

# Quantifying the Extent and Value of Volunteering in relation to Inland Waterways



Association of  
Inland  
Navigation  
Authorities



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## Final report to the Association of Inland Navigation Authorities April 2011

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# Association of Inland Navigation Authorities (AINA)

## Providing a single voice on waterway management and operation

AINA was set up in 1996 with strong encouragement from government to provide, for the first time ever, a single voice for waterway management and operation.

The broad purpose of AINA is to facilitate the management and development of inland waterways as an economic, environmental, and social resource.

AINA's key strategic objectives are to:

- represent the collective views of navigation authorities to Government, regulators, other policy makers, funders and stakeholders;
- provide information, advice and good practice for the management, operation and development of inland waterways for navigation and wider use.

AINA defines 'inland waterways' as including all navigable and operational, non-tidal channels including rivers, canals and lakes, and all associated land and assets such as lock sites, towpaths and amenity areas - in other words any land which has an impact on, or relationship with an operational waterway. These inland waterways may be in public ownership, have public access, or be privately owned; but all will have the potential to be part of the navigation impact zone.

## More about AINA

Please visit our website at [www.aina.org.uk](http://www.aina.org.uk) for further information about AINA.

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# Executive Summary

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In June 2010, Ecorys (formerly ECOTEC Research and Consulting) in partnership with CSV (Community Service Volunteers) was commissioned by the Association of Inland Navigation Authorities (AINA) to quantify in financial terms the extent of **volunteering activity which takes place either on, or because of, inland waterways**.

A **mixed-method approach** incorporating qualitative and quantitative research methods was used to build a snapshot of volunteering activity across the sector, drawing on a telephone survey of 101 organisations that engage volunteers in waterway-related activity and an online survey of 256 volunteers.

This study is set against a **changing policy context** under the coalition Government and the emergence of the 'Big Society' agenda which involves a renewed interest in citizenship and participation, as well as a shift away from support and infrastructure for civil society towards a focus on service delivery. In parallel, large-scale cutbacks are transforming many aspects of the public sector. Specifically, the timing of this study is pertinent given the planned change in status of British Waterways in 2012 when it becomes a new charitable body within civil society.

## **The Profile of Volunteering on Inland Waterways**

Geographically, the distribution of organisations involving volunteers **reflects the distribution of inland waterways**, with around 25% operating nationally and the remainder (75%) operating regionally and locally. Within this, there is a concentration of organisations represented in the **East of England** and fewer organisations in the North East.

The size of an organisation can be measured in terms of its number of staff and turnover. Both measures reveal a sector characterised by a **small number of very large organisations** (including British Waterways, the Environment Agency and the Broads Authority) and a **large proportion (70%) of organisations having less than 10 staff** and a turnover of less than £50,000, with 13% having no turnover at all.

In terms of numbers of volunteers, there are around **21,000 regular volunteers** undertaking volunteering activities on or because of inland waterways (this compares to 50,000 regular National Trust volunteers), with around half of these engaged with medium-sized organisations (11–50 staff) and a relatively small proportion of regular volunteers involved with small organisations.

Volunteers spend an estimated **11,000 volunteer days per month** with inland waterways organisations (132,000 per year), with 1,200 for British Waterways and 420 at the Broads Authority. Excluding the effects of larger organisations on the average figure generates a smaller number, with 46% of organisations reporting that volunteers spend up to 30 days volunteering a month. A **'typical' organisation** therefore has around **28–48 regular volunteers with around 20–40 volunteer days per month**.

An analysis of volunteer demographics shows a predominance of volunteers who are **white (94%), male (68%) and aged over 35 (85%)**, with a 'dip' in the 25–34 age bracket coinciding with the covered 'Generation Y'. The relatively large numbers of volunteers **aged over 55 (44%)**, reinforced by the volunteer survey (70% over 55),

indicates the popularity of volunteering amongst retirees, a positive sign given the ageing population and the long-term commitment exhibited by this group.

**Medium-sized organisations** (11–100 employees) display some distinctive characteristics with a more balanced gender split and a higher proportion of 16–24 year olds (48%), in contrast to the predominantly older age profile for small and larger organisations.

The main activity undertaken by volunteers is **practical restoration and maintenance (72%)**, followed by a broadly even distribution across 'use', 'operation' and 'other' areas of activity, including; marketing, fundraising, education and research. 57% of organisations stated that over 50% of volunteer time was spent on maintenance and restoration, further emphasising the predominance of this type of activity.

The **National Citizenship Survey** provides some interesting comparators for waterways organisations – women are more likely to volunteer nationally and there is a less pronounced age profile. Referral routes, motivations and benefits broadly reflect findings from inland waterways surveys, but nationally volunteers face barriers such as work commitments and childcare issues which were not highlighted within the waterways sector.

### **The Financial Value of Volunteering**

Based on estimates of the proportion of volunteering activity that is spent on unskilled, skilled, or professionally skilled work, an equivalent **financial value** for volunteering time spent on, or because of, waterways can be generated using Heritage Lottery multipliers. The majority of time (around 70%) is spent on unskilled work, around 4% of days is spent undertaking professionally skilled work, and 26% on skilled work. This generates an equivalent value of around £1 million of volunteer time undertaken on Britain's inland waterways each month. On an annual basis, this generates an estimate of around **£10 million** and compares to an estimate for the National Trust of £20 million.

If the skew caused by larger organisations is offset, the median results generate an average of 15 days of unskilled work and five days of skilled work a month, equating to a value of £1,450 a month or **£17,400 per year per organisation**.

### **A Social Return on Investment (SROI) Analysis**

In order to estimate the additional value of the social benefits of volunteering on, or because of, waterways, an SROI approach can be used when first consulting with stakeholders to identify key outcomes. Financial proxies can then be attached to these outcomes. The key outcomes for waterways volunteers are:

- *Improved environment and surroundings*
- *Improved community relations*
- *Enjoyment / sense of personal achievement*
- *Giving something back to the area*
- *Making new friends*
- *Improved well-being*

Using proxies for key outcomes from the SROI database generates an **additional value of £700,000 per year** for waterway-related volunteering.

## *Attracting and Retaining Volunteers*

A 2010 report undertaken by Ecorys and CSV on behalf of the Inland Waterways Advisory Council (IWAC) highlighted **good practice in attracting and retaining volunteers** from outside the waterways sector. Whilst there is some excellent work and good practice being undertaken with volunteers within the waterways sector, there are also opportunities to further improve and expand the volunteer base drawing on this wider experience.

The majority of organisations have an annual volunteer budget of less than £10,000 and so have very **limited resources** to develop volunteering. Almost half of organisations have formal volunteer management processes in place, including a designated lead, although larger organisations are more likely to have formal arrangements in place. Within this, **formal documentation** for risk assessments, training and written volunteer policies are adopted by around 70%, but less than 25% offer **accredited training** leading to qualifications and less than half have **formal induction** processes in place. Around 70% of organisations **collect information** about volunteers either formally or informally, with opportunities to improve the consistency and comprehensiveness of information collected.

In order to encourage volunteering in the future and increase the number of volunteers on the waterways, there are a number of **positive aspects** of current volunteering practice within the waterway network to build on. For instance, volunteers feel that they are given **good opportunities** and that their **efforts are appreciated**. However, there are three areas in which volunteers are least satisfied; induction, the lack of opportunity to influence the development of the organisation, and on-going consultation. There is also scope for **better organisation** and a reduction in the level of **bureaucracy** for volunteers.

In terms of specific **barriers** to increasing volunteering, organisations are most concerned about longer term **sustainability**, both in regard to funding and the age of the volunteer base. Smaller organisations were more likely to report barriers relating to recruitment and retention of volunteers than larger organisations. For volunteers, the attraction of waterway-related volunteering appears to focus mainly on the **'cause'** as well as the desire to give something back, with the most common method of getting involved being through **'word of mouth'**. This mirrors the findings of the wider National Citizenship Survey.

## *Conclusions and Recommendations*

There is a very strong base of volunteering across the inland waterways sector, involving different activities and engaging a range of highly committed volunteers. There is **potential** to build on this volunteer base and existing good practice by encouraging waterways organisations to more effectively recruit, integrate and retain volunteers in the future. In the context of the Big Society, the changing role of the public sector and rising unemployment (in particular amongst young people), there are opportunities to increase volunteer engagement in a wider range of activities for the benefit all concerned.

This report provides a snapshot of a number of key features of volunteering on, or because of, inland waterways. It highlights wide-ranging **social benefits** in terms of personal and community development and offers a useful **baseline** for organisations to review their volunteering strategies, both independently and collectively as a sector.



The following **recommendations** are made for inland waterways organisations in light of the findings of this report, as well as the good practice in volunteering from other sectors highlighted in the IWAC report.

1. Collectively publicise and celebrate the existing range, value and benefits of volunteering identified in this report through articles in civil society publications and via dissemination to existing networks nationally and regionally.
2. Establish agreed protocols across the sector for the collection of data on volunteering to ensure consistency of definitions and information used in future surveys.
3. Going forward, make a clear distinction in analysis and volunteering strategies between the distinctive larger, medium-sized and smaller inland waterways organisations that make up the rest of the sector.
4. Proactively engage on a sector basis with initiatives such as the National Citizens Service and Work Programme which may involve significant volunteering elements.
5. Identify a wider range of roles in which volunteers can get involved, in particular skilled and managerial roles.
6. Work in partnership with other civil society bodies to engage under-represented groups such as younger people (especially 24–35 years) and those from minority ethnic groups.
7. Promote and support practical volunteer management improvements amongst smaller organisations in line with Investors in Volunteers standards, covering: policies and procedures (in particular formal induction processes); recognition of volunteer time and achievements; the promotion of specific volunteer roles, responsibilities and management systems; and the establishment of regular consultation and communication channels with volunteers.
8. Promote volunteer management training on a sector basis to improve integration of volunteers in organisations.
9. Use the identified motivations and enthusiasm of existing volunteers to drive future marketing campaigns.
10. Identify collective opportunities for engagement with corporate volunteering programmes on a sector basis to target the 25–34 age group.

# 1.0 Introduction

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In June 2010, Ecorys (formerly ECOTEC Research and Consulting) in partnership with CSV (Community Service Volunteers) was commissioned by the Association of Inland Navigation Authorities (AINA) to quantify in financial terms the extent of volunteering activity which takes place either on, or because of, inland waterways.

This report sets out the results of the research and analyses the extent of volunteering activity taking place on inland waterways across Britain, including the value of volunteering to the waterways, society and the volunteers themselves. It then contextualises these findings against wider trends in civil society. Finally, it examines current volunteer management practices within waterway organisations and the potential for lessons in attracting, integrating and retaining volunteers from outside the sector.

## 1.1 Aim of the Research

This research addresses the following objectives and research questions as set by AINA:

- *the number and type of organisations engaging volunteers which already do or have the potential to connect with inland waterways*
- *the existing capacity of the above organisations in managing volunteers ‘professionally’ i.e. using task descriptions, etc., and how they promote various roles*
- *the number of individuals volunteering undertaking a wide range of activities, suitably broken down and categorised*
- *the numbers of navigation authority staff/volunteers dedicated to engaging volunteers on the waterways; i.e. a distinct role such as a volunteers’ coordinator or officer*
- *the amount of time volunteers spend (in the broadest possible terms) in relation to the numbers of individuals volunteering*
- *a categorisation of the various levels of skills being used in volunteering and an apportionment of the amount to which each level is being engaged*
- *a demographic sample of volunteers engaged in relation to the waterways, e.g. age, gender, ethnicity*
- *the value of volunteering work in contributing to the agendas of various government departments*
- *the value of volunteering work to volunteers themselves, highlighting their motivations and received benefits*
- *the value of volunteering to both to the waterways and to society.*

## 1.2 Method

A mixed-method approach incorporating qualitative and quantitative research methods was used to build a snapshot of volunteering activity across the sector. This included:

- a telephone survey of **101** organisations that engage volunteers in waterway-related activity, representative of the whole inland waterways volunteering sector

- an online survey of volunteers capturing information on the motivations of volunteers and the benefits they gain (the online survey was sent to **65** organisations who agreed to distribute it to their volunteers, resulting in a total of **256** completed surveys)
- analysing data from both the telephone and online survey (this was analysed in order to understand the trends and frequencies in relation to key aspects of volunteering within the sector)
- an exploration of direct financial as well as wider social benefits (via a Social Return on Investment approach) of volunteering activity across Britain's waterways, based on results from the surveys
- advice throughout the research from CSV Consulting which has practical experience of volunteering.

### 1.3 Context

This study is set against a changing policy context under the coalition Government and the emergence of the 'Big Society' agenda which involves a renewed interest in citizenship and participation. Volunteering is a key part of this, with specific initiatives, such as those associated with the Olympics and the 2011 European Year of the Volunteer, potentially opening up volunteering to new groups. In parallel, large-scale public sector cutbacks are transforming many aspects of the public sector. Specifically, the timing of this study is pertinent given the planned transfer of British Waterways to a civil society organisation.

### 1.4 Report Structure

This report is structured as follows:

- **Chapter Two** provides an overview of waterway-related volunteering activity and background information for organisations operating within the sector.
- **Chapter Three** estimates a financial value for direct volunteering activity undertaken on inland waterways.
- **Chapter Four** considers the Social Return on Investment (SROI) of waterway-related volunteering, assigning a monetary value to the social outcomes generated by this activity.
- **Chapter Five** examines the motivations of volunteers on the waterways and also considers the challenges facing the sector in increasing volunteering activity.
- **Chapter Six** sets out conclusions and recommendations going forward.

## 2.0 Profile of Volunteering on Inland Waterways

This chapter sets out an overview of volunteering activity for organisations engaging volunteers in activities related to the inland waterways. The starting point for this research was consultation with AINA members in an attempt to capture information about all volunteering activity relating to their waterways. The key definition used is that volunteering activity must be *on, or because of*, inland waterways. The information collected included the location and size of organisation, and the type of volunteering activity carried out, as well as a profile of the volunteers involved.

### 2.1 Sample

The data used in this report is taken from the results of 101 telephone interviews of organisations that support inland waterway-related volunteering activity and an online survey of 256 volunteers from 65 organisations. A range of statutory and voluntary organisations, starting with AINA members and 'snowballing' to other associated organisations, were included in both surveys. An initial list of 186 organisations was constructed, with 35 responding that they did not engage volunteers or were unable to supply sufficient information. A further 50 did not respond. A list of the 101 organisations involved in the telephone survey is provided in Appendix One.

Given that both surveys included the large inland waterways organisations of British Waterways, the Environment Agency and the Broads Authority, as well as a significant proportion of the estimated total population of medium-sized and smaller organisations, the sample used here is seen as representative of inland waterways volunteering overall. Of course, the analysis is only as accurate as the responses provided. Therefore, where organisations have cited a particular number of volunteer days, or a breakdown of waterway-related tasks, the information has been largely taken at face value, with steps taken to mitigate or highlight the effects of any clear errors or extreme results.

### 2.2 Coverage

Figure 2.1 below shows the distribution of 5,090 km navigable inland waterways in England and Wales (there are additionally 220 km in Scotland). Of this, British Waterways is responsible for 2,615 km, the Environment Agency 1,020 km, the Broads Authority 200 km and Middle Level commissioners 190 km, with the remainder managed by a range of bodies including local authorities, port authorities and charitable trusts.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Data provided by AINA.

**Figure 2.1 Britain's Inland Waterways**



Both surveys involved organisations from across England, Scotland and Wales. Table 2.1 below sets out the regional distribution of the 101 organisations surveyed by telephone, which generated the majority of information about organisations involved in volunteering. Where organisations involved volunteers at locations in more than one region or throughout the UK, they were classed as national bodies.

**Table 2.1 Regional Distribution**

Location	Total / %
East of England	17
South East	10
East Midlands	9
North West	9
West Midlands	9
Wales	7
Yorkshire and the Humber	5
South West	4
London	4
Scotland	3
National	24
Total	101

Source: Ecorys Telephone Survey

Survey respondents broadly reflected the geography of inland waterways in Great Britain. Almost a quarter of organisations surveyed had a national remit, with the East of England having the highest regional concentration, focussing on volunteering in Norfolk, Suffolk, Cambridge, East Anglia and Bedford. The South East, East Midlands, North West and the West Midlands also had high concentrations of organisations but no organisations had a regional base in the North East.

## 2.3 Organisation Size

The size of organisations undertaking waterway-related volunteering activity was considered in two ways, the number of paid staff employed and annual turnover, as set out in Tables 2.2 and 2.3 below.

**Table 2.2 Organisation Size (Number of Staff)**

Number of Staff	Total / %
No paid staff (all volunteers)	48
1–10	23
11–50	12
51–100	6
101–250	4
250+	8
Total	101

*Source: Ecorys Telephone Survey*

The majority of organisations are small, with around 70% having less than 10 members of paid staff. Whilst eight organisations stated that they employ over 250 members of staff, this includes large national bodies that do not focus solely on waterway-related activity such as the National Trust, the Forestry Commission and statutory bodies such as County Councils. There was little variation regionally, with the majority of organisations in each region employing less than ten members of paid staff and larger organisations operating at a national level.

**Table 2.3 Organisation Size (Turnover)**

Annual Turnover	Total / %
No turnover	13
£1–£50,000	33
£50,000–£100,000	2
£100,001–£200,000	5
£200,001 +	20
Don't know	28
Total	101

*Source: Ecorys Telephone Survey*

Table 2.3 shows that just under half of all organisations surveyed had an annual turnover of under £50,000, with 13% having no turnover at all and 28% not knowing their turnover. Whilst 20 organisations generated a turnover of greater than £200,000, some of this relates to large national organisations with a wider remit. Again, the pattern overall was consistent across all of the regions and points to a predominance of small organisations operating with very limited resources.

## 2.4 Numbers of Volunteers

The organisational telephone survey provided two sets of information relating to the numbers of volunteers undertaking waterway-related activity. First, information about the number of people who 'regularly volunteer' (defined as taking place at least once a month) was collected. Second, information about the number of days per month people spent volunteering at each organisation was gathered.

It should be noted that there is some potential for double-counting of volunteer days, with some volunteers working with local organisations also being counted by British Waterway on their managed waterways. We have identified and discounted these instances wherever possible, but have factored in an adjustment in the final calculations. Similarly, a number of responses from large national organisations, such as RNLI, Keep Wales Tidy and the British Trust for Ornithology, had mistakenly included volunteers not on, or because of, inland waterways and the data has also been 'cleansed' of these anomalies. The risk of overstating numbers is also offset by the lack of returns from some waterway organisations.

**Table 2.4 Number of Regular Volunteers**

Adjusted Total Number of 'Regular' Volunteers	Mean	Median	Missing
21,166	230	35	9

*Source: Ecorys Telephone Survey*

Table 2.4 shows that there are around **21,000** regular volunteers undertaking waterway-related volunteering activities. The difference between the median and the mean figures highlights a positive skew to the data – due to the inclusion of organisations such as British Waterways, Thames 21 and The Waterways Trust, all of which recruit large numbers of volunteers. As a comparator, the National Trust currently estimates that it engages 50,000 regular volunteers. Table 2.5 below sets out the number of regular volunteers within the inland waterway sector by size of organisation.

**Table 2.5 Number of Regular Volunteers by Size of Organisation**

Size (Number of Full-time Employees)	Regular Volunteers	Total / %
No paid staff (all volunteers)	2,959	14
1–10	1,189	6
11–50	10,747	51
51–100	5,030	24
101–250	152	1
250+	1,089	5

Size (Number of Full-time Employees)	Regular Volunteers	Total / %
Grand Total	21,166	100

Over half of all 'regular volunteers' come from organisations with between 11 and 50 members of staff, with a relatively small proportion (20%) engaged with organisations with under 10 employees (that make up 70% of the sector according to Table 2.2 above).

In terms of volunteer days per month, Table 2.6 below gives an absolute value of **11,000** volunteer days per month for all inland waterways organisations (132,000 per year), again showing a positive skew for the averages.

**Table 2.6 Volunteer Days per Month**

Number	Mean	Median	Missing
11,368	139	30	18

*Source: Ecorys Telephone Survey*

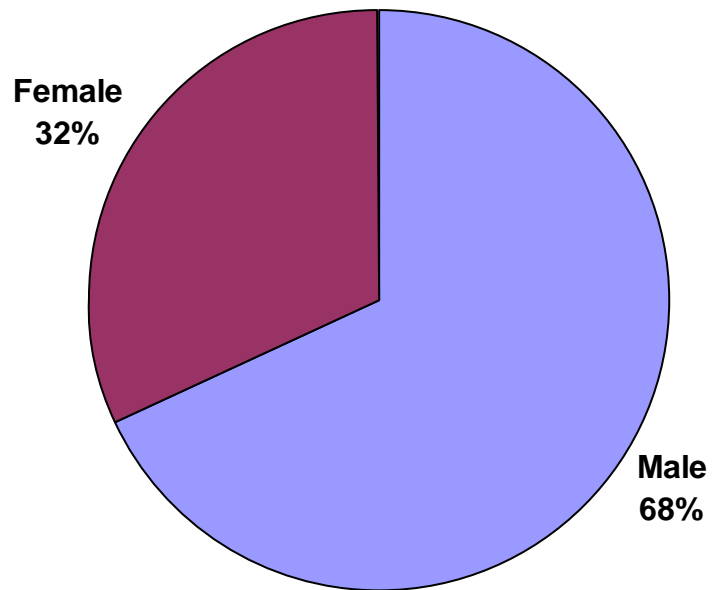
Of the 11,000 volunteer days a month undertaken on Britain's Waterways, 1,200 are for British Waterways and 420 at the Broads Authority. Interestingly, the British Waterways figure is anticipated to rise steeply in 2010. Excluding the effects of these larger organisations on the average figure of 139 days generates a smaller number, with 46% of organisations reporting that volunteers spend up to 30 days volunteering a month. A 'typical' organisation therefore has around 28–48 regular volunteers, with around 20–40 volunteer days per month. This excludes the impact of mass participation events and also ignores seasonal and other monthly fluctuations by giving an averaged figure across the year.

## 2.5 Volunteer Demographics

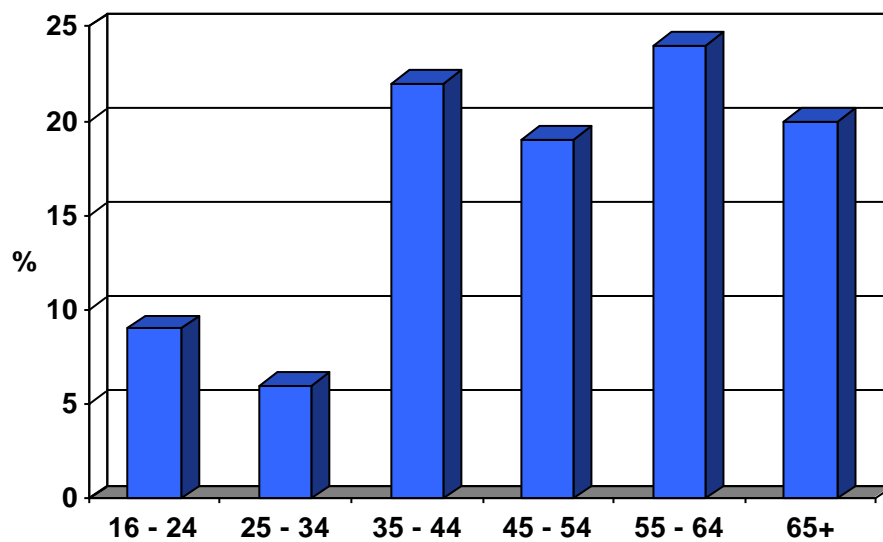
A snapshot of volunteers is provided in the figures and table below in terms of gender, age and ethnicity respectively. It should be noted that accurate demographic data was not available from all organisations, and in a number of cases a 'best guess' was provided.



**Figure 2.2 Volunteer Gender**



**Figure 2.3 Volunteer Age Profile**



**Table 2.7 Volunteer Ethnicity**

Ethnicity	Number Volunteering	%
White	3,807	94
Asian	43	1
Black	21	0.5
Mixed Race	105	3
Other	19	0.5

Source: Ecorys Telephone Survey

The figures and table above show that volunteers undertaking waterway-related activity are predominantly white, male and aged over 35. Only 15% are under 35, with a 'dip' in the 25–34 age bracket. This is significant as 'Generation Y' (24–30 yrs) are often seen as key targets for volunteer recruitment as they have valuable skills (for example, in relation to social media) and once engaged they help to ensure the longer term sustainability of an organisation. The relatively large numbers of volunteers aged over 55 (44%) indicates that volunteering is popular amongst retirees and early retirees, which is positive given the ageing population. Volunteers aged between 35 and 54 are also well represented, which indicates that there is a spread of recruitment and potential for replacing older groups over time.

The online survey of volunteers showed more of a skew towards older groups, with 70% reporting themselves as over 55, a significant variation (+26%) on figures provided by organisations. Furthermore, over half saw themselves as 'retirees'. This may reflect response bias, where retirees have more time to complete surveys, but it may also demonstrate that many organisations do not keep formal records and so do not have an accurate picture of their volunteer base. Respondents to the online survey were also those with a long history of volunteering, with 90% engaged for more than a year and 23% having volunteered for over 10 years, as shown in Table 2.8 below. This indicates a committed and sustained volunteer base.

The online volunteer survey reported a broadly similar figure for gender (72% vs 68%) and slightly lower figure for white ethnicity (88% vs 94%) which reinforced the findings from the organisational phone survey. For ethnicity, the remaining 12% was made up of blank or 'prefer not to say' responses, rather than an occurrence of more non-white groups than for the organisational survey. Asian groups (1%) appear to be particularly under-represented compared to the national population (4%) with a relatively younger age profile.

**Table 2.8 Length of Volunteer Engagement**

Age	Number	%
Less than 1 year	25	10
1–3 years	78	30
4–7 years	58	23
8–11 years	37	14
11 years or more	58	23
Total	256	100

*Source: Ecorys Online Survey*

Table 2.9 below highlights an interesting variation when gender is broken down by size of organisation. For small (under 10 employees) and larger (over 100 employees) organisations, there is a predominance of male volunteers (over 70%). However, for medium-sized organisations (11–100 employees) there is more balance between men and women at around 55% / 45% male to female.

**Table 2.9 Organisation Size and Volunteer Gender**

Size (Number of Full-time Employees)	Male %	Female %
No paid staff (all volunteers)	72	28
1–10	78	22
11–50	55	45
51–100	54	46
101–250	77	23
250+	77	23

Source: Ecorys Telephone Survey

There are 18 organisations accounting for around 15,000 regular volunteers employing between 11 and 100 staff. Within this, organisations with significantly more numbers of female volunteers include the Waterway Recovery Group and Thames21. A similar pattern emerges when looking at how the size of an organisation impacts on the age profile of volunteers as set out in Table 2.10 below, where there is a ‘blip’ in the overall trend for medium-sized organisations who have been able to engage 11–50 year olds, in contrast to the predominantly older age profile for small and larger organisations. These findings echo the distinctiveness of medium-sized organisations, highlighted in the similarly disproportionately high number of regular volunteers outlined in Table 2.5 above.

**Table 2.10 Size of Organisation by Volunteer Age**

Size (Number of Employees)	16–24	25–34	35–44	45–54	55–64	65+	Total / %
No paid staff (all volunteers)	2	7	4	20	26	41	100
1–10	3	6	5	13	39	34	100
11–50	48	6	7	6	13	19	100
51–100	9	9	10	26	44	3	100
101–250	4	4	5	13	26	46	100
250+	22	11	9	18	20	21	100

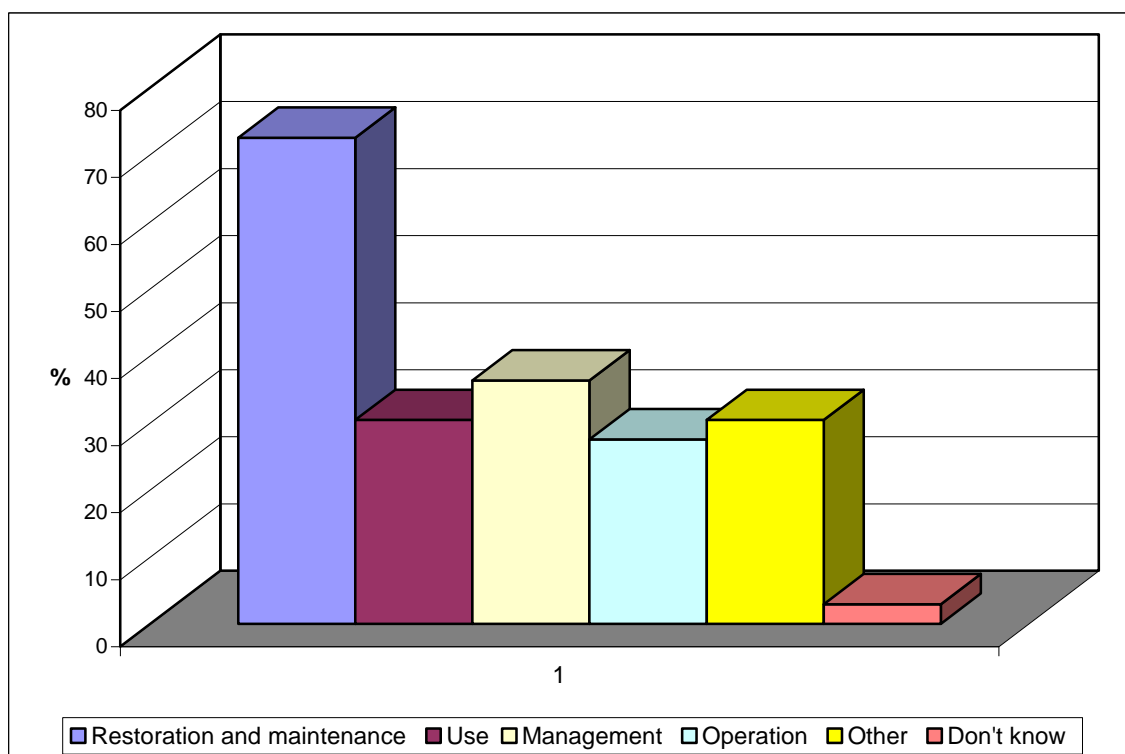
Source: Ecorys Telephone Survey

Table 2.10 above shows that for organisations with between 11 and 50 full-time members of staff, there are proportionately more 16- to 24-year-old volunteers (48%) than for the sector as a whole. This is due to a high proportion of younger volunteers engaging with the Waterway Recovery Group and the Waterways Action Squad and means that for the sector overall, the bias towards older, male volunteers is even more pronounced if these organisations are excluded.

## 2.6 Main Activities

Figure 2.4 below demonstrates the main areas of volunteer activity cited by respondents to the organisational phone survey (respondents were able to provide more than one response).

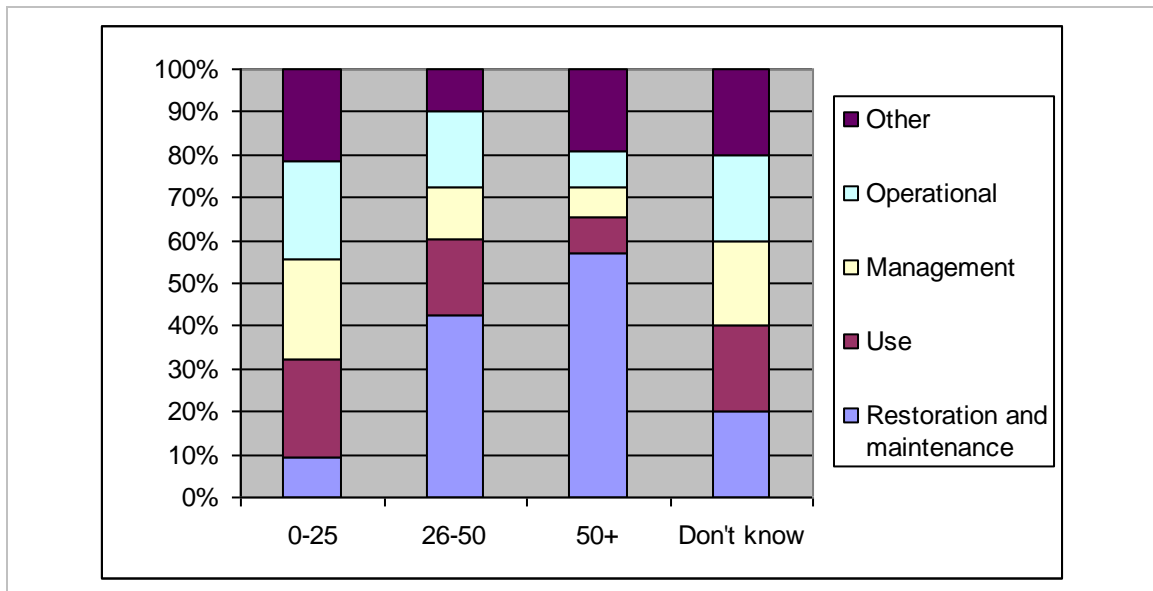
**Figure 2.4 Volunteer Activity**



'Restoration and maintenance' was the most frequently cited 'main' area of volunteering activity, accounting for 72% of responses. This includes vegetation clearance and maintenance of locks. 'Use' referred to people volunteering in relation to, for example, boating, angling or wildlife, whilst 'Operation' referred to lock-keeping or the work of towpath rangers. 'Other' areas of activity included marketing, education, research and in relation to conferences. This pattern was confirmed by the results of the online volunteer survey, with 65% of volunteers reporting themselves as primarily involved in practical restoration and maintenance tasks, 32% in operation, 25% in management, and 'fundraising' (7%) being the most popular 'other' category.

Figure 2.5 below further looks at the proportions of time spent on different activities, with 57% of organisations stating that over 50% of volunteer time was spent on maintenance and restoration. Cross-checking organisational characteristics, for example, size against type of volunteering activity, revealed no significant variations.

**Figure 2.5 Proportion of Time Spent**



Source: Ecorys Telephone Survey

## 2.7 The National Citizenship Survey

In order to provide some context for the above findings, the National Citizenship Survey provides a useful source of comparative information for volunteering in civil society more broadly. It is a Government-commissioned survey conducted every two years to provide evidence to support policy-making in the fields of cohesion, community empowerment, race equality, volunteering and charitable giving.

The survey results for 2008/09 found that some 26% of people claimed to regularly undertake formal volunteering activity.<sup>1</sup> In contrast to volunteers in the waterways sector, the Citizenship Survey found that women were more likely than men to participate in volunteering (28% compared to 23%), but as was the case for waterways, the Citizenship Survey found that there was a greater level of volunteering amongst older people, with 21% of people aged 21–34 and 30% of those aged 65–74 undertaking regular volunteering .

The Citizenship Survey found that men were more likely to run a campaign or activity than women and the most common type of organisation for which respondents volunteered was a sports club (accounting for 52% of all volunteering activity). Around 20% of formal volunteering activity was that associated with the environment or animals. Younger people (aged 16–25) were less likely to be involved with the environment and animals than older people, as were volunteers from minority ethnic groups.

The Citizenship Survey found that 56% of respondents had heard about volunteering opportunities through someone that they already knew who volunteered for the group or from someone they knew who wasn't involved with the group. This reflects findings in Chapter 5, where 68% of respondents had heard about the volunteering opportunity through word of mouth or who already knew about the organisation.

<sup>1</sup> Formal Volunteering is defined as unpaid work given as part of a club, organisation to benefit others or the environment.

The Citizenship Survey found that the most popular reason given that people volunteered was because they were 'wanting to improve things/ help people'. 62% of people cited this as a motivation, whilst 40% felt that 'helping the cause' was important to them. 'Meeting people and making new friends' was cited by 33% of respondents. 'Using existing skills' (33%), and 'meeting a need in the community' (28%) were also popular motivations. Chapter 5 confirms that motivations within the waterway sector are similar to those in the broader volunteering community, with 'giving something back' and the 'importance of the cause' being cited as the main motivations.

The main benefits of volunteering highlighted in the Citizenship Survey related to 'getting satisfaction from seeing the results' (65%), and 32% of regular volunteers felt that it gave them a 'sense of personal achievement'. The most common barriers to volunteering were work commitments and childcare issues and lack of time, factors not reflected as particular barriers for volunteers on or because of inland waterways.

## 3.0 The Financial Value of Volunteering

In order to estimate the financial value of volunteering on, or because of, inland waterways, organisations were asked to estimate the proportion of volunteering activity that was spent on unskilled, skilled, or professionally skilled work. Not all respondents were able to provide this information and a number of respondents indicated that the answers given were 'best estimates'. Calculations are set out in terms of monthly and annual estimates below. Adjusted figures are given to allow for positive skew caused by large organisations.

### 3.1 Monthly and Annual Totals

The number of volunteer days per month outlined in Table 2.6 in Chapter 2 was used as the base calculator for the value of volunteering activity. Recognised Heritage Lottery Fund multipliers of £50, £150 and £350 were then applied to the calculation of unskilled, skilled and professionally skilled work respectively.<sup>1</sup> So, for an organisation that stated they had 10 volunteer days a month of waterway-related activity and that 50% of the work was unskilled, a value for the amount of unskilled work can be calculated as follows:

- $10 \times 50\% = 5$  days a month spent on unskilled work
- $5 \times £50 = £250$  a month on unskilled work

Table 3.1 below aggregates the number of days spent each month on volunteering across the inland waterways volunteering sector, broken down by unskilled, skilled and professionally skilled days. It shows that the majority of days (around 70%) were spent on unskilled work, around 4% of days were spent undertaking professionally skilled work, and 26% on skilled work.

**Table 3.1 Volunteer Days by Type of Work**

Type of Work	Number	%	Mean	Median
Unskilled	7,502	69	94	15
Skilled	2,898	26	36	5
Professionally Skilled	462	4	6	0
Total	10,862			

Source: Ecorys Telephone Survey

Based on the number of days undertaken at a particular skill level, a calculation can be made relating to the monthly financial value of volunteering activity, as shown in Table 3.2 below. Each month, an equivalent value of around £1 million of volunteer work is undertaken on Britain's inland waterways. If a sensitivity variance of 20% is applied to the results to allow for potential double-counting, the value of monthly volunteering lies between £800,000 and £1 million. On an annual basis, this generates an estimate of around **£10 million**. This compares to an estimate for the National Trust of £20 million.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> These number are taken from Heritage Lottery, 'Thinking about Volunteering' online available at: [http://www.hlf.org.uk/HowToApply/furtherresources/Documents/Thinking\\_about\\_volunteering.pdf](http://www.hlf.org.uk/HowToApply/furtherresources/Documents/Thinking_about_volunteering.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/main/w-trust/w-volunteering.htm>

**Table 3.2 Estimated Monthly Value of Volunteering**

Type of Work	Value	Mean	Median
Unskilled	£375,100	£4,689	£750
Skilled	£434,694	£5,434	£788
Professionally Skilled	£161,714	£2,021	£0
Monthly Total	£971,508		

Source: *EcoNYS Telephone Survey*

### 3.2 Adjusted Values

If the positive skew from larger organisations is offset, the median results above generate an average of 15 days of unskilled work and five days of skilled work a month, equating to a value of £1,450 a month or £17,400 per year per organisation, roughly the equivalent of at least one additional full time employee.

There are a number of caveats to the figures generated here, however, including:

- Not every month will have the same number of volunteer days; there will be seasonal variations and mass participation events are not factored in.
- There was missing data from 21 organisations that were unable to supply the relevant detail.
- Not every volunteer will be as productive as the value ascribed in the calculation e.g., some volunteers may work ten-hour days as opposed to volunteers who work for just 5 or 6 hours a day.
- Double-counting of volunteers, that is, volunteers undertaking activity through a local organisation but captured by British Waterways (this has been offset by null responses).



## 4.0 Social Return on Investment (SROI) Analysis

This chapter estimates the wider social value of volunteering activity taking place on, or because of, Britain's inland waterways. Although a full Social Return on Investment (SROI) analysis is not within the scope of this study, the approach and framework as endorsed by the Office for Civil Society is used to show that there is a wider value to volunteering. This helps to more fully value volunteering when seen alongside the direct value of time spent as outlined in Chapter 3.

### 4.1 Defining Outcomes

In order to quantify what is sometimes referred to as 'social value' (anything that has a value to the society, the environment or the individual but doesn't immediately manifest in monetary terms), a number of approaches have been developed. Of these, SROI embeds aspects of different methodologies, including cost-benefit analysis, social accounting, triple bottom line reporting and impact assessment. Building on these approaches, Ecorys was involved in developing Government guidelines for SROI in 2008.<sup>1</sup>

One of the main principles of the SROI approach is to involve stakeholders in the process of defining outcomes in relation to the activity in question. Outcomes used within this SROI analysis were developed on the basis of responses to the telephone and online survey. While this gives an indication of outcomes relating to volunteering activity within the inland waterway sector, further consultation, research and analysis would be required for a comprehensive assessment.

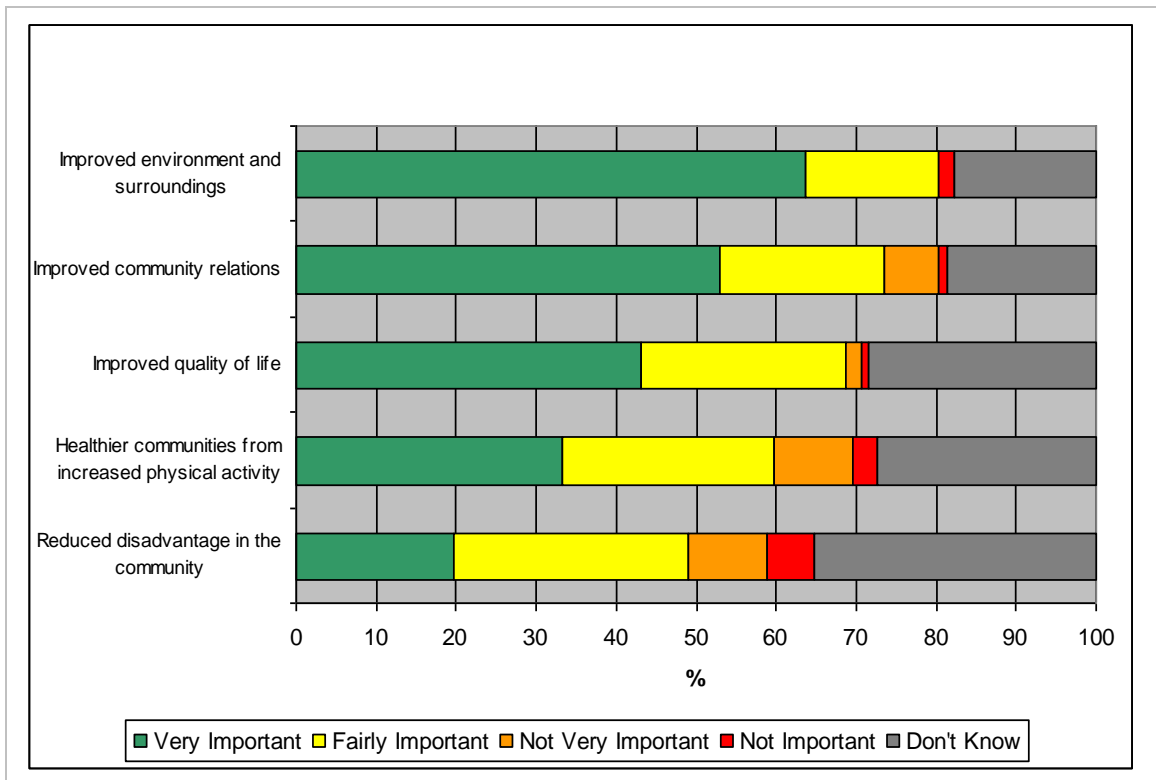
Our adapted method here involved the initial stage of the telephone survey: AINA members were asked open-ended questions in order to establish the main benefits and outcomes of volunteering to each individual organisation, to the volunteers themselves and to the wider community. The responses cited most frequently were then coded into a set of indicators and used within subsequent waves of the telephone survey and for the analysis presented here. These outcomes are considered in more detail below and a full list of the sources used in the SROI analysis can be found in Appendix Two

Figure 4.1 below shows the relative importance of wider 'external' benefits of volunteering to the community, whilst Figure 4.2 shows perceived outcomes for volunteers themselves.

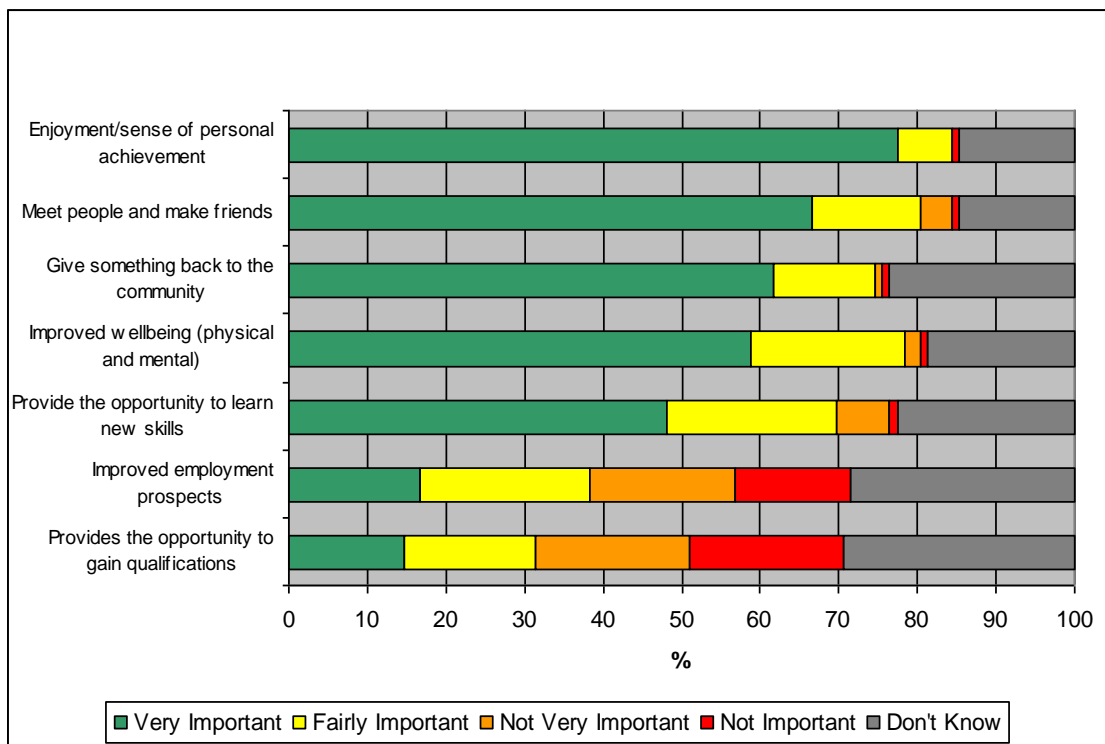
Improved environment and surroundings are seen as the most important community outcome by organisations, followed by improved relations and improved quality of life (Figure 4.1). For the volunteers themselves (Figure 4.2), enjoyment / sense of personal achievement, meeting people and making new friends, giving something back to the community and improved well-being (physical and mental) were all rated highly. These outcomes were therefore taken forward and used in the SROI analysis outlined in section 4.2 below.

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.sroiproject.org.uk/>

**Figure 4.1 Wider Benefits of Volunteering**



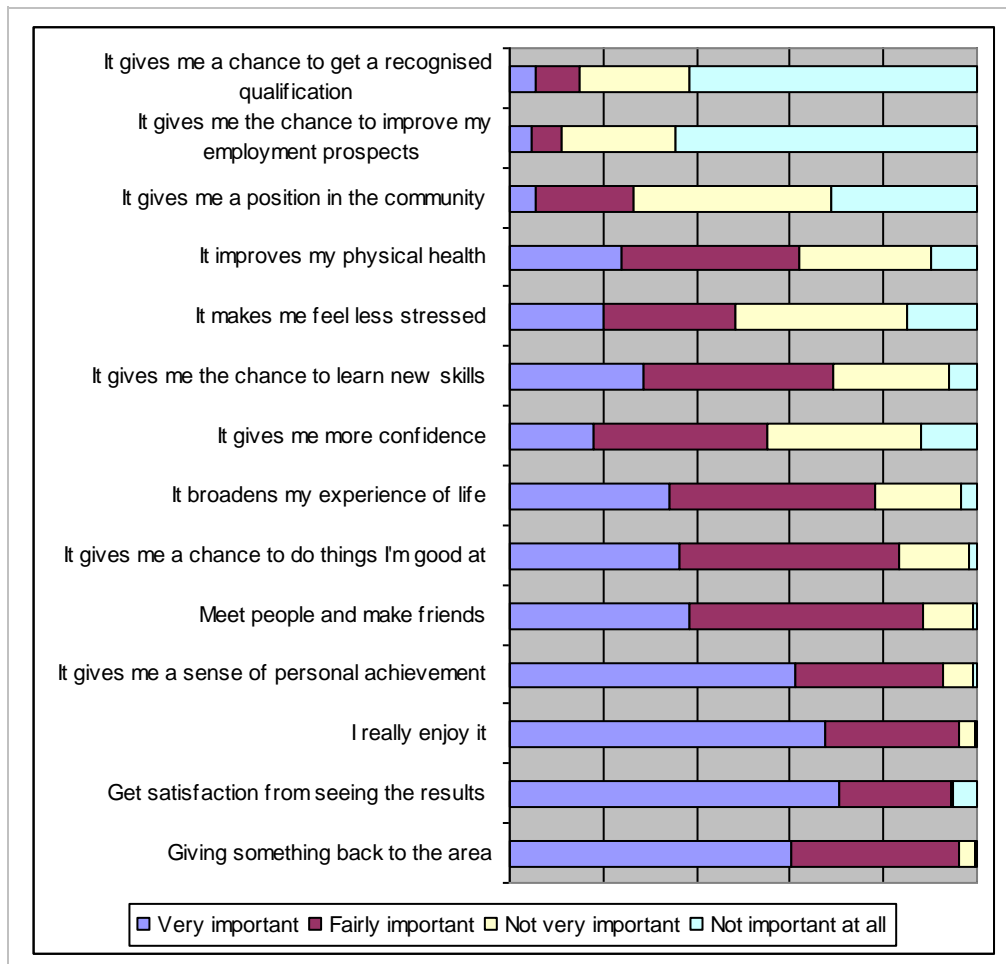
**Figure 4.2 Benefits to the Volunteers**



Source: Ecorys Telephone Survey

In order to cross-check outcomes generated by the telephone survey and the selection of indicators for a SROI analysis, the online survey also asked volunteers to rate their reasons for volunteering, with the results shown in Figure 4.3 below. This confirms the importance to volunteers of gaining satisfaction and a sense of achievement from volunteering, plus the desire to give something back to the local area as well as the social benefits. Notably, for both sets of responses, potential benefits in terms of gaining qualifications and improved employment prospects are not deemed particularly important.

**Figure 4.3 Volunteer's Reasons for Volunteering (%s)**



Source: Ecorys Online Survey

## 4.2 SROI Proxy Indicators and Values

Some 64% of organisations responding to the telephone survey stated that improved environment and surroundings were a 'very important' outcome for volunteering on, or because of, inland waterways. Furthermore, 'the cause is important to me' was identified by 55% of volunteers as the reason that they volunteered.

Four SROI outcomes were taken from the SROI database<sup>1</sup> to represent this outcome: *improving the environment, improving public access to the environment, improving community regeneration and better physical environments for communities*. Each of these SROI outcomes are considered in more detail in Table 4.1 below, setting out 'proxy', or estimated equivalent values, drawn from the recognised SROI database of such values.

**Table 4.1 Improved Environment and Surroundings**

SROI Outcome	Outcome indicator	Stakeholder	Proxy	Value
Improving the environment	Benefit experienced from continued preservation and recreational enjoyment of a typical national nature reserve.	Individual	Willingness to pay for the preservation of the Yorkshire Dales	£26.03 per year for visitors. £22.12 for local residents.
	Benefit experienced from continued preservation and recreational enjoyment of a national nature reserve of special significance.	Individual	Willingness to pay for the preservation of the Norfolk Broads	£83.67 per year per household
Better physical environments for communities	More use made of the canal	Local community / residents	Average willingness to pay of local residents in order to keep the canal	£0.79 per person (2009 prices)
Increasing public access to the environment	More use made of the canal	As above	As above	As above
Improving community regeneration	Change in people's perception of their local area	Local community / residents	Spending on home improvements and DIY	Average spending on DIY and home improvement per household per week in the UK: £20.50

Source: SROI Project Database

Over half of respondents stated that improved community relations were very important as a benefit to the community of volunteering activity. The SROI outcome 'more tolerant and less afraid of others' was identified to represent this and the financial value of this is set out below in Table 4.2. This proxy would be particularly relevant for organisations involved in organising mass participation events, such as litter picking, which may be more likely to involve a mix of ages and people from different backgrounds.

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.sroiproject.org.uk/sroi-database.aspx>

**Table 4.2 Improved Community Relations**

SROI Outcome	Outcome indicator	Stakeholder	Proxy	Value
More tolerant and less afraid of others	Better tolerance of other generations	Volunteers	Value of time spent with non peers during volunteer activity	Value per hour of conservation volunteers: £12.00 median gross hourly wage.

Around 80% of respondents stated that 'enjoyment / sense of personal achievement' was very important as a benefit to volunteers and 34% of volunteers cited that one of the reasons that they volunteered was that it was 'part of their philosophy of life'. Whilst this is difficult to quantify in financial terms, the SROI proxy chosen to represent this was 'improved well-being', with the financial value of this is set out below in Table 4.3.

**Table 4.3 Enjoyment / Sense of Personal Well-being**

SROI Outcome	Outcome Indicator	Stakeholder	Proxy	Value
Improved well-being	Improved mental well-being from being outdoors	Volunteers	Cost per hour of group therapy	£13.33 per hour

Over 60% of organisations stated that giving something back to the community was very important and this was also chosen by 40% of volunteers themselves. The SROI proxy closest to this was 'giving something back' as set out in Table 4.4 below with four associated indicators and proxy values.

**Table 4.4 Community Benefit**

SROI Outcome	Outcome indicator	Stakeholder	Proxy	Value
Giving something back	I am giving something back to my community	Volunteers	Average family spend on small gifts per week	£1.60 per compliment
	Increased personal satisfaction	Volunteers	The value of unsolicited time spent providing the service	£10.00 per hour (2009 prices)
	Having something to do when retired	Older people	The value of time donated	£10.99 per hour (2009 prices)

SROI Outcome	Outcome indicator	Stakeholder	Proxy	Value
	Helping people in my community	Volunteers	The multiplier reported by volunteers of their outcomes versus their time input	£15.00 per hour

Around 70% of organisations stated that ‘meeting people and making new friends’ was a very important outcome as a result of volunteering. The outcome ‘meeting people’ also scored highly in the volunteer survey, reflecting the important social aspects of volunteering. The two SROI ‘social capital’ outcomes identified to represent this, ‘having more friends’ and ‘better relationships’, are set out in Table 4.5 below

**Table 4.5 Social Capital Outcomes**

SROI Outcome	Outcome indicator	Stakeholder	Proxy	Value
Having more friends	Reduced social isolation	Older people	Additional spend on recreation	£415.46 per year (2007 prices), the Family Spending Survey
Better relationships	Feeling less isolated	Volunteers	Average annual expenditure per household on communications	£426.40 per year

Just over 60% of respondents cited that improved well-being, both physical and mental, was important to volunteers. Mental well-being has already been accounted for in Table 4.3 above, and physical well-being is included here under the proxy indicator for 'improving physical health' in Table 4.6.

**Table 4.6 Improving Physical Health**

SROI Outcome	Outcome Indicator	Stakeholder	Proxy	Value
Improving physical health	Increased physical activity and fitness	Volunteers	Average annual family spend on sports	£249.60 per year

### 4.3 Valuing Social Benefits

The outcomes and proxy indicators above show that there is a range of benefits of volunteering, in addition to the financial benefits valued in Chapter 3. These benefits will not be uniform across each volunteering organisation, with different types of activity more relevant to a particular outcome than others. For example,

group activity may have an impact on community relations whilst maintenance is more relevant to the preservation of natural assets. In addition, the SROI values used in this report are forecast values based on the survey responses and as such will only be realised if outcomes are achieved through volunteering.

Building on the information set out in Chapter 2 relating to the profile of volunteering on, or because of, inland waterways, the proxies outlined above generate an additional social value of volunteering of between £6,000 and £7,000 each year for each organisation. This equates to an additional value of up to **£700,000** per year from the sector, or an additional 7% on top of the £10 million in terms of direct time identified in Chapter 3. This figure will vary depending on where the volunteering activity takes place and who undertakes it. Whilst it was not within the scope of this research, a more rigorous approach further defining the key benefits of volunteering to the volunteers themselves and the wider community could provide a firmer assessment of the wider social value of waterway-related volunteering activity.

## 5.0 Attracting and Retaining Volunteers

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This chapter reviews current volunteer management practice within organisations participating in the telephone survey, as well as the experience of the volunteers themselves, as part of the online survey. Some of the barriers to increasing volunteering activity in the future are outlined, linking to parallel research into good practice in attracting and retaining volunteers within the wider volunteering sector.

### 5.1 Volunteer Management

The recent report undertaken by Ecorys and CSV on behalf of the Inland Waterways Advisory Council (IWAC)<sup>1</sup> highlighted the importance of good volunteer management in attracting and retaining volunteers. The IWAC report sets out good practice taken from organisations outside the waterways sector with regard to developing and utilising more formalised approaches to volunteer management. This includes a 'model' volunteering organisation that uses effective practice in its adoption of task descriptions, written policies, inductions and training.

The report identifies good practice in the following areas:

- Capacity-building
- Corporate volunteering
- Local focus
- Marketing and publicity
- Organisational development
- Partnership
- Sustainability
- Training and support
- Understanding volunteers
- Volunteer diversity

It also sets out some key practical tools covering ethos and volunteering policy, a statement of commitment, monitoring, reporting, organisational responsibilities, screening and selection which can be developed to enhance the role of volunteers.

The telephone and online surveys within this report explored existing practice amongst waterways organisations in order to highlight where good practice might have an impact. As an overall indication of commitment of resources to volunteering, Table 5.1 below shows the organisational budgets set aside for volunteering activities amongst those surveyed.

<sup>1</sup> *Volunteering and Inland Waterways, How to Attract Integrate and Retain Volunteers* (September 2010), available online at: [http://www.iwac.org.uk/downloads/reports/IWAC\\_volunteering.pdf](http://www.iwac.org.uk/downloads/reports/IWAC_volunteering.pdf)



**Table 5.1 Volunteer Budget**

Volunteer Budget	Total / %
No budget allocated specifically for volunteering	57
£0–£10,000	30
£10,001–£20,000	1
£50,001–£100,000	1
£100,000+	4
Don't know	8
Total	101

Source: Ecorys Telephone Survey

The majority of organisations have an annual volunteer budget of less than £10,000, with over half having no budget at all, confirming that very limited resources are being used to achieve a great deal within the sector. Table 5.2 goes on to demonstrate the extent to which volunteer management is recognised as a specific task.

**Table 5.2 Volunteer Management**

Volunteer Management	Total / %
Yes, there is formal volunteer management	49
Yes, but volunteer management is more informal	28
No	23
Don't know	1
Total	101

Source: Ecorys Telephone survey

It is encouraging to note that almost half of organisations stated that they had formal volunteer management processes in place, including a designated lead. Moreover, a further 28 organisations indicated that informal volunteer management took place within their organisation. While a quarter of organisations cited that they do not have volunteer management processes in place, this reflects the predominance of small organisations participating in the survey and the fact that many organisations are inherently volunteer-based and may not see the need to formally recognise these roles.

In order to understand in more detail the extent to which organisation size has an impact on the level of formality of volunteer management, Table 5.3 below sets out volunteer management in relation to the number of full-time employees.

**Table 5.3 Volunteer Management and Organisation Size**

Organisation Size (Employees)	Volunteer Management %			
	No	Informal	Yes	Total
No paid staff (all volunteers)	30	36	34	100
1–10	22	13	65	100
11–50	9	9	82	100
101–250	33	33	33	100
51–100	0	20	80	100
250+	13	50	38	100

Source: Ecorys Telephone Survey

Perhaps not surprisingly, those organisations that are run entirely by volunteers are less likely to have formal management processes in place. Whilst this may not be an issue with regard to existing volunteers, the organisation may need to improve their processes if they are going to attract new volunteers in a systematic and structured way. This may be an area for improvement for the sector overall.

Table 5.4 below identifies the specific aspects of formal volunteer management in place at organisations. Whilst formal documentation for risk assessments, training and written volunteer policies are adopted by around 70% of organisations, under a quarter of organisations have accredited training leading to qualifications. Similarly, under half of organisations state that they have formal induction processes in place. Within these figures, there were no distinct patterns relating to organisation size.

**Table 5.4 Volunteer Management Processes**

Aspects of Volunteer Management	Total / %
Task descriptions	56
Written policies	68
Formal induction processes	50
Risk assessments	70
Training	70
Accredited training leading to qualifications	23
Other	11
Don't know	7

Source: Ecorys telephone survey

Table 5.5 below shows that over 70% of organisations collect information about volunteers either formally or informally. As highlighted previously, this means that some (30%) of the information contained in this report is based on estimates and there are also issues about the consistency of definition and data collection. If waterway organisations want to involve more volunteers and develop strategies, they will need to develop a more robust and comprehensive information base.

**Table 5.5 Volunteer Data**

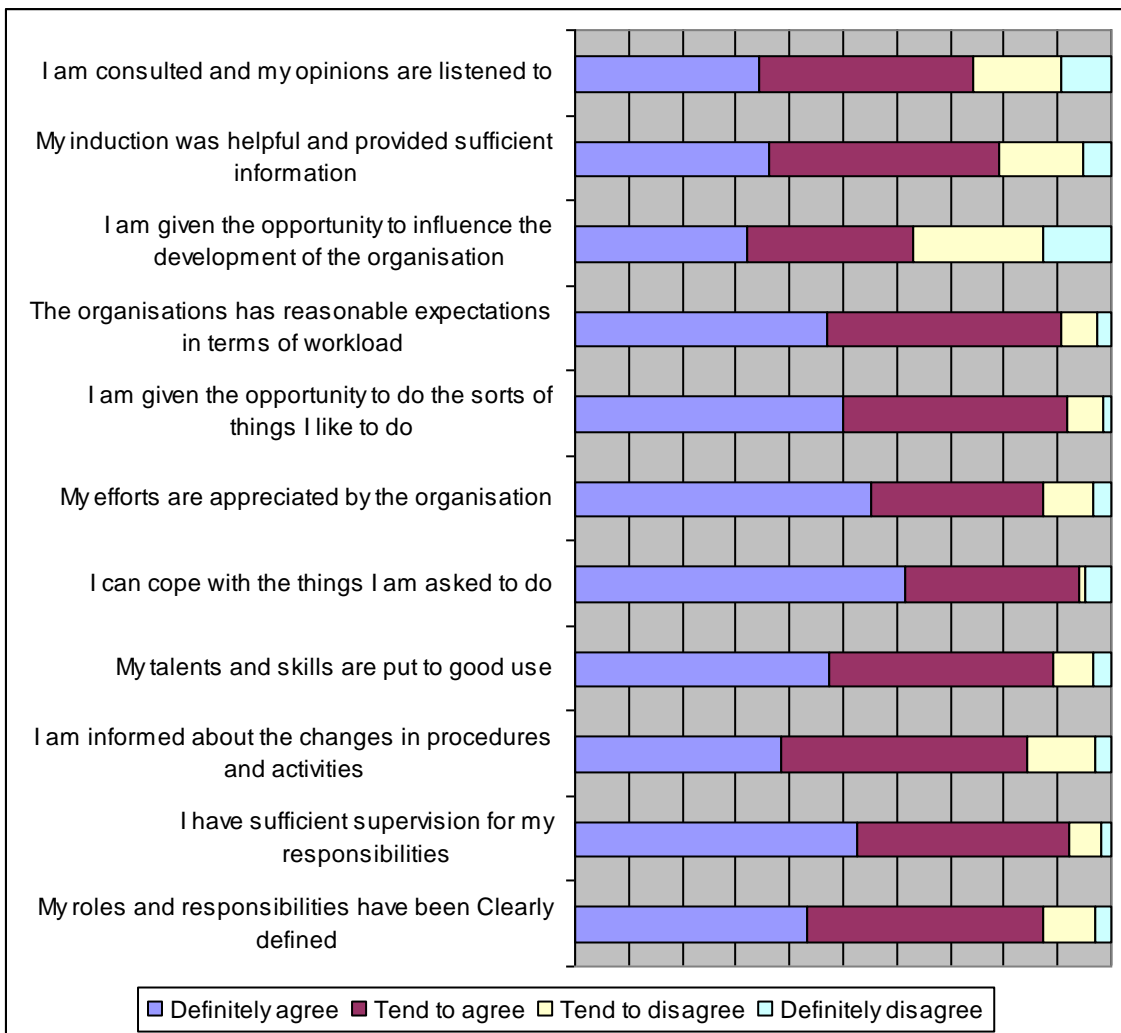
Formal data collection	Total / %
Yes, there is formal collection and analysis of volunteer information	47
Yes, but collection and analysis of volunteer information is informal	24
No information on volunteers is collected	30
Total	101

Source: Ecorys Telephone Survey

## 5.2 Increasing Volunteering in the Future

The online survey of volunteers sought to understand how satisfied existing volunteers were with their volunteering experience in order to help inform future strategies and volunteer support. Figure 5.1 below, sets out the extent to which volunteers agreed with a series of statements relating to volunteering.

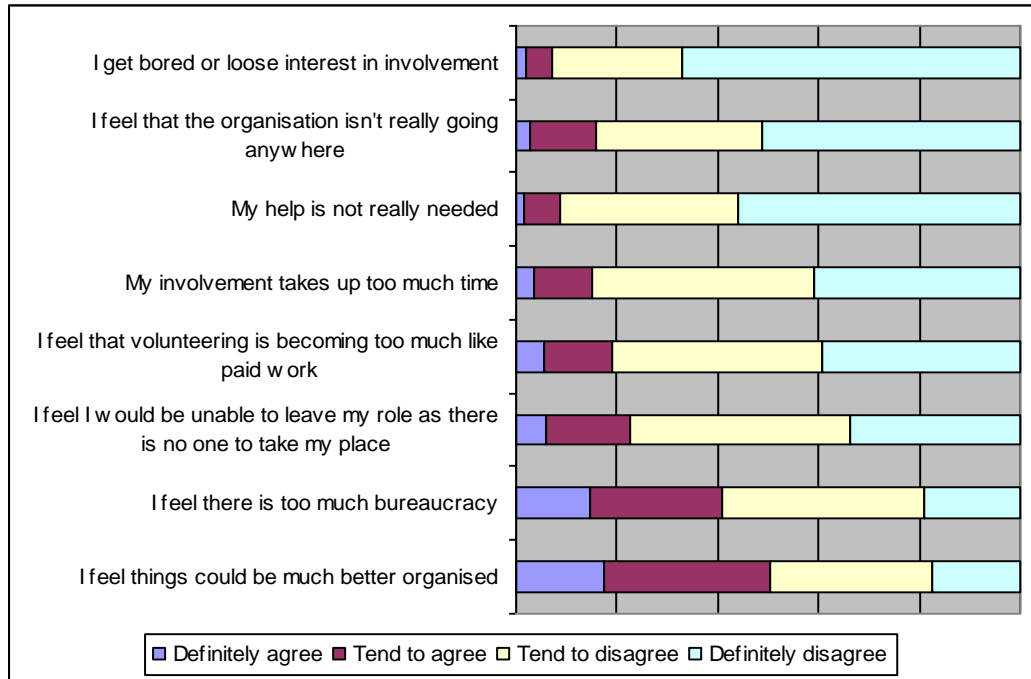
**Figure 5.1 Positive Aspects of the Volunteer Experience**



Source: Ecorys Online Volunteer Survey

Figure 5.1 above indicates that overall, there is a positive feeling amongst volunteers in relation to each of the statements. In particular, volunteers felt that they were given good opportunities and that their efforts were appreciated. The three areas in which volunteers were least satisfied related to the extent to which their induction was helpful, the opportunities they had to influence the development of the organisation, and the extent to which they were consulted and their opinions listened to. Responses to more negative statements about volunteer experiences are set out in Figure 4.2 below.

**Figure 5.2 Negative Aspects of the Volunteer Experience (%s)**



Source: Ecorys Online Volunteer Survey

Figure 5.2 above shows that there is scope for better organisation and a reduction in the level of bureaucracy for volunteers so that their experience of volunteering is improved. Encouragingly, volunteers tended to disagree that their involvement takes up too much of their time, and that they lose interest when they undertake volunteer work.

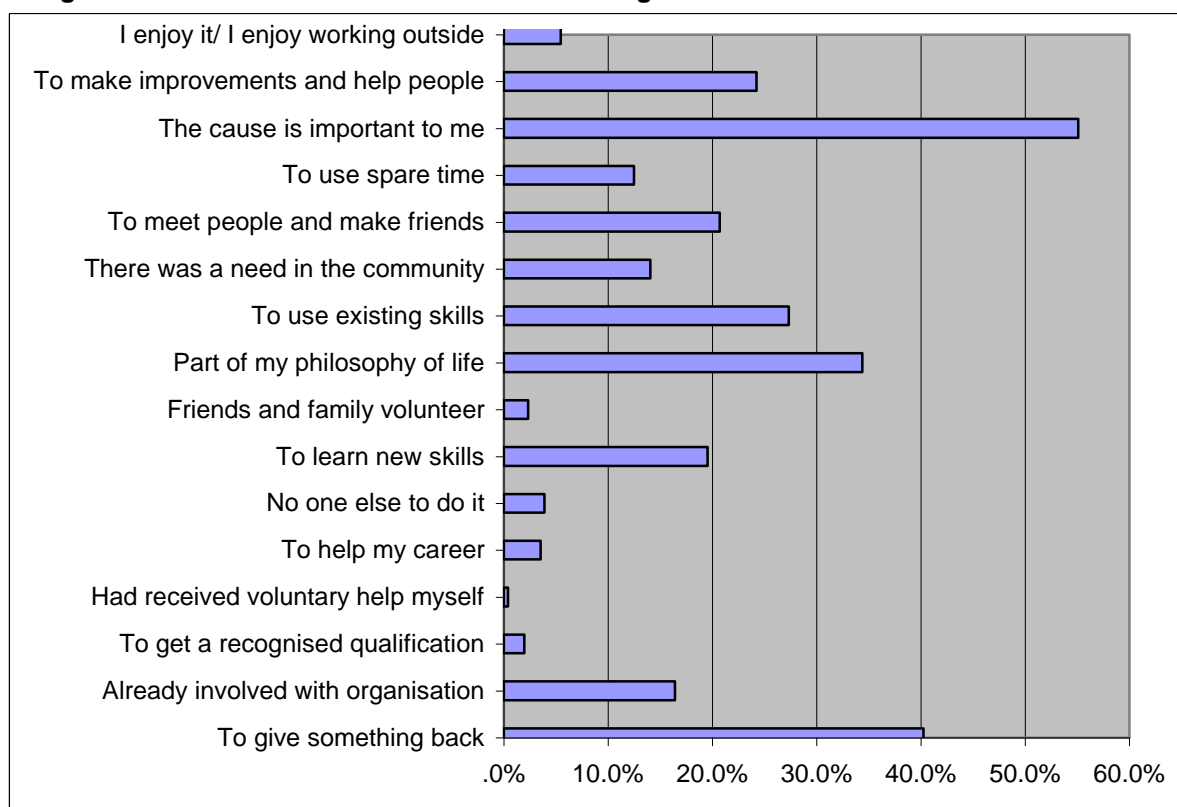
Table 5.6 below highlights the barriers cited by organisations with regard to increasing the extent of volunteering. The key barrier relates to the sustainability of volunteering activity, either through lack of funding or due to the age of the volunteer base. Smaller organisations were more likely to report barriers relating to recruitment and retention of volunteers than larger organisations.

**Table 5.6 Barriers to Volunteering**

Barriers	Total / %
Sustainability, e.g. funding issues or having an older volunteer base with no younger volunteers to continue the work	50
Attracting/recruiting and retaining volunteers to waterway organisation is difficult	44
There is a lack of capacity to support volunteers, e.g. volunteer managers	25
Lack of diversity of current waterway volunteers	18
Other	16
Volunteer tasks are limited to practical activities – there needs to be more variation	7
None / Don't know	13

In terms of attracting volunteers, it is interesting to take note of the main motivations given by volunteers themselves for getting involved, as set out in Figure 5.3 below. This highlights the importance of affinity to the 'cause' as well as the desire to give something back. With regard to the method of getting involved, the most commonly cited means of hearing about volunteering opportunities was 'word of mouth' (38%), with a further 30% having already heard of the organisation prior to volunteering.

**Figure 5.3 Volunteer's Reasons for Volunteering**



## 6.0 Conclusions and Recommendations

This research is very timely given the UK Government's 'Big Society' agenda and, in particular, its decision, taken in October 2010, that British Waterways will be abolished as a public corporation in England and Wales and that a new waterways charity within civil society will be formed. **This report shows clearly that volunteering already plays a key role in many aspects of the work of the inland waterways, with wide-ranging benefits for volunteers and organisations alike.**

Linking to the IWAC report issued in 2010,<sup>1</sup> it is also apparent that there is great potential for the inland waterways sector to build on this volunteer base and do more to effectively recruit, integrate and retain volunteers in the future. In the context of rising unemployment (in particular amongst young people), **there are opportunities to involve a broader base of volunteers in a wider range of activities for the benefit of all concerned.**

This report provides a useful snapshot of a number of key features of volunteering on, or because of, inland waterways. It highlights wide-ranging social benefits in terms of personal and community development and offers a useful baseline for organisations to review their volunteering strategies, both independently and collectively as a sector.

### 6.1 Conclusions

This research quantifies in financial terms the value of volunteering on, or because of, Britain's inland waterways. It also identifies some key characteristics of volunteering on waterways:

- A comparative economic value of time given by volunteers on Britain's waterways has been estimated at £10 million per year.
- The social value of volunteering will vary across organisations but increases the benefit by up to £700,000 per year.
- There are a far greater number of male than female volunteers, except for within medium-sized organisations, in contrast to national trends for more women to volunteer than men.
- There is a reasonable spread in volunteer ages, albeit with a dip in the 25–34 age band, and a predominance of the over 35s (broadly reflecting national trends).
- An average organisation undertaking waterway-related volunteering activity benefits from around 30 volunteer days a month.
- The majority of inland waterway organisations are small; 70% have less than 10 employees, 50% have a turnover of less than £50,000 pa and over half have no paid staff.
- The majority of voluntary work undertaken relates to practical restoration and maintenance and is classified as unskilled although there is also a spread across 'other' activity, including marketing and

<sup>1</sup> *Volunteering and Inland Waterways, How to Attract Integrate and Retain Volunteers* (September 2010), available online at: [http://www.iwac.org.uk/downloads/reports/IWAC\\_volunteering.pdf](http://www.iwac.org.uk/downloads/reports/IWAC_volunteering.pdf)

fundraising.

- Just under half of inland waterways organisations (47%) have formalised volunteer management procedures.
- There are around 11,000 volunteer days a month carried out on Britain's waterways.

From the perspective of the volunteers themselves, key findings include:

- Volunteers are motivated to volunteer because the cause is important to them and they want to give something back.
- The majority of volunteers are long-term and have been volunteering at the same organisation for at least one year.
- Volunteers are more likely to hear about volunteering opportunities through word of mouth, or on the basis of existing knowledge of an organisation.
- Volunteers are positive about their volunteering experience but highlight that organisation could be improved and bureaucracy reduced.

In addition, there are concerns from inland waterway organisations regarding the sustainability of volunteering, in particular the need to attract more young people and the impact of funding cutbacks and uncertainty about the 'Big Society' agenda.

## 6.2 Recommendations

The following recommendations are made for inland waterways organisations in light of the findings of this report, as well as the good practice in volunteering from other sectors highlighted in the IWAC report.

1. Collectively publicise and celebrate the existing range, value and benefits of volunteering identified in this report through articles in civil society publications and via dissemination to existing networks nationally and regionally.
2. Establish agreed protocols across the sector for the collection of data on volunteering to ensure consistency of definitions and information used in future surveys.
3. In future, make a clear distinction in analysis and volunteering strategies between the distinctive larger, medium-sized and much smaller inland waterways organisations that make up the rest of the sector.
4. Proactively engage on a sector basis with initiatives such as the National Citizens Service and Work Programme which may involve significant volunteering elements.
5. Identify a wider range of roles in which volunteers can get involved, in particular skilled and managerial roles.

6. Work in partnership with other civil society bodies to engage under-represented groups such as younger people (especially 24–35) and those from minority ethnic groups.
7. Promote and support practical volunteer management improvements amongst smaller organisations in line with Investors in Volunteers standards, covering: policies and procedures (in particular formal induction processes); recognition of volunteer time and achievements; the promotion of specific volunteer roles, responsibilities and management systems, and the establishment of regular consultation and communication channels with volunteers.
8. Promote volunteer management training on a sector basis to improve integration of volunteers in organisations.
9. Use the identified motivations and enthusiasm of existing volunteers to drive future marketing campaigns.
10. Identify collective opportunities for engagement with corporate volunteering programmes on a sector basis to target 25–34 age group.



# Appendix One: Telephone Survey Organisation List

## Organisation

Angling Trust

Avon Navigation Trust

Basingstoke Canal Authority

Bat Conservation Trust

BCN Society

BCTV

Biosphere Expeditions – Norwich

Boat Museum Society

British Trust for Ornithology

British Waterways

Broads Authority

Broads Society

Buckingham Canal Society

Butterfly Conservation

Cam Valley Forum

Cambridge Canoe Club

Canal Museum Stoke Bruerne

Canoe England

Central Council for Physical Recreation

Cheshire West and Chester Council

Chester Canal Heritage Trust

Chesterfield Canal Partnership

Chesterfield Canal Trust

City of York Council

Commercial Boat Operators Association

Conservators of the River Cam

Cotswold Canal Trust

Countryside Team, Cardiff Council

County Ecologists

Coventry Canal Society

Dedham Vale Project

Derbyshire County Council

Droitwich Canals Trust

East Anglia Waterways Association

East Manchester Community Boat Project

Erewash Canal Preservation & Development

Forestry Commission

Forth & Clyde Canal Society

Foxton Canal Museum

Friends of the Cromford Canal

## Organisation

Friends Of The Montgomery Canal

Grand Western Canal Country Park Ranger Service

Grand Western Canal Trust

Grantham Canal Society

Great Ouse Boating Association

Greenways Project

Henley Rivertime Boat Trust

Historic Narrowboat Owners Club

Huddersfield Canal Society

Inland Waterways Association (including the Waterway Recovery Group)

Keep Britain Tidy

Keep Wales Tidy

Lake District National Park Authority

Lancaster Canal Trust

Leeds and Liverpool Canal Society

Linlithgow canal centre

Loch Lomond National Park

Medway Valley Countryside Partnership

Melton & Oakham Waterways Society

Mink Management Project

National Association of Boat Owners

National Federation of Anglers

National Trails Office

National Trust

Neath & Tennant Canals Preservation Society

Neath and Tennant Canals

Norfolk Wildlife Trust

Pocklington Canal Amenity Society

Residential Boat Owners Association

River Stour Trust

River Thames Boat Project

River Weaver Canal Society

RNLI

Rochdale Canal Society

Saturn Project

Shropshire Union Canal Society

Sobriety Project

Staffordshire & Worcestershire Canal Society

Stratford-upon-Avon Canal Society

Suffolk Coast & Heaths

## Organisation

Surrey and Hampshire Canal Society

Swansea Canal Society

Swingbridge Work Boat

Ted Ellis Trust

Thames User Group

Thames21

The Duchess Countess Packet Boat Trust

The Horseboating Society

The Inland Waterways Protection Society

The Pirate Club

The Shropshire Union Fly Boat Restoration Society

The Waterways Trust

The Wildlife Trust for Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire, Northamptonshire and Peterborough

Towpath Tidy

Waterways action squad

Well Creek Trust

Wendover Arm Trust

Wensum Valley Project

Wey and Arun Canal Trust

Worcester Birmingham Canal Society

Wey Navigations National Trust

## Appendix Two: Sources used in the SROI Analysis

SROI Outcome	Outcome indicator	Report source
Improving the environment	Benefit experienced from continued preservation and recreational enjoyment of a typical national nature reserve.	Bateman, I.J., Willis, K.G., Garrod, G.D., Doktor, P., Langford, I., Turner, R.K., 1992. <i>Recreation and environmental preservation value of the Norfolk broads: a contingent valuation study</i> . Report to the National Rivers Authority, Environmental Appraisal Group, University of East Anglia, valuation results cited in Bateman, I., Willis, K., Garrod, G. (1993) Consistency Between Contingent Valuation Estimates: A Comparison of Two Studies of UK National Parks. <i>Regional Studies</i> , Vol. 28.5.
	Benefit experienced from continued preservation and recreational enjoyment of a national nature reserve of special significance.	Bateman, I.J., Willis, K.G., Garrod, G.D., Doktor, P., Langford, I., Turner, R.K., 1992. <i>Recreation and environmental preservation value of the Norfolk broads: a contingent valuation study</i> . Report to the National Rivers Authority, Environmental Appraisal Group, University of East Anglia, valuation results cited in Bateman, I., Willis, K., Garrod, G. (1993) Consistency Between Contingent Valuation Estimates: A Comparison of Two Studies of UK National Parks. <i>Regional Studies</i> , Vol. 28.5.
Better physical environments for communities	More use made of the canal	Willis <i>et al.</i> , 1990, Department of Agricultural Economics, University of Newcastle on Tyne, as reported in R.K. Turner and M. Postle, 1994, CSERGE Working Paper WM 94-08 'Valuing the Water Environment', CSERGE
Increasing public access to the environment	More use made of the canal	Willis <i>et al.</i> , 1990, Department of Agricultural Economics, University of Newcastle on Tyne, as reported in R.K. Turner and M. Postle, 1994, CSERGE Working Paper WM 94-08 'Valuing the Water Environment', CSERGE.
Improving community regeneration	Change in people's perception of their local area	Table A1 of the 2009 edition of the Family Spending Survey, Office for National Statistics, <a href="http://www.statistics.gov.uk/downloads/theme_social/Family-Spending-2008/FamilySpending2009.pdf">http://www.statistics.gov.uk/downloads/theme_social/Family-Spending-2008/FamilySpending2009.pdf</a>
More tolerant and less afraid of others	Better tolerance of other generations	Central Scotland Forestry Trust 'Greenlink' SROI report October 2009
Improved well-	Improved mental well-being from	The actual NHS costs of providing group therapy

SROI Outcome	Outcome indicator	Report source
being	being outdoors	have been identified as £7.80 per two hour session, from Barratt and Byford PSSRU, Central Scotland Forestry Trust 'Greenlink' SROI report
Giving something back	I am giving something back to my community	Central Scotland Forestry Trust 'Greenlink' SROI report October 2009  <a href="http://www.greenspacescotland.org.uk/default.asp?page=517">http://www.greenspacescotland.org.uk/default.asp?page=517</a>
	Increased personal satisfaction	Community First Moray SROI Report
	Having something to do when retired	The median gross hourly wage for all employees in the UK (irrespective of hours worked or gender), from the Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings  <a href="http://www.statistics.gov.uk/downloads/theme_labour/ASHE-2009/2009_all_employees.pdf">http://www.statistics.gov.uk/downloads/theme_labour/ASHE-2009/2009_all_employees.pdf</a>
	Helping people in my community	Community First Moray SROI Report at <a href="http://www.communityfirstmoray.org.uk/news.htm">http://www.communityfirstmoray.org.uk/news.htm</a> June 2009
Having more friends	Reduced social isolation	Older Person's Advice Project SROI Report December 2009  <a href="http://linkhousing.org.uk/index.php/media-centre/news/new-study-proves-worth-of-links-older-persons-advice-project/">http://linkhousing.org.uk/index.php/media-centre/news/new-study-proves-worth-of-links-older-persons-advice-project/</a>
Better relationships	Feeling less isolated	From the Family Spending Survey 2008  <a href="http://www.statistics.gov.uk/StatBase/Product.asp?vlnk=361">http://www.statistics.gov.uk/StatBase/Product.asp?vlnk=361</a>
Improving physical health	Increased physical activity and fitness	The financial proxy is derived from Table A1 categories 9.4.1 of £4.80 per week, Central Scotland Forestry Trust 'Greenlink' SROI report

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