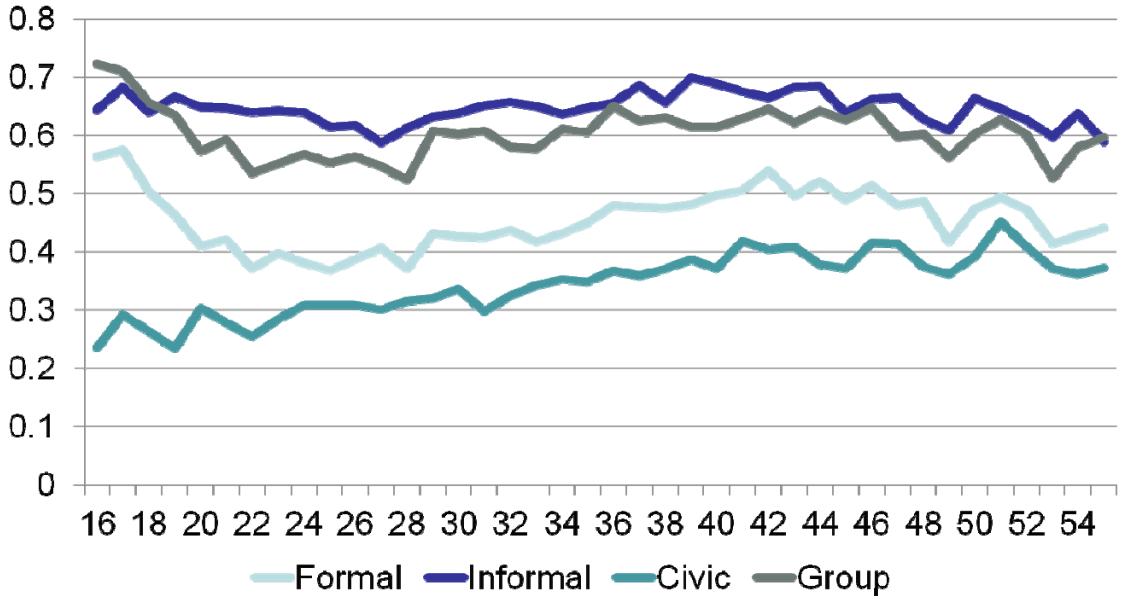
Comparing young people with older age groups, this evidence shows that young people aged 16-19 are more likely to be engaged in pro-social activities than people in the older age groups. 83.9% of those aged 16-19 report being engaged in at least one of the four activities (formal volunteering, informal volunteering, civic participation, group membership). This compares to 79.7% of those aged 20-24, 76.6% of those aged 25-29 and 81.0% of those aged 30-55.

This finding is in contrast with other studies that have tended to look at pro-social activity amongst a broader category of young people, with 16 – 24 a common grouping (e.g. Low et al, 2007). The conclusion from these previous studies is that young people are less engaged in these kinds of activities. Focusing more narrowly on the age range 16-19 reveals a different picture and suggests that levels of engagement are higher among young people.

More detailed analysis of participation rate by age (Figure 1) highlights that there is a steep decline in formal volunteering and group membership from age 16 through 20. Civic activity rises with age, while the age profile of informal volunteering is relatively flat.

The decline in formal volunteering and group membership as people move into their 20s suggests that educational institutions may play a role in providing opportunities for these activities – and that the decline is linked to people leaving education and moving into employment. This is confirmed by further analysis later in the report. In the next section we show that levels of pro-social activity are higher among young people in education than they are among young people in work (or than among young people not in employment, education or training). Further evidence in Section 4 shows that schools and colleges are the most important source of information about volunteering for young people – and indeed are more frequently cited than any other source among any age group. Finally, evidence on motivations for volunteering (discussed in Section 4) highlights that many young people are fairly instrumental in their attitude towards volunteering (seeing it as a way of enhancing skills and gaining experience for example) and may therefore stop volunteering once they have achieved their desired goal and moved into employment or further education.

Figure 2.1 Age profiles, pro-social activity



Source: Citizenship Survey

Formal volunteering and group membership begin to rise again around age 30, most likely coinciding with having children and the children starting school (as shown in Section 4 there is an increase in the number of people citing school as a source of information about volunteering activities among people at this age). This may point to a natural life-cycle to pro-social activity, something that has been suggested previously (Ockenden and Russell 2010). However, formal volunteering and group membership do not return to the same level as before – young people are more engaged in these activities than any other age group.

There is a strong degree of overlap in the activities, shown in Table 2.2. Most young people doing each of the activities are also engaged in others. Of those who formally volunteer, for example, 81% also do informal volunteering, 35% also do some civic participation and 99% are a member of a group.

Table 2.2	Inter-relationship between pro-social activities, aged 16-19				
Of those doing…	Prop^{n} that also does formal vol	Prop^{n} that also does informal vol	Prop^{n} that also does civic partic	Prop^{n} that also does group	N
Formal vol	1.00	0.81	0.35	0.99	1,125
Informal vol	0.61	1.00	0.28	0.75	1,621
Any civic	0.69	0.78	1.00	0.81	612
Any group	0.79	0.75	0.29	1.00	1,525
Source: Citizenship Survey					

In addition to being more likely to engage in pro-social activity, young people also show a greater level of commitment in terms of their time. For the three types of activity where information is available, (formal volunteering, informal volunteering and civic participation), those aged 16-19 are more likely than older age groups to report that they are engaged at least once a month rather than several times a year or less.

2.2 Dynamics of engagement

The evidence from the Citizenship Survey provides a snapshot of the proportion of people who are engaged in pro-social activities at a single point in time. In practice, many are likely to move in to – and out of – such activities, implying for example that a greater proportion of people will be engaged at some point in time. The BHPS collected data from the same individuals over time allowing analysis of the dynamics of engagement and, in particular, the extent to which young people persist in being engaged (or not) in pro-social behaviour from one year to the next.

As already discussed, compared to the Citizenship Survey, the BHPS is a more general household survey. It asks fewer (and less detailed) questions about pro-social activities and, partly as a result of this, reported levels of engagement are lower in the BHPS compared to the more specialised Citizenship Survey, although the patterns in participation are very similar.

Table 2.3 presents evidence from the BHPS on the extent to which individuals persist in their engagement, broken down by age. Specifically it shows the proportion of those who are engaged who are still engaged when they next complete the survey. For formal volunteering and group membership, the gap between observations is two years while for informal volunteering, it is one year. It also reports the same thing for non-engagement.

Table 2.3 Persistence of pro-social activities among young people		
	Of those engaged - % who are engaged when next observed	Of those not engaged - % who are still not engaged when next observed
Formal volunteering		
Age 16 – 19	42.2%	89.2%
Age 20 – 24	35.8%	89.9%
Age 25 – 29	46.0%	89.3%
Age 30 – 55	55.8%	87.3%
Informal volunteering		
Age 16 – 19	37.0%	97.2%
Age 20 – 24	37.1%	97.4%
Age 25 – 29	45.2%	97.0%
Age 30 – 55	62.5%	94.7%
Group membership		
Age 16 – 19	59.2%	77.8%
Age 20 – 24	69.8%	74.1%
Age 25 – 29	76.5%	75.1%
Age 30 – 55	82.9%	74.3%
Source: British Household Panel Survey		

As the table illustrates, the majority of young people do not persist in engagement with volunteering. Only around 40 per cent of those who volunteer (either formally or informally) are still doing it when they are next observed. This is consistent with the relatively steep decline in the level of volunteering between ages 16-19. Levels of persistence do, however, rise with age. Among those aged 30-55, the majority of people do persist with their engagement.

In general, levels of non-engagement are highly persistent, particularly for volunteering. Around 90 per cent of those who report not doing the activity in one period also report not doing it two years later. This means that very few young people who are not already engaged in these activities take them up.

This suggests two different challenges if policy-makers are keen to raise levels of volunteering in any year:

- Encouraging those who are not currently engaged to start doing pro-social activities
- Encouraging those who are currently engaged in pro-social activities to continue to do so as they get older.

2.3 Types of activity

Table 2.4 provides more detail on the type of pro-social activity (within the four broader categories) that young people engage in (compared to older age groups).

The questions on types of volunteering activities provide information on the tasks that volunteers perform. In this respect, there are many similarities between the profile of volunteering activities for young people aged 16-19 compared to the older age groups. Young people take on responsible volunteering roles such as organising and helping to run activities and leading groups and being committee members. There are some differences, however, particularly where specific skills are required. Younger people are less likely to provide transport and to do administrative-type work.

The questions on types of civic participation and group membership provide information on the purpose of the organisations that young people engage with. Not surprisingly, there is a greater tendency for young people to engage with youth-oriented organisations (groups involved in young people's services, children's education and activities etc).

Table 2.4.1 Types of pro-social activity – formal volunteering

	16-19	20-24	25-29	30-55
Organize/help to run an activity	50.0%	45.1%	42.8%	48.1%
Raise Money/sponsored events	43.5%	38.3%	44.6%	51.9%
Visiting/ befriending people	30.1%	31.9%	31.3%	29.1%
Giving advice/info/counselling	20.6%	24.6%	26.1%	26.7%
Leading group/member of committee	20.0%	18.3%	16.9%	25.4%
Representing	14.7%	14.1%	11.9%	13.4%
Campaigning	8.2%	10.0%	9.6%	9.3%
Secretarial/admin/clerical work	7.3%	13.4%	11.6%	15.8%
Provide transport/driving	6.5%	15.7%	17.8%	23.2%
Other practical help	39.2%	30.3%	28.8%	36.9%
Other help	7.8%	9.8%	10.1%	11.3%
N	**1,215**	**1,340**	**2,006**	**12,120**

Table 2.4.2 Types of pro-social activity – civic participation

	16-19	20-24	25-29	30-55
Local services to young	14.4%	4.6%	4.3%	4.0%
Local regeneration	6.6%	2.1%	3.0%	3.8%
Local community services	5.8%	3.1%	4.8%	6.2%
Local education service	4.9%	1.7%	1.8%	3.1%
Tackling local crime problems	2.7%	1.5%	1.9%	3.3%
Local health service	2.2%	0.9%	2.4%	2.4%
Tenants group	0.7%	2.4%	2.5%	3.1%
N	**411**	**656**	**1,098**	**7,594**

Table 2.4.3 Types of pro-social activity – informal volunteering				
	16-19	**20-24**	**25-29**	**30-55**
Giving advice to someone	39.9%	41.9%	39.7%	25.5%
Baby-sitting/ caring for children	30.6%	29.6%	29.7%	18.0%
Write letters/fill in forms	16.4%	22.0%	24.8%	14.8%
Cook/clean/laundry/gardening	15.5%	17.1%	14.6%	9.3%
Do shopping/collect pension/pay	15.1%	16.2%	16.5%	12.3%
Transporting/escorting someone	14.9%	25.5%	29.3%	31.5%
Keep in touch with someone	14.1%	15.7%	16.2%	13.4%
Looking after property/pet	13.6%	18.4%	20.8%	17.4%
Decorating/home	11.6%	14.6%	14.9%	7.5%
Representing someone	5.8%	8.0%	8.6%	10.1%
Sitting with/providing personal care	3.1%	3.5%	3.7%	2.8%
Other	3.6%	4.5%	5.0%	4.5%
N	**1,757**	**2,582**	**3,754**	**19,452**

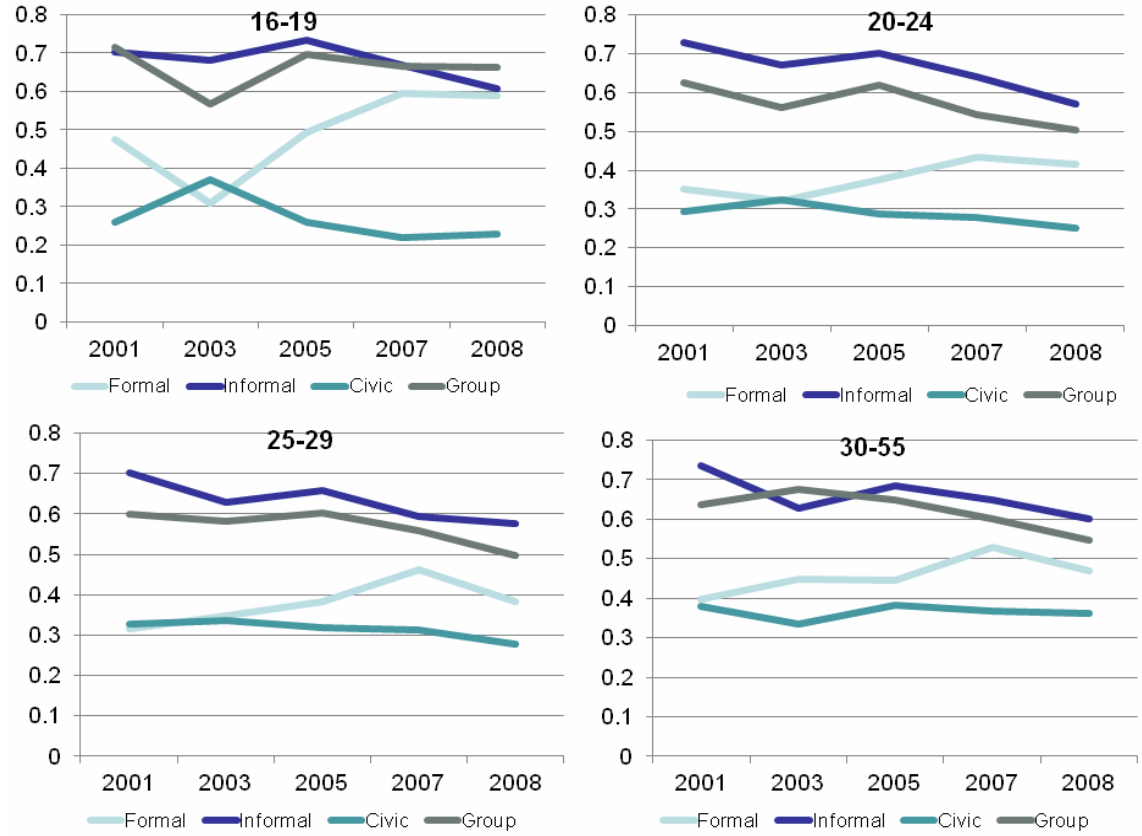
Table 2.4.4 Types of pro-social activity – group membership				
	16-19	**20-24**	**25-29**	**30-55**
Exercise	55.5%	53.1%	50.1%	47.7%
Children activities	37.5%	19.5%	17.6%	23.0%
Religion	35.6%	33.2%	34.9%	37.6%
Hobbies/recreation/arts/social	34.8%	31.9%	28.2%	28.5%
Children's education	30.2%	20.2%	26.4%	35.2%
Adults education	12.3%	22.4%	20.6%	18.7%
Safety/First Aid	12.1%	9.9%	9.4%	8.7%
Health/disability/social welfare	11.0%	14.9%	16.3%	19.1%
Elderly	6.9%	6.0%	6.4%	8.5%
Local Community/Neighbourhood	5.6%	7.2%	10.7%	16.4%
Politics	3.5%	2.9%	2.6%	3.4%
Justice/Human rights	4.3%	6.9%	7.1%	5.9%
Environment/animals	5.0%	5.4%	6.1%	10.2%
Trade unions	1.6%	4.5%	6.8%	10.9%
Citizens'	1.6%	1.9%	2.2%	3.9%
N	**1,765**	**2,226**	**3,337**	**21,878**
Source: Citizenship Survey				

2.4 Trends in engagement

Figure 2.2 plots levels of engagement over time, separately for each age group. The Citizenship Survey data covers the period 2001 – 2008/09 with the survey being conducted every other year across most of this time. To make it easier to pick out the main trends – and differences in those trends across age groups we run simple linear

regressions, summarizing the average annual change in participation rates for each age group. Further details and full results are given in Appendix A2.

Figure 2.2 Time trends in pro-social activity levels, by age group



Source: Citizenship Survey

In general, the evidence displayed in Figure 2.2 points to positive trends in the level of pro-social engagement among young people, at least when compared with levels of engagement among older age groups. The positive trends are clearest for formal volunteering. The level of formal volunteering has risen over the period as a whole among all age groups but the overall rate of increase has been greater among the young than among people in their 20s (3 percentage points each year, compared to 1 percentage point). Figure 2 shows evidence of a decline at the start of the period among the young, which was later reversed. This pattern may reflect the political and financial resources invested in supporting formal volunteering across this period. Conversely, informal volunteering appears to have declined among all age groups but the rate of decline appears to have been slower among the youngest age group than among the older age groups, but these differences are not statistically significant.

Group membership has remained broadly constant among the youngest age group; this contrasts with significant falls among those in their twenties. The only exception to the generally positive trends among young people is for civic participation, which has declined further amongst the youngest age group compared to older age groups (although the differences are small).

3 Demographic profile

In this section we look at the extent to which levels of engagement vary across sub-groups within the population of young people. We focus on gender, economic activity, ethnicity, religion and health which have been found by previous research to be important factors. As before, the main focus is on young people aged 16-19. However, we present comparative statistics for the older age groups in order to capture anything distinctive about the younger age group.

3.1 Gender

In line with previous studies, the Citizenship Survey shows that pro-social behaviour tends to be a more female activity when looking at the population as a whole. However, there is some evidence that traditional gender differences are narrowing at younger ages. Among the group aged 30-55, women are more likely to engage in all types of pro-social behaviour than men. This is not true among those aged 16-19. The gender gap is narrower in formal volunteering, while young men are more likely than young women to do civic participation and group membership.

Table 3.1 Levels of engagement, by gender and age group

	Formal volunteering	Informal volunteering	Civic participation	Group member	N
Age 16-19					
Men	51.9%	64.6%	25.3%	69.7%	1112
Women	52.0%	71.0%	24.3%	66.8%	1200
Age 20-24					
Men	37.7%	66.9%	27.0%	58.4%	1502
Women	37.9%	66.2%	29.4%	56.5%	2002
Age 25-29					
Men	36.9%	63.6%	30.9%	56.4%	2325
Women	37.6%	63.3%	31.7%	57.0%	3011
Age 30-55					
Men	41.9%	65.0%	37.0%	60.2%	15772
Women	48.0%	68.6%	37.7%	63.0%	19628
Source: Citizenship Survey					

Among young people, the difference between traditional volunteering activities (which remain more common among women) and civic and group activities (which are more common among men) is consistent with evidence showing that men prefer 'action-oriented activities' – sports and ICT have been seen especially to engage young men (Hill and Russell, 2009; Home Office, 2003). Indeed, the 'competitive image' of sport, it is suggested, clashes with 'perceptions of femininity', with some young women feeling too self-conscious to be involved in sport, or fear that it is too violent. Recent secondary analysis of the Taking Part survey shows that in the sporting sector, young males are much more likely to volunteer; across other cultural sectors the reverse is true (D'Souza et

al, 2011 forthcoming). Interestingly, both young men and young women perceive the other sex as having more options in activities than they have (EdComms, 2009). Young men have also been seen to be heavily involved in youth councils (Gaskin, 2004), and young women in performance activities and school-involvement activities (Perkins et al, 2007).

3.2 Economic activity

Among 16-19 year olds, those in full time education are most likely to volunteer and also to engage in groups. In fact young people aged 16-19 in education are the most likely to do these activities of any of economic activity group across all ages. Education is also positively correlated with formal volunteering among 20-24-year olds. Being in education is less strongly correlated with informal volunteering and civic participation – education institutions are likely to play less of a role in providing opportunities for these particular pro-social activities.

Table 3.2 Levels of engagement, by economic activity and age group

	Formal volunteering	Informal volunteering	Civic participation	Group member	N
Age 16-19					
In education	59.5%	67.7%	25.7%	73.2%	1107
In work	50.1%	72.4%	24.6%	67.5%	686
NEET	43.9%	64.5%	23.4%	62.1%	781
Age 20-24					
In education	46.5%	63.3%	29.4%	62.8%	572
In work	41.2%	71.6%	28.9%	61.4%	1999
NEET	29.2%	60.3%	27.3%	49.0%	1295
Age 25-29					
In education	34.1%	58.1%	29.8%	52.8%	248
In work	41.8%	67.4%	32.6%	61.2%	3776
NEET	28.9%	56.2%	29.0%	48.0%	1863
Age 30-55					
In education	48.5%	67.7%	40.1%	63.8%	436
In work	49.1%	70.4%	39.1%	65.9%	24602
NEET	36.2%	59.1%	33.3%	52.3%	10204

Source: Citizenship Survey

Schools and other education institutions clearly have a key role to play in generating opportunities for people to engage in volunteering and group activities. As shown in the next section, no other single institution comes close in terms of providing a source of information about volunteering. One potential issue that this creates is that there is a decline in engagement as young people leave full time education. Also, previous research has indicated that by holding pro-social activities on school premises, young people who feel an antipathy or lack of belonging toward school for whatever reason, including having been bullied, can be put off form participating, and thereby excluded (EdComms, 2009). These issues are explored further in Chapter four and in the conclusion.

Levels of engagement are consistently lowest among the NEET-group (i.e. those who are not in education, employment or training). This is in spite of the fact that research undertaken as part of the evaluation of v – The National Young Volunteers' Service – suggests that formal volunteering programmes often act as a substitute for – and hopefully a stepping-stone to – employment for young people (NatCen et al 2011 forthcoming). There may be factors specific to this group which make them less likely to take advantage of volunteering opportunities. NEETs are seen to be more reticent about the potential benefits of volunteering to job acquisition or access to education than other young people (vInformed, 2008).

3.3 Ethnicity

Levels of engagement in each type of activity are very similar between white and non-white ethnic groups among the youngest age group. This is in contrast with older age groups where there is a greater gap in engagement between whites and non-whites. The data in Table 3.3 below shows an aggregate of all ethnic minorities within which there is of course significant diversity of experience. Our results cannot describe patterns for difference ethnic groups masked by this, although it is worth noting that previous research has shown that Asian young people are less likely to volunteer than white or black young people (Hill et al 2009).

Table 3.3 Levels of engagement, by ethnicity and age group

	Formal volunteering	Informal volunteering	Civic participation	Group member	N
Age 16 – 19					
White	52.9%	68.8%	25.2%	68.3%	1466
Non-white	50.7%	66.7%	24.2%	68.1%	1121
Age 20 – 24					
White	38.8%	68.8%	29.7%	58.5%	2279
Non-white	36.5%	63.3%	26.5%	55.6%	1602
Age 25 – 29					
White	40.7%	67.0%	33.5%	59.8%	3612
Non-white	32.3%	57.9%	28.0%	51.9%	2302
Age 30 – 55					
White	47.9%	69.0%	40.3%	64.4%	24039
Non-white	39.7%	62.8%	31.2%	56.3%	11327
Source: Citizenship Survey					

More broadly within the literature, there is little consensus on how participation rates vary by ethnicity; the evidence here suggests that an interaction of ethnicity and age may be important for understanding participation.

One factor that may account for the narrowing gap could be a greater prevalence of second and later generation immigrants among younger age groups. Young people born outside of the UK are seen to have lower participation rates than those born in this country (Drever, 2010).

Another factor could be differential ethnic composition of different age groups. The non-white group may contain a number of different ethnic groups with quite different patterns of engagement. It has been suggested, for example, that Muslim parents, particularly South Asians, might choose that their children focus on academic work, or activities coincide with mosque attendance, or they might not want their daughters travelling home late (EdComms, 2009). Further analysis of differences across ethnic groups (and any changes over time) would be interesting to pursue, particularly to understand the extent to which they may explain the narrowing ethnic gap, but this is outside the scope of this study.

Another potentially important dimension to ethnic differences is evidence of differential rates of involvement in different cultural sectors. Analysis of Taking Part shows that while ethnicity has no bearing on volunteering in the sporting sector, fewer ethnic minority young people volunteer in the other cultural sectors, such as the arts and heritage (D'Souza et al 2011).

3.4 Religion

Religious practices are associated with differences in engagement. Among young people, levels of formal and informal volunteering and group membership are highest among those who are practising Christian. The main difference in this age group is between those who are practising Christian and those who are not (including those who are practising other religions, those who are religious but non-practising and those who report no religion).

In the youngest age group, levels of formal volunteering and group membership are lowest among those who report no religion (compared to those who are practising other religions or non-practising). This is similar to previous studies (Department for Education, 2010; also IVR, 2007; Bryant Lubden, 2010). It contrasts slightly with older age groups where levels of pro-social activity are lower among those who are practising other religions than among those who are non-practising or report no religion. In some respects, this may be similar to (and driven by similar factors to) the differences by age that were observed between the white and non-white ethnic groups.

Table 3.4 Levels of engagement, by religion and age group

	Formal volunt	Informal volunt	Civic partic	Group member	N
Age 16 – 19					
Practising Christian	75.0%	71.9%	19.8%	80.1%	113
Practising other religion	59.9%	59.3%	27.0%	64.9%	252
Non-practising	56.6%	63.9%	20.6%	65.9%	329
No religion	53.2%	64.1%	21.1%	60.9%	200
Age 20 – 24					
Practising Christian	51.9%	63.8%	29.4%	60.4%	186

Practising other religion	38.5%	50.4%	25.1%	45.6%	334
Non-practising	44.1%	65.3%	25.5%	54.9%	468
No religion	38.3%	62.1%	28.0%	50.5%	285
Age 25 – 29					
Practising Christian	55.5%	63.4%	30.0%	63.8%	316
Practising other religion	32.1%	47.6%	26.0%	44.3%	562
Non-practising	43.5%	63.3%	33.5%	54.4%	662
No religion	42.8%	62.6%	26.4%	52.5%	344
Age 30 – 55					
Practising Christian	62.6%	69.5%	39.5%	67.6%	2618
Practising other religion	35.8%	51.2%	29.2%	44.1%	2514
Non-practising	50.2%	63.7%	37.3%	58.8%	4575
No religion	50.0%	65.3%	40.3%	57.6%	1306
Source: Citizenship Survey					

A link between pro-social activity and religion is hardly surprising given that many pro-social activities take place in religious spaces or through networks organised through religions. The apparent growing gap among young people between practising Christians and those with no religion may be less easy to explain. Previous research has found that young people who volunteer are less likely to have found out about the opportunity through their church than their older counterparts (Drever, 2010). The evidence on where people find out about volunteering opportunities presented in the next chapter supports this, showing that "place of worship" is less important for younger people than for older. However, the proportion of people who report being practising Christians is also lower among the younger age group than among the older – 13 per cent of those aged 16-19 compared to 24 per cent of those aged 30-55. This may point to selection effects as the main explanation for a widening gap (i.e. that practising young Christians are an increasingly selected group compared to the older population).

3.5 Health and disability

Health problems and disability may potentially impact on people's ability to engage in pro-social activities. To explore this, we exploit a question in the Citizenship Survey that asks whether respondents suffer from any limiting long-term illness or disability. Classifying people on the basis of this question reveals levels of engagement among those with a long-term illness/ disability that are close to – and in many cases higher than – levels among those without. To some extent this is supported by evidence on barriers in the next section – ill-health is only cited by a small number. However, this analysis must be caveated by the fact that there are relatively small numbers reporting ill-health and disability and also by potential bias issues around self-reported health status measures.

Table 3.5 Levels of engagement, by ill health and age group					
	Formal volunteering	Informal volunteering	Civic partic	Group member	N
Age 16 – 19					
No health problems	52.2%	67.6%	24.5%	68.7%	2206
LT illness/ disability	48.8%	74.6%	29.1%	61.2%	123
Age 20 – 24					
No health problems	37.8%	66.3%	27.9%	57.2%	3281
LT illness/ disability	38.2%	70.4%	35.6%	60.4%	241
Age 25 – 29					
No health problems	37.0%	62.7%	30.5%	56.5%	4939
LT illness/ disability	42.4%	73.4%	42.1%	60.4%	415
Age 30 – 55					
No health problems	46.3%	67.7%	37.0%	62.9%	27808
LT illness/ disability	40.0%	63.8%	40.0%	56.2%	4855
Source: Citizenship Survey					

The findings from the Citizenship Survey contrast with those from some previous studies. For example, Moore and Fishlock, 2006, find that while around 20 per cent of the working-age population has a disability, only three to six per cent of volunteers in the UK are disabled. However, in terms of levels of informal volunteering, no statistically significant difference between those with an LLI or disability and those without has been found (Kitchen et al, 2006).

The Helping Out survey shows that people with an LLI are more likely to formally volunteer within the area of health and disability, and in local community groups, which could reflect participation in self-help groups (Teasdale, 2008). By contrast, volunteers with a disability or LLI were underrepresented in sports volunteering, conservation volunteering, and participation in an educational group (ibid). Fitzgerald and Lang (2009) point out that low rates of volunteering in the sports sector could be linked to low participation rates (see also D'Souza et al 2011).

Volunteers with an LLI were more likely to be motivated by 'seeing a need in the community' than volunteers not at risk of social exclusion, and to be more likely to recognise the personal benefits (ibid Teasdale; Fitzgerald and Lang, 2009). It is also suggested that disabled young people (along with other marginalised groups) are more likely to be motivated to participate by seeking mutual support or campaigning around an issue which affects them personally (Roker and Eden, 2002). The main barriers faced by those with an LLI were the disability itself (84 per cent compared with 22 per cent of all respondents who were not formal volunteers in the last year but would like to help) and anxiety about losing benefits (ibid Teasdale; Fitzgerald and Lang, 2009). Problems faced by disabled volunteers include access issues (for organisations which are not disability-focussed), lack of reasonable adjustments, and negative views of disabled people (Scope, 2005).

4 Motivations, facilitators and barriers

In this section we consider the main motivations that lead young people to become involved in pro-social behaviour, what barriers prevent them and what facilitators would lead them to becoming engaged, or to engage more. Clearly many of these factors are inter-related and many common themes emerge with regard to specific motivators, facilitators and barriers (which we collectively term "triggers") for young people.

4.1 Summary of key triggers

The focus of this study is on behavioural triggers, contrasting with much of the existing literature which has largely focussed on practical factors. For example, the most commonly cited barrier to taking part in out-of-school activities, such as volunteering, is 'lack of time' (Hill and Russell, 2009; Gaskin, 2004; Hutin, 2008; IVR, 2007; BYC, 2008; Drever, 2008). This is said to be true especially for students at Key Stage 4 level, due to exam pressure (Keating et al, 2009). Other oft-cited barriers are 'lack of information' on how to become involved (Hill and Russell 2009; Gaskin 2004; Hutin 2008; EdComms 2009; BYC 2008; Ellis, 2004), or the initial financial outlay required to become involved (Gaskin, 2004; Keating et al, 2009; Perkins et al, 2007). We show below that these are important, but we focus much of the discussion on other, behavioural factors. These can be grouped under three broad headings:

- **Instrumental or extrinsic triggers** – these describe a set of factors that relate to the rewards of pro-social activity to the individuals themselves, including their own personal development or skill enhancement. As we show below, these factors are particularly important for young people relative to older people. Young people may be looking to aid university admission or later employment (Eley, 2001; Hutin, 2008), through, for example, membership of school councils (Keating et al, 2009; Low et al, 2007). We show in the next section that young people who engage in certain pro-social activities (specifically formal volunteering and group membership) are indeed more likely to have a degree and improved employment outcomes. This positive association supports the instrumental motivation for engagement, although it may arise through the self-selection of young people into pro-social activities rather than through a causal mechanism.

- **Mission-driven or intrinsic triggers** – these describe a set of factors that relate to individuals' own internally-driven motivations and beliefs that lead to engagement in pro-social activities, independent of any personal benefit. This may be altruism or a sense of civic responsibility that leads people to help disadvantaged people or others in the community, which has been found to be especially true of women (Hill and Russell, 2009; Eley, 2001). Religious beliefs may also act as intrinsic triggers. These factors appear to be less important for young people relative to older age groups.

- **Social triggers** – these describe a set of factors that relate to the influence of individuals' engagement with others on their pro-social activity. This may include people being motivated to engage in order to meet people and make friends (Hutin, 2008) or to have fun (Perkins et al, 2007), or people engaging as a result of their interaction with others (eg volunteering because their friends and family do it, or because they are asked). Freeman (1997) presents evidence on the "power of the ask" showing that many people volunteer only when requested to do so. He interprets this as people feeling obliged to volunteer, although there may be other interpretations, such as the ask engendering a warm glow or a sense of self-belief. More practically, people may use social triggers to narrow down on specific volunteer opportunities (from a wider set of possible options).

The next section presents findings from the analysis of the Citizenship survey, which collects information on a wide range of trigger factors. The following sections draw out in more detail the findings from the literature on the behavioural factors that affect involvement in pro-social activities.

It is worth emphasizing that the "behavioural" literature that we look at here is distinct from the emerging field of behavioural economics. There has been almost no work which has sought to examine the effect of different "nudges" on pro-social activity, such as volunteering. A notable exception is a recent study reported by Peter John and co-authors in which a local authority offered opportunities for civic engagement to people phoning up to complain about services. A treatment group was offered verbal encouragement and practical opportunities, compared to a control group that was sent publicly-available information. The idea was to turn "complainers" into "volunteers", but the nudge had no discernible effect on behaviour in practice (see John et al, 2011). Further studies such as these, however, offer opportunities to learn practical lessons about what strategies might be effective in raising levels of pro-social activity.

4.2 Evidence from the Citizenship Survey

The Citizenship Survey asks a number of questions on motivations, facilitators and barriers to people becoming engaged in formal volunteering or group activity. While this does not encompass all pro-social behaviour, the responses provide interesting insights into potential drivers and inhibitors among the young.

Positive triggers – motivations and facilitators

Table 4.1 summarises information on people's self-reported motivations for volunteering.

Across all the age groups, the single most important motivating factor to get engaged is for a sense of personal achievement and enjoyment. This applies to more than 80 per cent of participants in all age groups.

The main difference by age is that young people are more likely to cite instrumental reasons for volunteering than older age groups. For example, they are more likely to cite "gaining skills" (62 per cent of those aged 16-19 compared to 25 per cent of those aged

30-55) and “help with career” (38 per cent compared to 12 per cent). They are also more likely to cite “gaining confidence and self-esteem” (31 per cent compared to 11 per cent).

By contrast, intrinsic factors are relatively more important for older age groups. For example, they are more likely to cite personal, political or religious beliefs (58 per cent of those aged 30-55 compared to 40 per cent of those aged 16-19), feeling less selfish (39 per cent compared to 22 per cent) and a desire to improve things and help people (67 per cent compared to 59 per cent).

Table 4.1 Motivations for engagement

	Age 16-19	Age 20-24	Age 25-29	Age 30-55
Personal achievement/growth/enjoyment	82.8%	84.3%	86.6%	85.8%
Meet people/new friends	65.4%	71.3%	70.0%	71.2%
Gain skills	62.0%	50.2%	34.7%	25.4%
Improve things/help people/solve issue	58.9%	67.9%	64.5%	67.2%
Use skills/do things I am good at	44.4%	41.8%	45.5%	41.7%
Personal/political/religious beliefs	39.7%	43.7%	56.6%	57.8%
Help with career/get qualification	37.6%	29.4%	20.8%	11.5%
Gain in confidence/self-esteem	30.6%	18.8%	13.9%	10.9%
Family/friends did it	28.6%	18.5%	20.9%	19.7%
I had spare time	26.5%	27.2%	24.6%	25.3%
Feel less selfish/ more needed	21.6%	30.9%	34.3%	37.8%
Get a position in the community	8.9%	9.9%	7.7%	8.0%
Received help	4.7%	3.6%	5.2%	3.8%
N	**292**	**293**	**403**	**2934**

Source: Citizenship Survey

Table 4.2 summarises what might facilitate an increase in people’s level of engagement – this includes factors that people report would encourage them to start and factors that would encourage them to increase their level of engagement.

There is some evidence that practical barriers – transport and expenses – are relatively more important for young people than for older. This is not surprising as they may have less access to their own car and lower incomes. In line with the earlier finding of similar levels of activity among people reporting a long-term illness or disability, health is not an important factor – cited by less than 1 per cent of those asked.

In terms of behavioural facilitators, there are many similarities with the motivators. In particular, instrumental factors are more important for young people – a higher proportion say that knowing that volunteering could improve their skills would lead them to doing it/ doing more. Also more important for young people are social factors. 63 per cent of those aged 16-19 say that the involvement and encouragement of friends and family would be a

facilitator. This is higher than among older age groups. This may reflect a desire for volunteering and other forms of pro-social activity to be a social experience. Alternatively, the involvement of friends and family may help to give young people greater self-confidence.

Table 4.2 Potential facilitators

	Age 16-19	Age 20-24	Age 25-29	Age 30-55
If friends/family got involved with me/made me start	63.3%	53.3%	46.8%	44.8%
If someone asked me to get involved	46.5%	45.7%	44.7%	46.1%
If I knew it improve my skills	43.5%	37.4%	30.7%	22.1%
If more information was available	26.5%	27.7%	26.1%	23.5%
If I could do it from home	19.6%	24.8%	27.1%	25.8%
If someone could provide transport	18.7%	14.5%	10.2%	7.9%
If I knew I could get expenses paid	16.5%	15.9%	12.6%	9.4%
If it was for a good cause/something I believed in	2.7%	3.7%	4.7%	8.7%
If I had help with my career resp/time	1.3%	2.8%	4.0%	3.6%
If I had less work commit/employer encouragement	0.3%	0.5%	0.9%	1.3%
If I knew it would make a difference	0.2%	0.3%	0.3%	0.4%
If it was of interest	0.3%	0.3%	0.3%	0.3%
If I had more self-motivation	0.3%	0.6%	0.5%	0.9%
If my health improved	0.1%	0.3%	0.3%	0.4%
If I could use my skills/experience	0.1%	0.5%	1.0%	1.3%

Source: Citizenship Survey

Sources of information

Among the potential facilitators, around one-quarter of those who respond say that having more information would lead them to get involved. Table 4.3 summarizes information from the Citizenship Survey on how those who do volunteer find out about volunteering opportunities.

For people in the youngest age group, the main source of information is their school, college or university. Nearly one-third of people aged 16-19 cite this as a source of information about volunteering opportunities. In fact, this is a much higher proportion than any other source across all age groups. Education institutions play a crucial role in engaging young people in volunteering and once people leave education institutions there is not any other institution of comparable importance. Schools become more important again for people aged 30-55 pointing to a link through children.

Religious places of worship are the second most important institution in terms of providing information behind education bodies. These are less important among young people aged 16-19, which may be explained by lower levels of practising religion compared to older age groups. Employers play much less of a role, as do "official" sources of information such as volunteer bureaux. Information coming directly from the organisations is also relatively unimportant.

There is relatively little use of new media to find out about volunteering. As a source of information, the internet is behind TV, radio and magazines and only just ahead of libraries. However, is should be noted that the data is from 2008 and new media platforms and usage has increased dramatically in recent years. Recent qualitative research (NatCen, 2011) suggests that new media is an increasingly important source of information for particular groups of young people finding out about opportunities they would otherwise not have been aware of.

Much more important than official sources of information are other volunteers – these are an important source of information for all age groups.

Table 4.3 Sources of information about opportunities for volunteering

	Age 16-19	Age 20-24	Age 25-29	Age 30-55
School, college, university	32.5%	15.8%	11.5%	15.9%
From someone else already involved	27.2%	22.7%	22.5%	27.6%
Place of worship	10.1%	9.0%	9.7%	13.1%
Through previously using service	9.2%	8.2%	8.7%	11.4%
Radio/newspaper/magazine	5.3%	5.4%	5.4%	6.6%
Promotional events/voluntary fair	3.4%	3.1%	2.7%	3.4%
Internet/yellow pages	3.3%	3.4%	3.5%	2.9%
Library	3.2%	1.9%	1.3%	2.6%
Careers centre	2.3%	1.9%	1.5%	1.1%
Citiz bureau/comm centre/volunt bureau	2.2%	2.1%	2.1%	2.0%
Employer volunteer scheme	2.2%	2.8%	3.5%	2.4%
Millennium volunteers	1.6%	1.2%	0.7%	0.5%
GP's surgery/hospital	1.0%	1.8%	1.3%	1.8%
Word of mouth friends/family/neighbours	0.9%	2.1%	2.9%	0.9%
Contacted by group/club/organization	0.5%	1.1%	0.9%	1.4%
Leaflet/flyer/advertisement	0.5%	0.6%	0.5%	0.5%
Other	0.8%	1.4%	1.7%	1.8%
N	**1,898**	**2,565**	**3,922**	**25,328**
Source: Citizenship Survey				

Potential barriers

Table 4.4 summarises the factors that people specifically cite act as barriers to their engagement. The results mirror closely the literature, with other time pressures and commitments as the most commonly cited barrier for all ages – work, study and family for example. Other practical barriers (such as health) are less commonly cited.

Awareness and information are also important. Particularly among young people, there may also be some perception issues about whether volunteering is really for them ('never thought about it', 'there is no need', 'I am too young').

Table 4.4 Factors cited as barriers to volunteering

	Age 16-19	Age 20-24	Age 25-29	Age 30-55
Other commitments				
Study commitments	45.8%	27.2%	14.6%	8.6%
Lack of time/ do other in spare time	34.1%	28.9%	28.2%	25.7%
Work commitments	14.4%	34.1%	41.8%	50.6%
Domestic Household Activities	5.4%	17.1%	26.8%	33.8%
Parenting/Caring/family responsibilities.	3.0%	6.9%	9.7%	10.6%
Away from home a lot	0.4%	0.8%	0.5%	0.5%
Too busy finding/looking for a job	0.2%	0.2%	0.1%	0.1%
Information/ opportunities				
Lack of opportunity	19.5%	20.4%	18.3%	13.7%
Lack of awareness of possibility/info	16.1%	15.9%	12.4%	12.2%
New area/not involv in local community	8.4%	12.1%	13.2%	8.7%
Never been asked	2.4%	2.9%	3.5%	3.5%
Perceptions				
Lack of motivation/never thought about it	15.3%	12.0%	8.2%	8.6%
Life Stage/too young/too old	11.7%	2.2%	0.8%	0.9%
No need/no need locally/no help need	4.2%	1.4%	3.0%	2.1%
Specific barriers				
Language problems/cultural reasons	2.9%	1.1%	4.1%	2.1%
Physical or mental health	1.0%	1.7%	2.9%	6.2%
Lack of money/resources	0.2%	1.0%	0.6%	0.8%

Source: Citizenship Survey

4.3 Underlying factors influencing pro-social behaviour

In this section we discuss specific behavioural factors in more detail. This discussion draws on the findings from the quantitative literature. It is organised around three thematic headings: levels of confidence; family attitudes, structure and background; youth and peer attitudes. Under each heading 'underlying' factors are identified as barriers and, often, on the flip side as facilitators.

Confidence, self-esteem and trust

Much of the literature refers to young people not having the confidence to become involved in pro-social activities (Gaskin, 2004; Ellis, 2004). This is not something picked up directly by the Citizenship Survey as it is not an answer option (although it may be reflected in young people's desire to engage with – or with the support of – friends and family). Gaining confidence is also a prime motivating factor behind getting involved.

In the absence of any nationally representative data, evidence on these factors in the literature is a collation of programme evaluations or study of particular sub-groups. The literature suggests that a fear of rejection or that their efforts will not be recognised can put young people off becoming involved despite a desire to do so (*ibid,* Ellis). Others may feel they have 'nothing to offer' (v, 2007). Low levels of self-esteem have also been linked to low take up of leisure participation, and young people with low self-esteem were also more likely to report more barriers than others (Raymore et al 1994 cited in Huebner and Mancini 2003). This is brought into sharper focus by recent research suggesting that there is a link between participation and volunteering in the sporting and cultural sectors (D'Souza et al, forthcoming). It is worth noting that this is not a barrier solely faced by young people. In *Helping Out*, Low et al (2007) found that two-fifths of adults not involved yet wanting to be felt they did not have the right skills or experience to start volunteering, though this was seen to decline with age.

Young women have been found to be particularly susceptible to this. They are more likely to feel shy or self-conscious than young men (*ibid*; Perkins et al, 2007), and this has been found to be especially true of younger women (18-21 years) than older ones (22-25 years) (Princes Trust 2004 cited in Gaskin 2004). Girls were also found to be more likely to cite having 'nothing to offer' as a barrier to volunteering than were boys (v, 2007). Lack of confidence was also found to be a significant barrier for people who are minorities and had possibly felt marginalised, such as disabled people, BME young people and ex-offenders (Ellis, 2004).

It has been suggested (see, for example the 2007 report by the National Youth Agency) that volunteering increases young people's self-confidence, with more recent research (NatCen at al, 2011) adding some more robust evidence to this assertion. Three mechanisms for this change are identified: through improving communication skills, through 'learning by doing' and by developing feelings of self-worth and self-efficacy (*ibid,* NYA 2007). It is thus something of a vicious circle that a lack of self-confidence holds some young people back from activities which could promote their confidence. Furthermore, volunteering is viewed as a 'route out of social exclusion', by increasing

feelings of self-worth and self-esteem through 'actively choosing to help someone' (Bowgett, 2006; NatCen, 2011).

The literature also provides evidence that becoming involved in volunteering has the capacity to increase the likelihood that people feel involved in their communities more generally. It has been found that volunteers in the sporting and cultural sectors are more likely to feel that they can influence the provision and design of local services within that sector (D'Souza et al, forthcoming). Furthermore, the research undertaken for the v evaluation (16-25 year olds) suggests that young people's motivations for pro-social activity may change: volunteers on v programmes originally motivated, despite low confidence, by personal gain (improving their CV/career opportunities) could be affected by the very engagement in volunteering and helping others, such that they had or would become involved in other pro-social activities for more altruistic, community-focused reasons. Other research shows that what keeps young people in extra-curricular activities is enjoyment (Wikeley et al, 2007), though these may have a less tangible benefit to others than volunteering in the v programme.

The flipside of this, of course, is that more confident young people are more likely to become involved in pro-social activities. In a study of American youth (13-15 years old), Bryant Ludden (2011) found a link between psychological well-being and involvement in school-based pro-social activities, and that those with 'perceived higher personal popularity' were more likely to be involved than others. It is likely this is a cyclical relationship, but also that feeling good about yourself is a facilitator to becoming involved in pro-social activities, as suggested by the opposite being true for low self-esteem as mentioned above.

In the report *Understanding participation* (2009), Brodie et al cite 'suspicion and lack of trust' as a barrier to pro-social activities such as volunteering or fundraising among the population as a whole. This was expressed, for example, as not giving to a charity because of doubt over the business model or efficacy of charitable giving, or not volunteering to remain eligible for welfare benefits. The literature seldom suggests that this is also true of young people. Indeed, raising or handling money is seen to be the most popular type of voluntary activity among young people (Hutin, 2008). While younger people donate less money on average than their older counterparts (Low et al, 2007) this is more likely due to lack of resources than cynicism (there is no evidence on how much money working young people donate as a proportion of income). There is also evidence that young people are more likely to give to charities via shop counter collections and to people on the streets begging, than their older counterparts (Drever, 2010).

Family, friends and other social influences

Much evidence from the Citizenship Survey points to the importance of an individual's social networks. Family and friends provide support and encouragement and co-participate. They provide information about specific opportunities for pro-social activities and an example that young people can follow. There is evidence that parental endorsement is important in the take-up of activities among young people (Huebner and

Mancini, 2003); parent being involved in the local community is also important in the take-up of activities in and out of school among young people (Fletcher et al, 2000). This also suggests, however, that this could be the cause of exclusion from this type of activity for some young people, as Keating et al (2009) reported a difficulty in engaging parents in activities that boost the citizenship curriculum, and Mahoney and Stattin (2000) found a relationship between young people in Finland not participating in structured activities and low parental support for such activity.

Having limited exposure to family or friends who have volunteered has also been cited as a barrier to young people volunteering (Eley, 2001). This is in line with the finding that 83 per cent of 18-24 year old volunteers had family members who had also volunteered (Davis Smith, 1998 cited in Gaskin, 2004). Family links may also contribute to the importance of 'word of mouth' as a route into volunteering for adults (Low et al, 2007) and young people alike (Gaskin, 2004). Aside from the practical issue, whereby having family members who have volunteered can provide information and an introduction into volunteering, there will be less tangible benefits such as demonstrating that pro-social behaviour is worthwhile and rewarding, and a tacit support and encouragement of such behaviour. Conversely, a literature and communications review by the then Department for Children Schools and Families found that where parents have low expectations of their children, this is seen to reinforce disengagement with pro-social activity (EdComms, 2009). For young people from lower socio-economic backgrounds who did volunteer, school was more frequently cited as the means to entry (Davis Smith, 1999). There are also instances where family can be a barrier to volunteering for other reasons – as seen with concerns over safety among some ethnic minority families in Chapter 3 (EdComms, 2009) – or where negative attitudes about volunteering and other activities are introduced or reinforced.

Young people from higher socio-economic backgrounds have displayed more likelihood to take part in volunteering (Davis Smith, 1999) and more positive family influence than others (Gaskin, 2004; Bryant Ludden, 2011; Perkins et al, 2007; Davis Smith, 1999). Young people who placed greater importance on school achievement and had higher grades than others were also more likely be involved in school-based pro-social behaviour (Bryant Ludden, 2011), though this is likely interlinked with socio-economic background.

In addition to attitudes of family members, family structure and relationships are seen to be related to participation in pro-social behaviour. Huebner and Mancini (2003) found that, in addition to parental endorsement of participation, parental marital status and parental monitoring were significant factors in aiding pro-social behaviour among young people. They link these factors mainly to practical facilitators, such as having greater capacity to drive young people to activities, or introducing them to networks involved in pro-social behaviour. Wikeley et al (2007) support these findings: young people who do not live with both their natural parents may well spend time with non-resident parents rather than undertaking out-of-school activities, while the cost of transport was prohibitive for many from poorer backgrounds.

Mahoney and Stattin (2000), in their study of Finnish youth, note that some activities – notably unstructured ones at youth recreation centres – attract young people with poor relationships with their parents, while Perkins et al (2007) found ethnic minority young people in America who were involved in pro-social programmes did so in order to avoid dangerous situations and not get into trouble.

Youth and peer attitudes

Overall, it has been found that some young people hold a negative image of the terms volunteers and volunteering. When this language is used, it is seen as something done by older people, 'do-gooders', and consisting of a narrow range of activities or 'menial tasks' (Gaskin, 2004; NatCen et al, 2011). These views have been seen as a particularly strong barrier for BME people and minority groups such as disabled, gay, ex-offenders (Gaskin, 2004): volunteers are seen to be mainstream, white and middle class (Karmat, 2001 cited in Gaskin, 2004) which in some sectors reflects the reality.

Negative attitudes towards pro-social activities held by peers have also been seen to put young people off taking part (Gaskin, 2004). Volunteering is reported to hold 'low status' among young people's peers, and carries with it the image of being 'sad' or 'not cool' (Ellis, 2004). To overcome this, a study for the Cabinet Office (British Youth Council 2008) and the evaluation of v (NatCen et al, 2011) found marketing of activities in a way that is relevant and attractive to young people to be important. This is emphasised by the fact that the v evaluation also found that peer referral is a key factor in recruiting young volunteers. The number of friends that a young person has is seen, through multivariate analysis, to be a significant predictor of participation in formal volunteering (Drever, 2010). This might be because of exposure to these peer-to-peer routes into volunteering; however it may also simply be that similar people form – and sustain – friendships with each other.

Despite some of these negative perceptions, there is evidence that young people also see volunteers as being 'caring', 'committed', 'trustworthy', 'confident' (Gaskin, 2004 – though the association between the volunteer and older people was enduring). A study of peer attitudes found 68 per cent said it was 'cool to volunteer to help other people'; this was more true of females (78 per cent said this) than males (59 per cent) (the Giving Campaign, 2002, cited in Gaskin, 2004).

It has also been noted that young people are more likely to get involved in pro-social activity that is linked to something they are interested in, such as sports, arts, media and so on (Gaskin, 2004). Young women are more likely to be interested in performance activities, boys in sports (Perkins et al, 2007). Recent youth volunteering programmes have taken on some of these messages in the way that they design and market volunteering opportunities to attract young people (NatCen et al 2011).

4.4 Summary

A key finding from the Citizenship Survey is that young people are more strongly motivated by instrumental factors to engage in pro-social activity than older age groups.

Gaining skills and confidence and furthering their career are relatively more important. Knowing that it will help with skill development and career prospects is also a potential facilitator. Intrinsic factors are more important for older age groups. It may be that they have less need for skill and career development. Alternatively, a longer period of engagement in pro-social activities may help to reinforce and build mission motivations.

If young people are looking to pro-social activity to gain confidence then lack of confidence may hold them back. This is not directly asked about in the Citizenship Survey, but may be reflected in the fact that young people would like encouragement – or even co-participation – from friends and family. The literature shows that under-confidence as an inhibitor is particularly important for younger girls, disabled young people, BME young people and ex-offenders.

The most commonly cited barrier to emerge from the Citizenship data – namely lack of time due to study commitments or other – is supported by literature focussing on practical constraints. Lack of information also features strongly both in the literature and data and there is clearly an issue about finding a replacement for education institutions as a provider of information and opportunities. Transport and expenses are also relatively more important for younger people.

Outside education, official bodies play a relatively unimportant role in inducing people to volunteer. Instead, informal social networks are important, providing not only practical information but encouragement and endorsement. Attitudes of peer groups were also found to be important in the literature, which reflects the findings of our analysis of the importance of friends or family being involved (a quarter of young people cited this as a motive, Table 4.1). While the literature suggests that a largely negative view among young people of more traditional pro-social activities, and volunteering in particular, more recent studies suggest this might be changing. This may be tied into improving the diversity and promotion of opportunities which young people are already interested in, rather than something completely new.

5 Impacts of pro-social behaviour

The main aim of this research was to consider potential motivators and barriers to prop-social activity among young people. However, the project Steering Group was also keen to review existing evidence on the impacts of pro-social behaviour. It is beyond the scope of this project to carry out a comprehensive analysis of the impacts. We focus on a number of areas suggested by the preceding discussion – including personal development and social networks. We also look at evidence from the British Household Panel Survey on the association between young people's engagement and their later education and employment outcomes.

5.1 The literature

The review of triggers in the previous section reveals quite a lot about what people – particularly young people – perceive to be potential positive outcomes from engagement. Skills and qualifications, wider social networks and greater confidence, for example, provide motivation for people (particularly young people) to engage.

The existing literature largely supports this perception of the benefits. Firstly, volunteering has in particular been linked with career prospects, either through the development of core skills or mirroring 'work experience' in a specific sector (*ibid.*; NatCen et al 2011; Eley 2003; Gaskin 2004).

Secondly, a range of research has identified that engaging in pro-social activities can have a positive impact on young people's confidence, in terms of overcoming shyness to get involved, and their self-esteem, in terms of a belief in having something to offer (NatCen et al 2011; Department for Education 2010a; Hill et al 2009).

Research on impacts also suggests that pro-social activities are a potential route to gaining or extending social networks. One of the reasons young people become involved in pro-social activities is to meet new people and several studies identify this as an impact of volunteering in particular (NatCen et al 2011; Gaskin 2004). While this is true for all age groups of volunteers, it is particularly significant for young people, who also appear more likely to mix with people from different ethnic and religious backgrounds as a result of their volunteering activity (Drever 2010). Furthermore, it has been suggested that pro-social activity can lead to improved trust and respect amongst participants and between participants and organisers (Alderson 2000). Other research also finds that pro-social behaviour improves the capacity of young people to deal with social issues and take responsibility in the community (Eley 2010). The latter point reflects findings amongst the wider population that volunteers in a particular sector are more likely to feel they have an influence over related local decisions (D'Souza et al 2011). This suggests there is the potential for a "virtuous circle" through which initial engagement in pro-social activity leads to further engagement, for example by encouraging self-belief or by fostering intrinsic motivations. However, the evidence base for this virtuous circle is limited. If anything, the

decline in participation in formal volunteering and group activity as people move into their 20s, as well as the evidence on the high levels of non-persistence, suggests that many people find it easy to disengage.

5.2 Evidence from the BHPS

This section presents analysis of the British Household Panel Survey looking at the relationship between youth pro-social activity and individuals' later economic outcomes (namely their education, employment and earnings). In particular, we look at the relationship between whether someone engaged in volunteering and group membership between ages 16 – 19 and their education, employment and earnings outcomes between the ages of 25 – 27.

Ideally, we would like to measure the causal effect of pro-social activity, such as volunteering, but this is subject to a number of identification issues (which may also affect findings from the existing literature). Suppose we are interested in whether volunteering has an effect on employment and observe both volunteering behaviour and employment status. One potential problem if we look at current volunteering is reverse causality – that whether or not someone is employed may affect whether or not they volunteer (e.g. since it influences the opportunity cost of their time). Looking at the relationship between earlier volunteering and later employment gets round this reverse causality problem. However, a second potential issue is that any positive (or negative) association may also capture characteristics of the individual – such as their conscientiousness or motivation – that affect both their pro-social activity and their employment. This potential problem is not overcome by looking at past pro-social activity. Any observed positive (or negative) association may therefore capture both the direct impact of engagement and the effect of individuals' (unobserved) characteristics that led them to engage in the first place. It is possible to control for some observed characteristics that may affect both pro-social activity and later outcomes, but not for unobserved factors such as individual conscientiousness.

Full regression results, together with an explanation of the regression models, are presented in Appendix A3. Here we focus on the main results.

There is not a uniform association of all types of pro-social activities with later outcomes. The British Household Panel Survey allows us to look at the separate effect of three types of activities – formal volunteering, informal volunteering and group membership. In general, the evidence points to positive associations between later education and employment outcomes and formal volunteering and group membership. But the association with informal volunteering is generally negative. It is worth emphasizing that the definition of informal volunteering in the BHPS is much narrower than in the Citizenship Survey and focuses more explicitly on caring responsibilities (see Appendix A1).

The patterns for men and women in the relationship between youth engagement and later outcomes are also different and we report and discuss the results separately.

Our focus with educational outcomes is on whether or not someone has a degree. Specifically, we look at whether someone reports having a degree at age 25 or 27 and their earlier pro-social activity between ages 16 – 19.

- The data show that, among women, formal volunteering has a positive association with getting a degree. Women who did some formal volunteering are 19 percentage points more likely to have a degree by age 25–27 than those who do not. Given that the proportion of women aged 25-29 with a degree (including a higher degree) is 31 per cent, this effect is fairly large. For men, there is no statistically significant association.

- Informal volunteering has a negative association with getting a degree for women. Women who do informal volunteering are 15 percentage points less likely to have a degree by age 25-27 than those who do not. Again, there is no significant assocation among men.

- Group activity has a positive association with whether or not someone has a degree. This is statistically significant for both men and women. Women who engage in groups are 23 percentage points more likely to have a degree by age 25-27 than those who do not. Men who engage in groups are 15 percentage points more likely to have a degree by age 25-27 than those who do not. Again, the magnitude of these differences is large.

Our focus with employment outcomes is on whether or not someone is unemployed:

- In general, the evidence suggests little significant association between pro-social activity and whether or not someone is in work. Group activity has the strongest association with later employment and the relationship is strongest among men. Men who were members of groups when they were young are 5 percentage points less likely to be unemployed when they are older. However, once additional controls are introduced for individuals' characteristics the difference reduces and becomes statistically insignificant.

Finally, we look at the association between pro-social activities and later earnings (for people who are working):

- For women, formal volunteering has a positive association with later earnings – earnings are 23 per cent higher among those who have done some formal volunteering compared to those who have not. However, introducing controls for education and other characteristics, this coefficient halves in magnitude and becomes statistically insignificant. In other words, much of observed higher earnings among women who have volunteered arise as a result of the fact that

they are more likely to attain higher qualifications. We cannot say that formal volunteering has any positive association with later earnings, over and above the association with educational outcomes.

- For women, there is a similar story when looking at informal volunteering. This has a negative association with later earnings. Earnings are 27 per cent lower among those who have done some informal volunteering/ caring compared to those who have not. Introducing controls for education and other characteristics, this coefficient reduces in magnitude (although not nearly to the same extent) and becomes statistically insignificant. The size of the coefficient suggests that there may be an additional association between informal volunteering and later earnings over and above the link to educational outcomes, but this is not statistically significant.

- For men, only group membership is significantly associated with later earnings. However, this has a positive association with later earnings, even conditional on education. Earnings are 25 per cent higher among those who were members of a group between ages 16-19, even comparing those with the same educational outcomes.

This is the first evidence on the link between young people's engagement and their later education and employment outcomes. It is hard to disentangle the effect of volunteering and group activity from the self-selection of individuals into these activities. Nevertheless, the evidence is consistent with the perceived positive effects that motivate involvement in pro-social activity by many young people. It would be interesting to extend this work further to look at the relationship with later pro-social behaviours and, even more importantly, to find ways of identifying the causal effect of engagement (separate from any selection effects). The evaluation of NCS may provide an excellent opportunity to do this.

6 Discussion

This report has synthesised two strands of research with the aim of better understanding the facilitators and barriers to pro-social behaviour amongst young people. Here we summarise some of the key findings from the analysis and, with reference to the literature, consider what this means for policy at a national level and practice within the voluntary sector for encouraging two outcomes:

- Changing the behaviour of young people not currently involved in pro-social activities
- Sustaining and diversifying the involvement of those currently involved in pro-social activities

Table 6 at the end of this section summarises the main messages emerging from the research

6.1 The current situation

By focusing specifically on young people aged 16-19, the findings from our secondary analysis reveals a very positive story about young people's engagement. Given that previous studies had tended to aggregate the picture for a wider age range of young people (16-24), this was not previously well known. Our findings show that levels of engagement are actually higher amongst people aged 16-19 than among older age groups. Furthermore, measured in time given, the level of commitment also tends to be higher.

The story is also positive when looking at trends in engagement among 16-19 year olds. During the 2000s formal volunteering rose faster among 16-19 year olds than among people in their 20s. This is a notable finding given the policy context – interventions to create volunteering opportunities have been focused at a wider age group, 16-24, but appear to have a had more of an effect for those at the lower end of that age range. Given that the Citizenship Survey will no longer be conducted, it may be difficult to establish the impact of changing emphasis of policy in this area from an investment in creating volunteering opportunities, through a young volunteers' service, to developing young people into volunteers, through NCS. Looking at trends in other pro-social activities, membership of clubs and groups has been constant for young people, though this contrasts with declining rates among older people. Similarly, while informal volunteering has been declining amongst young people, the rate is slower than for other age groups.

6.2 Inclusivity of pro-social activities

Our analysis also shows that traditional differences across demographic groups are narrower among young people. This is true of gender and ethnic differences. Understanding what lies behind these changes is beyond the scope of this study, but would be interesting to explore further. In relation to ethnic differences, it may reflect the composition of ethnic minorities within younger age groups. It may also suggest that

recent initiatives to attract a more ethnically diverse group of young people to volunteering opportunities have been successful. Evidence from the evaluation of v showed that ethnic minorities were over represented in volunteering opportunities created under v's various programmes (NatCen et al 2011).

Perhaps surprisingly, we found little evidence that health or disabilities are major barriers to pro-social activity among young people. They are not widely cited as barriers. There are also comparable levels of engagement when we compare people with and without a self-reported limiting long-term illness or disability. Of course, there may be some limitations with self-reported health indicators. Other evidence found in the literature indicates an under-representation of people with disabilities among volunteers, compared to the population as a whole.

Pro-social behaviour was found to be significantly lower amongst young NEETs (compared to those in education or employment). This is in spite of the fact that NEETs may have the most to gain. Qualitative evidence from the v evaluation suggested that where NEETs were involved in volunteering this had a greater relative impact on their lives, in terms of confidence, self-esteem and employability, than other groups. Consequently, although there may be more resource involved in engaging with and encouraging this group to get involved in pro-social activities, it may be considered a worthwhile investment.

6.3 Increasing and diversifying pro-social behaviour

Our analysis has identified the key role played by education institutions in facilitating pro-social behaviour. They provide a key source of information about opportunities. Rates of engagement – particularly in formal volunteering and group activities – are highest among young people in education compared to other economic activity and age groups and fall away as people move into their 20s. The levels of persistence in pro-social activities are lower among the younger age groups – high levels of engagement among the young are often not sustained.

To some extent this drop-off of engagement at school/college leaving ages may be natural as people move to a new life stage. Not least because many young people have an instrumental attitude to volunteering, seeing it as a way of gaining skills and helping with their career. For them, it may have served its immediate purpose by the time they leave school/college. It is also clear that engagement may have an established life-cycle, picking up again among the over 30s, perhaps through children. There is little evidence in the literature that captures this life-cycle picture, which may be interesting to explore further in the long-term, possibly through the use of BHPS and Understanding Society.

However, it would be worth exploring ways to maintain the engagement of young people into their 20s. The main barriers cited by people in this age group are other time commitments, lack of opportunities and information. Evidence from the literature suggests that ensuring that there are flexible opportunities is important as is encouraging employers and educational institutions to embed pro-social activities into induction or

professional/personal development schedules. Finally, there may be ways for organisations to work on young people who are initially motivated by instrumental reasons and engage them through sustained long-term mission-motivations, i.e. to create a genuine virtuous circle. Findings of the v evaluation suggested that although some harder to reach groups were attracted to volunteering for personal reasons, such as improving their employability, through the act of volunteering their motivations for sustaining and engaging in more pro-social activities changed. A rewarding and enjoyable volunteering experience can motivate young people to engage in other activities for the benefit of others in the community (NatCen et al 2011).

As well as keeping people engaged, there are further challenges in reaching out to the minority of people who are currently not engaged. These may include those who may not feel included by school/college-oriented activities as well as those who are not in education, employment and training. Recent policy initiatives such as `v' appear to have been successful in diversifying the image and practice of volunteering and there may be particular lessons to learn from this experience. It is also clear from the literature that social networks of friends and family are important. Breaking into networks where there is currently no engagement may be hard but seems likely to yield large benefits.

All of these issues are salient to the current National Citizen Service (NCS), planned to be delivered to up to 90,000 16 year-olds by 2014. The programme aims to provide young people with a number of the skills and qualities that the literature suggests act as drivers of pro-social activity (such as confidence, self esteem, leadership) as well as developing social links and local relationships within their community to create the conditions within which pro-social behaviour could thrive. The crucial tests will be whether it reaches those who would otherwise not engage and whether it results in sustained pro-social activity.

Table 6 Encouraging pro-social activity among young people	
Messages from the research	**Target**
Young people should be given positive messages about their engagement in pro-social activity. It is not widely known that young people are more active than any other age group in the rest of the working age population (and that the trends over time are more positive); this fact could be promoted positively by government and the sector to deal with any remaining negative image of volunteering being “not cool” or “not for people like them.”	Voluntary sector Government Media
Traditional differences in participation eg across ethnic groups are narrower among young people than in older age groups, which may in part reflect targeted initiatives such as v. This demonstrates the potential for policy to bring about more socially-mixed participation through changing perceptions.	Voluntary sector Government
Many young people’s engagement stops when they leave full-time education. It is important to recognise this as an important transition point and think about doing more to maintain engagement through e.g. flexible volunteering opportunities built around employment and embedded into workplace induction activities.	Voluntary sector Government Employers
Instrumental motivations (building skills, career and confidence) are relatively more important for young people than for older. The evidence supports this and shows that people who do formal volunteering/ group participation when they are young (16-19) go on to have better education and employment outcomes when they reach their 20s. This kind of positive message can provide further motivation for the initial engagement of young people. However, there is an opportunity and a challenge for voluntary organisations to build and sustain longer-term mission-motivated relationships	Voluntary sector
Social networks play a crucial role for young people, providing support, information and role models. Existing volunteers can help to engage their peers and family (e.g. through encouraging them to give it a go).	Voluntary sector
A minority of young people remain persistently disengaged and may be outside social networks where pro-social activity takes place. This group disproportionately includes NEETs. The evidence suggests that measures to promote positive images of pro-social activity and to build individuals’ confidence that they have something to offer can be effective.	Voluntary sector Government

Bibliography

Bowgett, K. (2007) 'Homeless people and volunteering' *Voluntary action* 7(3) pp 11-29 http://www.ivr.org.uk/Institute+of+Volunteering+Research%2fVA+Documents%2fVA7_3%2farticle1_bowgett.pdf

British Youth Council (2008) 'Recognise and Respect Us' Overcoming Barriers to Youth *V*olunteering Available online: http://www.byc.org.uk/media/18384/Recognise%20and%20Respect%20Us.%20Overcoming%20Barriers%20to%20Youth%20Volunteering.%20Full%20Report%2024%20July%202009.pdf

Brodie, E., Cowling, E., and Nissen, N. (2009) *Understanding participation: a literature review* (http://www.ivr.org.uk/Institute+of+Volunteering+Research%2fMigrated+Resources%2fDocuments%2fU%2fPathways-literature-review-final-version.pdf)

Bryant Ludden, A. (2011) 'Engagement in school and community civic activities among rural adolescents' *Journal of Youth and Adolescence* 40(9): 1254-1270

Davis Smith, J. (1999) 'Poor marketing or the decline of altruism? Young people and volunteering in the United Kingdom' *International Journal of Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Marketing* 4(4) pp. 372–377

Department for Education (2010a) Internal analysis of volunteering among 16-19 year olds using Citizenship Survey

Department for Education (2010b) Internal analysis of volunteering using Tellus4

Drever, E. (2010) *2008-09 Citizenship Survey: Volunteering and charitable giving topic report* (London: CLG)

D'Souza, J., Low, N., Lee, L., Morrell, G. and Hall, J. (forthcoming) *Understanding the drivers of volunteering*

EdComms (2009) *Attitudinal Barriers to Engaging Young People in Positive Activities: Literature and Communications Review* (DCSF: London) https://www.education.gov.uk/publications/eOrderingDownload/DCSF-RR140.pdf

Eley, D. 2001 'The impact of volunteering on citizenship qualities in young people' *VAJ* 4(1)

Locke, M. (2007) *Who gives time now? Patterns of participation in volunteering* (IVR: London)

Ellis, A. (2004) *Generation V: Young people speak out on volunteering* (Institute for Volunteering Research: London)

Fitzgerald, H. and Lang, M. (2009) *A reivew of the literature on volunteering, disability and sport* (Carnegie Research Institute: Leeds) http://www.imspa.co.uk/technical/docs/20100317151715volunteering_disability_and_sport_literature_review__2_%5B1%5D.pdf

Fletcher, A., Elder, G. Jr., and Mekos, D. (2000) 'Parental influences on adolescent involvement in community activities' *Journal of Research on Adolescence, 10*, 29-48 http://libres.uncg.edu/ir/uncg/f/A_Fletcher_Parental_2000.pdf

Freeman, R. (1997) "Working for nothing: The supply of volunteer labor" Journal of Labor Economics, 15(1) Part 2: S140-S166

Gaskin, K . (2004) *Young people, volunteering and civic service: A review of the literature* A report for the Institute for Volunteering Research

Hill, M. and Russell, J., with Brewis, G. (2009) *Young people, volunteering and youth projects: A rapid review of recent evidence* http://vinspired.com/uploads/admin_assets/datas/282/original/v_formative_evaluation_rapid_evidence_review_Dec_2009_x_2.pdf

Home Office (2003) *Cul-de-sacs and gateways: understanding the polsitive futures approach* (London: Home Office)

Huebner, A. and Mancini, J. (2003) 'Shaping Structured Out-of-School Time Use Among Youth: The Effects of Self, Family, and Friend Systems' *Journal of Youth and Adolescence* 32(6) pp 453-463

Hutin, M. (2008) *Young people help out: Volunteering and giving among young people* (IVR: London)

John, P., Cotterill, S. Liu, H. and Richardson, L. (2011) *Nudge Nudge Think Think*, Bloomsbury, London

Keating, A., D. Kerr, J. Lopes, G. Featherstone, and T. Benton. (2009) *Embedding Citizenship Education (CE) in secondary schools in England (2002–08): Citizenship Education Longitudinal Study (CELS): Seventh Annual Report* (London: DCSF)

Kitchen, S., Michaelson, J., Wood, N.,, A., Benton, T. and John, P. (2006) *2005 Citizenship survey: active communities topic report* (Department for Communities and Local Government: London)

Low, N., Butt, S., Ellis Paine, A., and Davis Smith, J. (2007) *Helping out: a national survey of volunteering and charitable giving* (Cabinet Office: London?) http://www.ivr.org.uk/Institute+of+Volunteering+Research%2fMigrated+Resources%2fDocuments%2fH%2fOTS_Helping_Out.pdf

Mahoney, J. and Stattin, H. (2000). 'Leisure activities and adolescent antisocial behavior: The role of structure and social context' *Journal of Adolescence, 23,* pp 113–127

Moore, D., and Fishlock, S. (2006) *Can do volunteering: a guide to involving young disabled people as volunteers* Online at http://www.energizeinc.com/art/subj/documents/canDOweb.pdf

National Centre for Social Research, Institute for Volunteering Research, University of Southampton, University of Birmingham, Public Zone (2011) *Formative Evaluation of v: the National Young Volunteers' Service, Final Report*

Ockenden, N. and Russell, J. (2010) 'The volunteer journey: people moving into and out of volunteering over their life course', Paper presented at NCVO / VSSN Researching the Voluntary Sector Conference, Leeds, 6th September

Roker, D. and Eden, K. (2002) *A Longitudinal Study of Young People's Involvement in Social Action: The Youth and Social Action project* (Brighton: Trust for the Study of Adolescence)

Smith, S. (2010) "Social Connectedness and Retirement", CMPO Working Paper 10/255 http://www.bris.ac.uk/cmpo/publications/papers/2010/abstract255.html

Scope (2005) *Time to get equal in volunteering: tackling disablism* (Scope: London)

Teasdale, S. (2008) *Volunteering among groups deemed at risk of social exclusions* (IVR: London) The National Youth Agency (2007) *Young people's volunteering and skills development* Research report RW103 for the Department for Education and Skills http://www.ivr.org.uk/Institute+of+Volunteering+Research%2fMigrated+Resources%2fDocuments%2fS%2fSocial_Exclusion08.pdfhttp://www.volunteering.org.uk/NR/rdonlyres/C4E9C2A7-9C3C-407E-A107-DA9E9B607ECC/0/YoungPeoplesVolunteeringandSkillsDevelopmentfullreport.pdf

The National Youth Agency (2007) *Young people's volunteering and skills development*, Research report RW103 (Department for Education and Skills: London)

v (2007) *Barriers preventing passionate young people acting on their concerns* (v: London)

http://vinspired.com/uploads/admin_assets/datas/2/original/Young_Peoples_Passions.pdf

v (2008) *Youth volunteering: attitudes and perceptions* (v: London)
http://vinspired.com/uploads/admin_assets/datas/4/original/attitudes_and_perceptions.pdf

Wood et al (2009) '"The Confidence To Do Things That I Know Nothing About": skills development through extra-curricular inquiry activity' in *Proceedings: 3rd Learning Through Enquiry Alliance (LTEA) conference 2008: Inquiry in a Networked World* (Centre for Inquiry-based Learning in the Arts and Social Sciences: Sheffield)

Wikeley, F., Bullock, K., Muschamp, Y. and Ridge, T. (2007) *Educational relationships outside school: why access is important* (Joseph Rowntree Foundation: York)
http://www.education.ed.ac.uk/outdoored/research/educational_relationships.pdf

Appendix A1: Variable definitions

For the secondary data analysis, we focus on four pro-social behaviours. These are

- Formal volunteering
- Informal volunteering
- Civic participation
- Group membership

The choice of these four was related to the variables available in the Citizenship Survey. Only three of the behaviours are asked about in the British Household Panel Survey (excluding civic participation).

Formal volunteering

In the Citizenship Survey, this is defined on the basis of unpaid help given to groups, clubs and organisations within the last twelve months. This is available in each wave of the available survey data (2001, 2003, 2005, 2007 and 2008/9).

In the British Household Panel Survey, this is defined on the basis of people reporting that they do unpaid voluntary work. This question has been asked every other year since 1996.

Informal volunteering

In the Citizenship Survey, this is defined as doing things unpaid, for someone who was not a relative (specifically not help given through a group, club or organisation). This is available in each wave of the available survey data (2001, 2003, 2005, 2007 and 2008/9).

In the British Household Panel Survey, this is defined on the basis of people reporting that they provide some regular service or help for any sick, handicapped or elderly person not living with them. This is asked in every wave.

Civic Participation

In the Citizenship Survey, this is defined on the basis of individuals' membership of a number of listed groups within the last 12 months. These include a group making decisions on local health services, a decision making group set up to regenerate the local area, a decision making group set up to tackle local crime problems, a tenants' group decision making committee, a group making decisions on local education services, a group making decisions on local services for young people, another group making decisions on services in the local. This is available in each wave of the available survey data.

There is no comparable information collected in the British Household Panel Survey.

Group membership

In the Citizenship Survey, this is defined on the basis of individuals taking part, supporting or helping in a number of listed groups, clubs or organisations during the last 12 months. The list includes Children's education/ schools, Youth/children's activities (outside school), Education for adults, Sports/exercise (taking part, coaching or going to watch), Religion, Politics, The elderly, Health, Disability and Social welfare, Safety, First Aid, The environment, animals, Justice and Human Rights, Local community or neighbourhood groups, Citizens' Groups, Hobbies / Recreation / Arts/ Social clubs, Trade union activity,

Other. This is available in each wave of the available survey data.
In the British Household Panel Survey, the question is very similar. Individuals are asked whether they are a member of any of a number of organisations – political party, trade untions, environmental group, parents'/school association, tenants'/ residents' group or neighbourhood watch, religious group or church organisation, voluntary services group, other community or civic group, social club/ working men's club, sports club, women's institute/ townswomen's guild, women's institute/ feminist organisation, other group or organisation. This information is available every other wave from 1995.

Table A1 compares overall levels of participation in the two surveys across the working age population (aged 16-55) using the most recently available data. In the case of both formal volunteering and informal volunteering, levels of participation are much higher in the Citizenship Survey than they are in the BHPS which may largely be driven by differences in the questions asked. Levels of group membership are much more similar across the two surveys.

As discussed in Section 2.1 in the main report, the differences across the surveys make it hard to claim complete accuracy about the estimated overall levels of activity in the population. The way the questions are asked affects the reported extent of the activities, pointing to a degree of fuzziness. However, these issues should not affect the validity of comparisons made over time, or within groups at any point in time.

Table A1 Participation, ages 16-55, 2007/8

	Formal volunteering	Informal volunteering	Civic participation	Group membership
Citizenship Survey	46%	60%	33%	54%
BHPS	20%	9%	N/A	51%

Appendix A2: Regression results – trends

In order to explore further the direction and magnitude of any time trends in pro-social activities among different age groups, we run simple regressions of the following form for each of the four different activities:

$$P_{gt} = \sum_{g=1}^{4} \beta_g (I \mid G = g) + \sum_{g=1}^{4} \gamma_g (I \mid G = g) T + u_{gt}$$

Where P is the proportion of each age group ($G = g$) that is engaged in the activity at time t, β_g identifies constant differences across groups and γ_g identifies for each group the extent to which engagement changes over times, assuming a constant percentage point increase over time. This may simplify the actual change over time.

Dependent variable = proportion engaged in the activity, by year and age group

Table A2	**Trends in engagement, differences by age group (OLS regression results)**			
	Formal volunteering	Informal volunteering	Civic participation	Group membership
Age 16 – 19	0.028** *.010*	-0.010 *.006*	-0.012** *.006*	0.000 *.007*
Age 20 – 24	0.014 *.010*	-0.018** *.006*	-0.007 *.006*	-0.014* *.007*
Age 25 – 29	0.015* *.010*	-0.016** *.006*	-0.007 *.006*	-0.012 *.007*
Age 30 – 55	0.013** *.010*	-0.013** *.006*	0.000 *.006*	-0.013* *.007*
The regression coefficients summarise the average annual change in the proportion engaged in each activity for each age band. ** denotes that this change is significantly different from zero at the 5% significance level, * at the 10% significance level. Standard errors are reported in italics.				

Appendix A3: Regression results – impacts

We exploit the panel nature of the British Household Panel Survey in order to explore the relationship between young people's engagement in pro-social activities (between ages 16-19) and their later education and employment outcomes (observed at ages 25-27).

We run regressions of the following form.

$$Y_i^{2527} = \alpha + \beta_1 FV_i^{1619} + \beta_2 IV_i^{1619} + \beta_3 G_i^{1619} + u_i$$

Where Y indicates the relevant outcome observed when the individual is aged 25-27. We look at three outcomes. The first is whether or not the individual has a degree, the second is whether they are unemployed when they are observed at these ages and the third is their earnings (among those who are employed). In all cases, we are interested in the relationship between these outcomes and the individual's earlier engagement in pro-social activities. Using the BHPS data, we define three indicators for whether the individual ever engaged in formal volunteering (FV), informal volunteering (IV) and group membership (G) between the ages of 16 – 19. One individual may be observed more than once between ages 25-27 – we therefore cluster the standard errors at the individual level.

Clearly the employment outcomes (unemployment and earnings) may be affected by the qualifications that someone has – which may also be affected by pro-social activities. For these outcomes, we therefore look to see whether pro-social activities have an independent effect on employment outcomes in addition to any effect on education outcomes. For employment outcomes, we run a second set of regressions and include a set of indicators for individuals' highest educational qualifications.

$$Y_i^{2527} = \alpha + \beta_1 FV_i^{1619} + \beta_2 IV_i^{1619} + \beta_3 G_i^{1619} + \sum_{q=2}^{5} \gamma_q Q_i^q + u_i$$

Educational qualifications are grouped in to five categories – further degree, Degree, HNCHND, A levels, GCSEs and below. Below GCSE is the omitted category. The coefficients on the other qualifications reflect the difference in employment outcomes between someone with that qualification and someone with below GCSEs.

Individuals who volunteer may have also different characteristics that separately affect these outcomes. We attempt to control for this by running a further set of regressions including a set of individual characteristics (age, gender, ethnicity and region).

Table A3.1 – A3.3 reports the results for education, unemployment and earnings. In all cases, regressions were run separately for men and women as the relationships differ between the two. We estimate the regressions using OLS. This makes the coefficients easier to interpret. Similar results were obtained from running probit regressions for the binary dependent variables (degree and unemployment).

Table A3.1 Relationship between pro-social activity and educational outcomes OLS regression results

Dependent variable = Highest qualification is a degree (0/1), individuals aged 25 – 27

	Men		Women	
	(1)	(2)	(1)	(2)
Formal vol	-0.026	-0.007	0.190**	0.170*
	(0.065)	(0.064)	(0.064)	(0.067)
Informal vol	0.011	-0.016	-0.145*	-0.151*
	(0.060)	(0.059)	(0.064)	(0.066)
Group activity	0.152**	0.151**	0.232**	0.229**
	(0.036)	(0.037)	(0.044)	(0.045)
Age		0.018*		0.0112
		(0.007)		(0.009)
Nonwhite		0.123		0.019
		(0.087)		(0.108)
Region		Yes		Yes
N	1253	1241	1086	1058
R^2	0.031	0.112	0.096	0.128

Standard errors in parentheses, * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$

Standard errors are clustered at the individual level

Table A3.2 Relationship between pro-social activity and later employment
OLS regression results
Dependent variable = Individual is unemployed (0/1)

	Men			Women		
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Formal vol	0.0045	0.024	0.032	-0.009	-0.002	-0.003
	(0.024)	(0.024)	(0.025)	(0.017)	(0.016)	(0.017)
Informal vol	-0.025	-0.018	-0.003	-0.008	-0.009	-0.005
	(0.021)	(0.021)	(0.022)	(0.021)	(0.019)	(0.022)
Group activity	-0.065**	-0.050*	-0.038	-0.022	-0.016	-0.016
	(0.020)	(0.020)	(0.021)	(0.015)	(0.015)	(0.015)
Further degree		-0.069	-0.121		-0.081	-0.088
		(0.098)	(0.105)		(0.061)	(0.063)
Degree		-0.183**	-0.190**		-0.107	-0.118*
		(0.067)	(0.062)		(0.054)	(0.054)
HNDHNC		-0.195**	-0.229**		-0.002	-0.005
		(0.068)	(0.066)		(0.072)	(0.073)
A level		-0.182**	-0.204**		-0.121*	-0.125*
		(0.066)	(0.061)		(0.054)	(0.054)
GCSE		-0.126	-0.127*		-0.070	-0.074
		(0.067)	(0.061)		(0.056)	(0.055)
Age			-0.009			0.002
			(0.008)			(0.008)
Nonwhite			0.117*			0.024
			(0.049)			(0.044)
Region			Yes			Yes
N	1324	1253	1241	1119	1086	1058
R^2	0.015	0.049	0.097	0.003	0.029	0.044

Standard errors in parentheses, $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$
Standard errors are clustered at the individual level

Table A3.3 Relationship between pro-social activity and later earnings

OLS regression results

Dependent variable = ln weekly earnings

	Men			Women		
	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)
Formal vol	0.085	0.072	0.086	0.204*	0.133	0.118
	(0.098)	(0.097)	(0.096)	(0.102)	(0.106)	(0.107)
Informal vol	0.006	0.008	-0.016	-0.237*	-0.194	-0.211
	(0.086)	(0.085)	(0.087)	(0.112)	(0.106)	(0.108)
Group activity	0.274**	0.235**	0.224**	0.108	0.005	0.006
	(0.057)	(0.060)	(0.059)	(0.071)	(0.070)	(0.072)
Weekly job hrs	0.009**	0.009**	0.009**	0.033**	0.031**	0.031**
	(0.002)	(0.002)	(0.002)	(0.004)	(0.004)	(0.004)
Further degree		0.531**	0.485*		0.855**	0.843**
		(0.198)	(0.201)		(0.290)	(0.295)
Degree		0.346*	0.333*		1.046**	0.995**
		(0.153)	(0.151)		(0.285)	(0.292)
HNDHNC		0.341*	0.393*		0.890**	0.835*
		(0.160)	(0.159)		(0.329)	(0.354)
A level		0.210	0.252		0.788**	0.752**
		(0.141)	(0.140)		(0.276)	(0.281)
GCSE		0.159	0.181		0.566*	0.551
		(0.142)	(0.138)		(0.273)	(0.282)
Age			0.080**			0.112**
			(0.018)			(0.029)
Nonwhite			-0.253*			-0.215
			(0.126)			(0.110)
Region			Yes			Yes
N	1185	1172	1160	1032	1025	997
R^2	0.077	0.094	0.135	0.245	0.286	0.318

Standard errors in parentheses, $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$

Standard errors are clustered at the individual level

Ref: DFE-RR188

ISBN: 978-1-78105-054-5

January 2012