

**University of Strathclyde**  
**School of Social Work and Social Policy**

**Young People & Volunteering:  
Attitudes and Experiences in Areas of  
Multiple Deprivation**

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degree of Doctor of Philosophy**

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## Abstract

In the run-up to the Year of Young People 2018, youth volunteering was cast in the political limelight following the Scottish Government's intention to 're-invigorate volunteering'. Yet, despite higher levels of youth than adult volunteering, young people's engagement is unequally structured by gender and area-based deprivation. Although there is a significant literature on youth volunteering, comparatively little is known about under-16s and how opportunities for volunteering are shaped by lived experiences in areas of multiple deprivation. This thesis addresses this gap by examining attitudes towards volunteering, routes and barriers to participation as well as the meanings volunteering acquires for those who do it.

The thesis draws on qualitative fieldwork with male and female volunteers and non-volunteers, aged 12-18, and with youth workers in local government and youth organisations. Different perspectives on volunteering are used to frame the ways in which participants approached volunteering. Bourdieu's theory of practice is employed to explore the relationship between objective conditions and subjective dispositions and their implications for facilitating and impeding volunteering. The concepts of 'bonding' and 'bridging social capital' are also used to understand the nature of participants' relationships and their impact on volunteering.

Findings indicate participants had broadly positive views of volunteering. However, there was widespread belief that it was considered a stigmatised activity due to its perceived incompatibility with peer norms. This stigma was also associated with the lack of information participants received about volunteering, as well as infrastructural issues limiting the support available to them. The notion of the 'participant-to-volunteer' transition is proposed to capture the way in which many participants started volunteering. This idea reflects the histories volunteers had as attendees at youth organisations prior to volunteering in them. Such foundations

provided a base from which calls to volunteer could be responded to positively. Aspects of 'traditional' and 'new' approaches to volunteerism were evident in participants' motivations. However, volunteering was predominantly valued for its relational and affective aspects, the sense of agency it provided and the opportunities it facilitated for personal development.

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# 1 Introduction

This thesis examines young people's attitudes towards and experiences of volunteering in areas of multiple deprivation in Glasgow. It focuses on the nature of youth engagement in deprived areas, as well as what young people think about volunteering and what it means to those who do it. This introductory chapter provides background information and a justification for the study. The first and second sections situate the study in its wider social and policy context. The third provides a rationale for the importance of studying young people's attitudes and experiences of volunteering in deprived areas. The fourth and fifth sections detail the theoretical and methodological tools used to generate and analyse data, while the sixth section describes the structure of the thesis.

## 1.1 Situating the study

As I was making the final adjustments to this thesis Scotland was entering its Year of Young People 2018, an initiative designed to showcase the achievements and contributions of young people across the country. Evidence of young people's contributions can be seen when contrasting their levels of volunteering with adult rates of engagement (52 compared to 27 percent)<sup>1</sup> and their participation in social action with young people across the UK (52 compared to 42 percent) (Pye & Michelmore, 2016).<sup>2</sup> Although these figures indicate there was much to celebrate, it is important that they are situated alongside the challenges young people face.

Scholars have argued policy decisions made following the 2007/8 recession disproportionately impacted low-income families with children (Bradshaw, 2016), as

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<sup>1</sup> These figures are taken from the *Young People in Scotland* survey and the *Scottish Household Survey* which are discussed in greater detail in the Literature Review.

<sup>2</sup> Social action is 'practical action in the service of others to create positive change' and includes activities such as volunteering (Pye & Michelmore, 2016, p. 8). Although the figures for youth volunteering and social action were identical (52 percent), they were taken from different studies and refer to separate activities.

well as young people and their future opportunities (France, 2016). In Scotland, recent figures indicate 26 percent of children are in poverty after housing costs are taken into consideration, six percentage points higher than the adult rate (Scottish Government, 2017d). Child poverty is not evenly distributed but varies between and within cities. For instance, although 34 percent of children in Glasgow were in poverty during 2015, the proportion varied from 25 to 43 percent across the city's wards (End Child Poverty, 2016). Furthermore, young people's experiences are unevenly shaped by area-based deprivation. Those from areas with high levels of deprivation tend to perform less well at school, experience disjointed post-school transitions and have poorer health and lower levels of wellbeing (Scottish Government, 2017a). Accordingly, young people in Scotland do not face the challenges in singular fashion.

Volunteering is similarly experienced in an uneven manner. Although young people exhibit relatively high rates of volunteering when contrasted with adults – adult rates have steadily fallen since 2010 (Scottish Government, 2017g), while young people's have increased significantly since 2009 (Linning & Jackson, 2017) – there are notable inequalities in youth engagement. Recent statistics indicate males and those in urban areas are less likely to volunteer than females and those in rural locations and that rates of volunteering are notably lower in areas experiencing high levels of deprivation (Linning & Jackson, 2017) – trends which are mirrored in the adult population (Scottish Government, 2017g). The continuation of these patterns from youth to adulthood suggests volunteering is shaped by objective conditions and that the disposition to volunteer is embedded at an early age (Brodie et al., 2011). Those without such early experiences are therefore at risk of being excluded from volunteering in later life.

It is important to note that these statistics refer to formal rather than informal volunteering. Formal volunteers act in organisations which direct their volunteer action, while informal volunteers provide services outside group or formally

organised contexts (Horton Smith, Stebbins, & Grotz, 2016, pp. 1396, 1398). This distinction is significant in light of Williams' (2003b, p. 539) contention that the culture of formal volunteering is 'alien' to persons in deprived areas. His argument suggests there is a cultural dimension to the uptake of volunteering opportunities, a point reflected in recent work concerning the differential participation of working- and middle-class young people (Dean, 2016a). The patterning of volunteering by demographic factors and the existence of cultural approaches towards it, highlight the interplay between objective conditions and subjective dispositions (Bourdieu, 1990). This thesis seeks to explore this relationship by examining how attitudes and experiences towards an 'alien' form of participation are shaped by lived experiences in areas of multiple deprivation.

The focus on formal volunteering is also informed by the distinct benefits it can generate. As Lim and Laurence (2015) note, formal volunteers can give rise to collective goods by supporting community organisations to deliver important services. They argue the importance of organisational volunteering is heightened in periods of austerity, due to increases in demand for services among those experiencing hard times. Voluntary action in clubs and community projects can also enhance levels of trust and social capital within communities (Putnam, 2000), as well as developing democratic competencies (Dodge & Ospina, 2016). In addition to generating collective goods, formal volunteering can provide personal benefits. It can have a role in reintegrating individuals into society and provide volunteers with a sense of worth (Nicholas & Ralston, 2011). Furthermore, formal volunteers can cultivate 'soft skills' that are desired in the employment market (Rego, Zózimo, Correia, & Ross, 2016). This latter point is of particular significance for young people who, in an era of individualisation, are encouraged to use experiences such as volunteering as a way of standing out from the crowd when seeking further education and employment (Holdsworth, 2015).

Volunteering in organisational settings is thus a significant activity that provides important social and individual benefits. The relative stability of rates formal volunteering following the 2007/8 recession, compared to significant declines in levels of informal volunteering, particularly in disadvantaged neighbourhoods, suggest the organisations where volunteering takes place are ‘pillar[s] of stable communit[ies]’ in which people invest for the social goods they generate (Lim & Laurence, 2015, p. 337). The stability of such organisations, however, is threatened by cuts to youth services (Unison, 2016a) which risk reducing the resources available to support young people to volunteer. In light of the benefits attached to formal volunteering, it is important to understand the possibilities and restrictions young people in deprived areas face in terms of accessing opportunities. This is of particular importance due to the lower than average levels of formal volunteering found in these areas. By exploring the meanings formal volunteering acquires, as well as attitudes towards it and factors facilitating and hindering access, the thesis can contribute to a clearer understanding of the landscape of formal volunteering in deprived areas.<sup>3</sup>

The current policy focus on youth volunteering and social action makes this a timely endeavour. In its programme for 2017/18, the Scottish Government (2017c, p. 110) indicated its intention to ‘re-invigorat[e] volunteering’, to focus on youth volunteering opportunities during the Year of Young People and to support groups experiencing barriers to volunteering. While at the time of writing it was unclear exactly what this would entail, it is essential to develop an evidence base about the nature of youth volunteering in deprived areas to ensure that any re-invigoration of volunteering does not exclude those that are underrepresented in statistics about participation. Furthermore, the capacity for the UK-wide #iwill campaign to meet its aim of increasing by 50 percent the proportion of young people taking part in

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<sup>3</sup> Unless otherwise specified, throughout the thesis the term ‘volunteering’ is used to denote ‘formal volunteering’.

meaningful social action by 2020 is partly contingent upon understanding the barriers marginalised groups experience.<sup>4</sup>

Although scholars have warned against viewing volunteering as a ‘magic bullet’ (Rochester et al., 2009, p. 4), there is evidence linking it to positive outcomes such as enhanced wellbeing (Binder & Freytag, 2013) and employability prospects (Newton, Oakley, & Pollard, 2011). The supposed win-win nature of volunteering – benefitting individuals and communities (Scottish Volunteering Forum, 2015) – has made it an attractive option for governments seeking to meet policy ends. The following section discusses such interventions and examines the manner in which they frame youth volunteering.

## **1.2 Policy context**

Researchers have argued that, since the 1960s, successive UK Governments have used volunteering to address a variety of politically desirable ends (Rochester, 2013; Sheard, 1995; Zimmeck, 2010):

Just as in the 1960s the government had promoted volunteering as a way of protecting society from the threat of disaffected youth; and just as in the late 1970s the government had called volunteers to protect society from the threat of union power; so, in the 1980s, the government turned to volunteering to protect society from the threats associated with the return of mass unemployment (Sheard, 1995, p. 118)

Sheard (1995, p. 116) argued volunteering was often framed as a ‘panacea’ for social problems, such as the ‘threat of disaffected youth’ – a notion that continues in contemporary debates (Davies, 2017). While policy interventions may be part of the reason why young people exhibit high levels of volunteering, the fact that they

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<sup>4</sup> See <http://www.iwill.org.uk/about-us/the-iwill-fund-frequently-asked-questions/> (accessed 14 December 2017).

are often targeted (Hardill & Baines, 2011; Strickland, 2010) raises questions about the aims and intentions of interventions. Scholars have argued schemes such as the National Citizen Service frame youth as a period of 'becoming' and adulthood as a period of 'being' (Mills & Waite, 2017). Volunteering is seen as a way of developing desired citizenship attributes in young people, often orientated towards preparing them for the labour market (de St Croix, 2017; Holmes, 2009) rather than challenging social inequalities (Davies, 2017). In these initiatives, it is often formal volunteering that is focused on and pulled in different directions to meet policy ends. It is therefore important to understand the nature of these interventions and to explore the extent to which they reflect the manner in which young people engage with volunteering.

Although previous governments harnessed volunteering for their own ends, the advent of New Labour in 1997 is considered to have invoked a change in policy characterised as 'hyperactive' (Zimmeck, 2010, p. 91) and often targeted towards young people and disadvantaged groups (Hardill & Baines, 2011). Programmes aimed at young people included the Young Volunteer Challenge and v Initiative, both of which sought to enhance employment prospects, and Millennium Volunteers, which, although not having employability as an outcome, was promoted with the strapline 'MV for your CV' (Kamerāde & Ellis Paine, 2014, p. 261). During this period, the Russell Commission was tasked with bringing about a 'step change' in youth volunteering (Russell, 2005). The Commission recommended increasing the value volunteering was seen to have in terms of skills development and employability enhancement. In keeping with New Labour's focus on employment as a route to social inclusion (Levitas, 2005), volunteering policy was aligned with tackling worklessness (Hardill & Baines, 2011).

In 2010, the UK Coalition Government, led by David Cameron's Conservative party, came to power with the Big Society thesis. Evans (2011) contends the Big Society positioned volunteering as a vehicle through which individuals could play their role

in fixing 'Broken Britain'. For young people, the National Citizen Service provided an opportunity for such activity. The programme, which received continued backing from Theresa May's (2017) administration, entails an outward bound style trip followed by a period of designing and implementing a community project, intended to provide young people with the opportunity to become 'active citizens' (Evans, 2011). The form of citizenship promoted, however, has been criticised for being philanthropic at the expense of politically active (Kisby, 2010). Critics argue the scheme is a brand to be consumed, that focuses on 'safe' and 'compliant' acts of citizenship (Mills & Waite, 2017, p. 72) leading to 'entrepreneurial individuals' (de St Croix, 2017). Additionally, the Public Accounts Committee stated the scheme 'may no longer be justifiable' due, in part, to its high financial costs (Parliament, 2017) which, in the context of austerity and cuts to youth services, limit resources that can be put towards local youth organisations (Davies, 2017). As under previous administrations, the Coalition's approach to volunteering was characterised by an emphasis on its capacity to enhance individual employability (Kamerāde & Ellis Paine, 2014).

More recently, with cross-party backing, the Step Up to Serve and #iwill campaigns were launched with the aim of making it easier for young people to help others (Cabinet Office, 2013). The campaigns focus on social action, defined as 'practical action in the service of others to create positive change' (Pye, James, & Stobart, 2014, p. 3). The use of the term social action has been criticised for emphasising a 'conformist vision' that underplays its 'radical' roots (Davies, 2017). Promotional material for the #iwill initiative suggests social action 'can build the skills necessary to be successful in the workplace', thus maintaining the focus on a form of citizenship orientated towards participation in the labour market.<sup>5</sup> Accordingly, from a UK-wide perspective, youth volunteering has been framed as a way of developing politically uncontroversial citizenship qualities and preparing young people for the labour market.

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<sup>5</sup> See <http://www.iwill.org.uk/about-us/making-the-case/> (accessed 06 October 2017).

In 2004, the then Scottish Executive (2004c) published its *Volunteering Strategy* which sought to improve volunteer experiences, remove barriers to participation and support young people through targeted interventions such as Project Scotland. Project Scotland was initiated to provide young people from ‘all backgrounds’ with the opportunity to participate in ‘life-changing and life-transforming’ volunteering experiences (Project Scotland, 2004, p. 2). In its current form, the programme places young people, aged 16-30, in contact with organisations where they volunteer for 20-30 hours per week over a three month period. Participants are able to attain a certificate of work readiness, accredited by the Scottish Qualifications Authority, thus linking volunteering with preparation for the labour market. This is also evident in the initiative’s promotional tagline – ‘helping young people in Scotland to get on in life through volunteering’ – which emphasises young people as ‘becoming’ rather than ‘being’ (James, Jenks, & Prout, 1998). Volunteering is framed as helping young people ‘get on in life’ by gaining employability-related skills to aid transitions into the labour market.

A developmental emphasis is also evident in the Saltire Awards, formerly the Millennium Volunteers initiative, which accredit volunteering experiences based on the number of hours volunteered. The programme is facilitated regionally, through Third Sector Interfaces in Scotland’s 32 local authority areas, and open to young people aged 12-25. Unlike Project Scotland, the Saltire Awards do not place young people in contact with organisations, but accredit volunteering activities completed at schools and volunteer-involving groups. The scheme has proven popular, administering 14,000 awards in 2012/13 and 27,000 in 2016/17.<sup>6</sup>

The developmental aspect of the Saltire Awards is evident in its intention to provide a way of ‘record[ing] and monitor[ing] individual skills and personal development’ (Scottish Government, 2017h), as well as its relationship with Scotland’s national

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<sup>6</sup> Figures taken from the Voluntary Action Scotland press release from July 2017.

educational framework, the Curriculum for Excellence. The Curriculum for Excellence aims to develop four capacities: successful learners, confident individuals, responsible citizens and effective contributors (Scottish Executive, 2004a). These capacities are central to the Scottish Government's aim of enhancing children and young people's wellbeing and making Scotland 'the best place in the world for children and young people to grow up' (Aileen Campbell, former Minister for Children and Wellbeing, cited in Scottish Government, 2013). Critics, however, argue the Curriculum for Excellence places too much emphasis on individual responsibility and underplays the significance of citizenship's political and democratic dimensions (Biesta, 2008). Moreover, the framework's promotion of the 'values on which Scottish society is based' (Scottish Executive, 2004a, p. 11) has been criticised for its normative character and under theorisation of what these values entail (Gillies, 2006). While these criticisms stem from an education perspective, similarities can be seen with the youth volunteering policies discussed above.

Scottish approaches, therefore, continue the trend of viewing volunteering as a way of developing politically desirable citizenship characteristics as well as preparing young people for the labour market. This is not to assert that other reasons for volunteering are wholly absent in promotional strategies. Project Scotland, for example, note some people 'get a kick out of helping others',<sup>7</sup> while Young Scot, Scotland's national youth information and citizenship charity, state volunteering can be a fun and social experience in addition to enhancing education and employment prospects.<sup>8</sup> Yet, despite this, the overall emphasis often rests on the ways in which volunteering can prepare young people for the world of work.

Attempts to instil citizenship characteristics in young people and create links between volunteering and employment, however, are not without their challenges.

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<sup>7</sup> See <https://www.projectscotland.co.uk/volunteers/faqs/> (accessed 18 January 2018).

<sup>8</sup> See <https://young.scot/information/community/why-should-i-volunteer/> (accessed 18 January 2018).

Discrepancies between the aims of policy makers and actions of volunteer coordinators can hamper the development of desired citizenship qualities (Dean, 2013b), while compulsory volunteering initiatives can reduce young people's sense of agency and thus fail to develop the intended characteristics (Warburton & Smith, 2003). Additionally, despite the 'enduring' policy interest in volunteering as a route to employment, evidence on its success is mixed (Ellis Paine, McKay, & Moro, 2013, p. 355).<sup>9</sup>

This section has shown that, from a policy perspective, volunteering has and continues to be framed as a way of addressing social concerns. Notable among these initiatives is the intention to prepare young people for adulthood and the labour market. Such individualised benefits are characteristic of what scholars have referred to as a shift from 'traditional' to 'new' forms of volunteerism. In light of such change, the following section provides a rationale for the importance of studying youth volunteering in deprived areas.

### **1.3 Rationale for the study**

Robert MacDonald (2011, p. 428), the notable youth studies scholar, argues the importance of studying young people lies in the notion that:

[The] youth phase allows a privileged vantage point from which to observe broader process of social change ... If new social trends emerge it is feasible that they will be seen here first or most obviously, among the coming, new generation of young adults.

Scholars of the voluntary sector have recently argued 'volunteering is undergoing radical change' with an increased emphasis on personal interest at the expense of collective sentiments (Hustinx, Shachar, Handy, & Horton Smith, 2016, p. 351). As MacDonald posits, it is arguably young people who are at the forefront of such

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<sup>9</sup> See subsection 2.2.2 for a discussion of the impact of volunteering on employment.

transformations. Youth volunteering policy, for example, is argued to encourage the adoption of instrumental motives among the young (Dean, 2014) who are urged to volunteer in order to stand out from the crowd when applying for jobs (Holdsworth, 2015). Indeed, young people have been found to express employability-orientated motives to a greater extent than adults (Low, Butt, Ellis Paine, & Davis Smith, 2007), giving weight to the notion that they are at the vanguard of change.

Yet, in addition to offering a window into change, MacDonald argues the study of youth also provides a way of assessing continuity. Thus, rather than taking the varying motives of young people and adults as evidence of opposing values, it has been argued they might more fruitfully be conceptualised as distinct responses to different circumstances (Nicholas & Ralston, 2016). While young people may emphasise employment-related motives, this does not preclude the expression of altruistic ones, nor, as Nicholas and Ralston (2016) argue, does old age restrict the importance of personal interest. Focusing on youth volunteering, therefore, offers a way of exploring whether or not transformations in volunteering are occurring.

Young people do not, however, constitute a homogenous group, as evident in demographic variations in their approach to volunteering (Linning & Jackson, 2017). Thus, although changes may be 'seen here first', they may appear unevenly throughout the youth population. For example, while young people from middle-class backgrounds have been reported to consciously express personal interest motivations (Storr & Spaaij, 2016), it is less clear how such motives manifest among those from less privileged backgrounds. It is therefore important to situate young people's volunteering experiences in the socio-spatial contexts in which they occur (Skinner, 2014; Smith, Timbrell, Woolvin, Muirhead, & Fyfe, 2010).

This thesis does this by examining the relationships young people, aged 12-18, have with volunteering in areas of multiple deprivation. Although youth is recognised as a significant stage in the development of an individual's pathway to participation

(Brodie et al., 2011), studies of youth volunteering tend to focus on those aged 16 and above (Sarre & Tarling, 2010), creating a gap in knowledge about this early period. The inclusion of persons aged 12-15 in this study helps address this deficit. Furthermore, the overall age range of 12-18 provides a way of exploring the extent to which attitudes alter as participants reach 16, the age at which they can legally leave school and enter full-time employment (Scottish Government, 2009b).

In addition to examining age-based differences, it is necessary to explore how gender shapes attitudes towards volunteering. At the national level, evidence indicates young males are not only less likely to volunteer, but less likely to say they would be interested in doing so (Linning & Jackson, 2017). At the more local level of deprived areas, such differences remain unanalysed. The necessity of conducting such analyses is reinforced by findings from the youth studies literature concerning the importance of peer norms and being 'one of the lads' in shaping behaviour in deprived neighbourhoods (MacDonald & Marsh, 2005, p. 84). As these are settings in which volunteering has been argued to be an 'alien' practice, it is important to understand how localised and gendered cultures impact opportunities for volunteering. To achieve this, it is also necessary to conduct fieldwork with both volunteers and non-volunteers. In relation to studies about why people start volunteering, scholars have noted that '[a]ll too often' information is 'gathered only from volunteers' (Musick & Wilson, 2008, p. 56). The inclusion of volunteers and non-volunteers provides a way of exploring similarities and differences in what interests young people about volunteering, as well as the factors that facilitate and hinder engagement.

The rationale for researching the attitudes and experiences of young people aged 12-18 in deprived areas is twofold: firstly, it provides a way of exploring how this group conceptualise volunteering; secondly, it offers a way of understanding how they engage with it. Both reasons have implications for assessing the 'radical change' volunteering is said to be undergoing. Evidence of individualised

approaches, such as CV enhancement and the selection of opportunities based on anticipated futures, can be taken as evidence of such change, while reports of altruism, long-term commitment and loyalty can be viewed as continuity. Moreover, situating participants' experiences in deprived areas offers important insights into how pathways to volunteering are forged in locations characterised by non-participation. This is significant practically, as the knowledge can be put towards designing inclusive youth volunteering initiatives, and theoretically, by exploring how specific behaviours occur in social environments where they go against group norms. Having provided a rationale for the study, the following section outlines the theoretical tools that will be employed to aid the analysis.

## **1.4 Theoretical approach**

Social theory, according to May and Powell (1996, p. 1), is 'core to establishing frameworks for understanding in social science' and for 'interpreting human action'. To this end, the thesis draws on different perspectives on volunteering, Bourdieu's theory of practice and bonding and bridging social capital. These approaches are employed to help understand the nature of volunteering from participants' perspectives, to explore the relationship between objective structures and subjective dispositions, as well as the significance of relationships and their implications for volunteering.

To understand the extent to which 'radical change' in volunteering has occurred, it is necessary to examine how it has altered over time. To this end, perspectives on voluntary action from the 19<sup>th</sup> century to the present day are examined. These include mutual aid, philanthropy, the development of citizenship qualities and the shift from 'traditional' to 'new' volunteerism. Although these approaches represent different ways of framing voluntary action, there exist continuities across them. For example, new volunteerism is associated with individualism, the notion that people volunteer primarily in order to personally benefit. Yet, rather than this representing a complete rupture with the past, elements of individualism were present in the

mutual aid organisations of the 19<sup>th</sup> century – evident in the notion that by helping ‘one’s fellows’ one would also protect ‘one’s own need for security against misfortune’ (Beveridge, 1948, pp. 8-9). Furthermore, although current approaches to volunteering are argued to be characterised as an individualistic ‘exchange’ rather than a philanthropic ‘gift’ (Ellis-Paine et al., 2016, p. 375), individualism was evident in 19<sup>th</sup> century philanthropy and altruism is not absent in the contemporary era. These perspectives provide a way of framing how participants relate to volunteering and thus exploring change and continuity in voluntary action.

To more fully understand possibilities for volunteering, Bourdieu’s theory of practice is employed. Central to this approach is the aim of analysing the relationship between objective conditions and subjective dispositions. The concept of ‘habitus’ is used to explore how ways of seeing and acting are inhabited in the body in accordance with an individual’s position in social space. These positions present individuals with objective possibilities, making certain actions thinkable and unthinkable, and are reinforced from an early age in accordance with group norms and expectations. When objective conditions and subjective dispositions align, the world appears natural and taken-for-granted. Accordingly, in areas where volunteering is ‘alien’, non-participation may be normalised leading to penalties for those who deviate from anticipated behaviours. Habitus is not, however, a deterministic concept, but one that is shaped by the unique set of experiences each person encounters. Thus, by focusing on individual social trajectories, it is possible to understand how certain behaviours are incorporated into the habitus, even when they go against group norms. Habitus makes possible an analysis of the relationship between group and individual dispositions and the social environments in which they are located. Bourdieu’s framework is therefore pertinent to this thesis as it aids the examination of how opportunities and barriers to volunteering manifest objectively and subjectively. In addition to this, while the concept of habitus has been widely deployed in areas such as educational research (Reay, 2004b), it has

received less attention in the world of voluntary sector studies. These theoretical tools thus offer a novel way of understanding youth volunteering.

In addition to these perspectives, the thesis makes use of the distinction between 'bonding' and 'bridging social capital' to understand the significance of relationships to volunteering. Bonding social capital denotes inward looking social relationships which are helpful for 'getting by', while its bridging component refers to outward facing relationships that are useful for 'getting ahead' (Putnam, 2000, p. 23). The 'dark sides' of social capital tend to be associated with its bonding dimension (van Deth, Edwards, Bădescu, Moldavanova, & Woolcock, 2016), while its bridging elements are more frequently sought in policy debates (Westwood, 2011). Although they are often thought of as discrete dimensions, their deployment in empirical work reveals they can be interwoven and lead to each other. For example, the provision of tight-knit inward facing bonds has the potential to act as a secure base from which individuals can bridge out to new networks (Weller, 2007). By focusing on the nature of relationships, bonding and bridging social capital provide a way of exploring the possibilities and limitations participants' relationships provide for engaging in volunteering, as well as the significance of relationships acquired through volunteering. This has implications not only for understanding facilitators and inhibitors to volunteering, but also why it is valued.

## **1.5 Methodological approach**

To address the research questions, a qualitative methodology was employed. While existing quantitative data provides valuable information on patterns of volunteering, qualitative methods were selected for their ability to generate in-depth understandings of the meanings volunteering acquires (Braun & Clarke, 2013). The specific methods used were focus groups and semi-structured interviews. Focus groups were conducted with different cohorts of young people and were deployed for their capacity to provide insight into how groups think about and relate to a given topic. Based on the notion that young people do not constitute

a homogenous group, the method was considered suitable for understanding similarities and differences in participants' attitudes and experiences. Focus groups were supplemented with interviews to gain greater insight into individual volunteering trajectories. The combination of these methods was considered to enhance opportunities for analysing how group and individual dispositions towards volunteering developed in settings where it was considered 'alien'. In addition to this, youth workers were interviewed to gain a broader understanding of the issues shaping youth volunteering in deprived areas. Accordingly, they aided the analysis of how objective conditions shaped possibilities for volunteering.

Participants were recruited from organisations located in the 'most deprived' areas of Glasgow as designated by the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD). Based on seven indicators, the index ranks small geographical areas from 'most' to 'least' deprived. The SIMD is used by the Scottish Government to assess a range of policy areas, including volunteering. It provided a way of identifying areas experiencing multiple deprivations and low levels of volunteering and was thus a valuable tool for locating research sites. Glasgow was used to identify research sites due to the high levels of deprivation found in the city. At the time of the fieldwork, 48 percent of the city was classified as being in the 20 percent 'most deprived' areas – a higher proportion than any other local authority area in Scotland (Scottish Government, 2016a). Youth and sports organisations as well as educational institutions were approached on the grounds that they were organisations where both male and female volunteers and non-volunteers could be found. Some of the organisations offered specific volunteer programmes, while others involved young people in less formal ways. In the majority of instances, young volunteers aided the design and delivery of play and sporting activities for other children and young people.

## **1.6 Structure of the thesis**

Chapter 2 analyses the literature on young people and volunteering. The first part examines definitional issues and rates of participation. The second assesses what is known about the nature of engagement in relation to motivations, pathways, benefits and barriers. The final section summarises and identifies gaps in the literature before outlining the research questions.

Chapter 3 details the theoretical framework for the study. The first section outlines different perspectives on volunteering, noting continuities and differences between them. The second part critically assesses the utility of Bourdieu' theory of practice to understanding how opportunities for volunteering are shaped by objective and subjective factors. The third examines the notion of social capital, particularly its bonding and bridging dimensions, and their importance in understanding the significance of relationships to volunteering.

Chapter 4 describes the methodological approach adopted. It highlights the philosophical paradigm underpinning the study and provides a rationale for the use of a qualitative approach. The chapter offers an account of the processes by which organisations were selected, in addition to summaries of their activities and descriptions of the areas in which they were located. Finally, the chapter discusses the ethical issues considered before, during and after the fieldwork as well the processes of data collection and analysis.

Chapter 5 examines participants' understandings of and attitudes towards volunteering. It notes variations among the different cohorts of participants, as well as the difficulties of separating attitudes of volunteering from experiences of it. The attitudes expressed are discussed in relation to the different perspectives on volunteering.

Chapter 6 explores participants' routes into volunteering opportunities and their motivations. The chapter is sensitive to the role of social context in shaping possibilities for volunteering. The concept of 'habitus' is used to understand how dispositions towards volunteering developed in accordance with early and familial experiences. Perspectives on volunteering are also used to make sense of participants' reasons for volunteering or wanting to do so.

Chapter 7 analyses the benefits volunteers felt they acquired from volunteering. To understand the significance of the sense of agency they gained, as well as the relational aspects they enjoyed, participants' accounts are situated in the context of their otherwise limited leisure opportunities. The concept of 'social capital' is used to analyse the nature of the relationships they developed and the affective dimensions of these attachments.

Chapter 8, the final empirical chapter, examines factors that restricted opportunities for volunteering. These are discussed in terms of objective restrictions, relating to institutional and spatial barriers, and subjective hindrances, relating to attitudes. Bourdieu's approach is used to explore the ways in which constrained opportunities for volunteering facilitated the development of a subjective disposition which framed volunteering as an act that would generate informal peer sanctions. The chapter explores the gendered dimensions of these penalties and examines the notion that their overall impact might have been overstated.

Finally, Chapter 9 concludes the thesis. It revisits the background of the study before outlining the original contribution to knowledge it makes. The thesis highlights how volunteering experiences were often preceded by periods of attendance at youth organisations. These prior experiences provided foundations, often developed over lengthy periods of time, from which participants were able to respond positively to calls to volunteer. Without such foundations, particularly in

the context of limited information about volunteering or opportunities to engage in it, access to opportunities was made challenging. The chapter reflects on the conceptual and theoretical tools used in the thesis, as well as limitations of the study. The thesis ends by suggesting avenues for future research and policy recommendations.

## **2 Literature review**

This chapter reviews literature relating to young people and volunteering to provide a foundation for the rest of the study. It is divided into three sections. The first explores the ways in which volunteering has been defined and the areas in which it takes place. It examines how rates of volunteering vary in Scotland by age, gender, geography and area-based deprivation. The second section examines the nature of engagement in terms of motivations and pathways to participation, benefits and barriers to entry. It highlights the difficulty of assessing each of these areas due to issues of causality, attribution and methodology. The final section summarises the Literature Review and notes gaps the thesis aims to fill.

### **2.1 Understanding volunteering and rates of participation**

In *The Politics of Volunteering*, Eliasoph (2013) argues there exists a tendency to think of volunteering in a particular way, as providing help to the needy rather than challenging social inequalities. Her contention raises the point that, although volunteering can occur in a wide variety of settings, it is more commonly considered in narrower terms. Furthermore, volunteering has been reported to suffer an image problem whereby it is stereotypically viewed as an activity for middle-aged and middle-class women (Ellis-Paine et al., 2016). This section addresses these points by examining the ways in which volunteering has been defined, the areas in which it takes place and levels of participation. It highlights definitional challenges and argues individuals do not always recognise themselves as volunteers. Moreover, while some aspects of the stereotype are supported by existing evidence, it fails to capture the complexity of participation.

#### *2.1.1 Defining volunteering*

It has been argued that 'we do not have a single, simple, objective definition which enables us to draw a clear line between what is volunteering and what is not' (Rochester, Ellis Paine, & Howlett, 2010, p. 19). Academics and policy makers have defined volunteering in various ways and the various areas in which it takes place

can create hazy boundaries concerning what constitutes an act as volunteering (Musick & Wilson, 2008). Despite this, the recently published *Palgrave Handbook of Volunteering, Civic Participation, and Nonprofit Associations* defines volunteer activity as:

Valuable [or useful] activity by an individual that is (i) not remunerated (or at least not fully remunerated, given its market value), (ii) not coerced by biology, force, authority, or law, and (iii) is aimed at helping (a) the welfare/satisfactions of one or more other persons outside one's immediate family and household or (b) the welfare of the larger society, the environment, or the whole of human society globally. (Horton Smith et al., 2016, pp. 1411-1412)

These three characteristics reinforce definitions proposed by scholars of the voluntary sector (Cnaan, Handy, & Wadsworth, 1996; Ellis Paine, Hill, & Rochester, 2010; Rochester et al., 2010). Additionally, Horton Smith et al. (2016) contend volunteering has a fourth attribute, organisational structure. Rather than viewing this as a defining characteristic, however, they view it as a feature. An act can therefore be considered volunteering in both formal (organisational) and informal (one-to-one) settings.

While there is a general acceptance of these characteristics, debate exists concerning what constitutes non-remuneration, non-coercion and benefit to others. Ellis Paine et al. (2010) posit these principles are best viewed along a spectrum. In relation to non-remuneration, they contend incentives and rewards constitute a grey area. Horton Smith et al. posit volunteering cannot be remunerated to its market value, while Ellis Paine et al. contend larger and more formal rewards, compared to unexpected ones or incentives encouraging initial participation, move into the realm of payment and thus discount an act as volunteering. Young people have been found to reflect this position, viewing an 'inherent contradiction' in the

notion of 'payment for volunteering' (Gaskin, 1998, p. 44). The process of defining an act as volunteering, in this respect, however, is complicated by the fact that that which constitutes a large incentive may vary from one context to another context (Ellis Paine et al., 2010). For example, in contrast to teenagers, Gaskin (1998) found young people in their 20s were more likely to consider a modest wage would make volunteering more appealing. Other studies have highlighted the importance of motivation in the public's perception of what constitutes volunteering. From this perspective, volunteering is not just unpaid work, but unpaid work 'performed for the correct reason' – i.e. a desire to help others (Musick & Wilson, 2008, p. 17).

Regarding beneficiaries, it has been proposed that the emphasis is shifting from society towards the individual (Hustinx et al., 2016). Some perspectives stress volunteers may benefit, but these benefits should be exceeded by the costs of volunteering (Musick & Wilson, 2008). Thus, while there is a sense that volunteers can benefit, it is often considered that beneficiaries must include those beyond oneself and immediate family (Ellis Paine et al., 2010; Horton Smith et al., 2016). However, there also exists a tension between actual and intended benefit (Ellis Paine et al., 2010). Although volunteers may be well intentioned, they may cause harm (Eliasoph, 2013). For example, in their quests for rewarding experiences, adult after-school volunteers have been found to distract rather than help children with their homework (Eliasoph, 2011).

The final characteristic, that volunteering is non-coerced, also generates debate. Ellis Paine et al. (2010) distinguish between five types of coercion: physical, legal, social, individual and institutional. They position the first two nearer the 'coerced' end of the spectrum, due to the restrictions placed on an individual's freedom, while contending the latter three occupy a more ambiguous position. In terms of social or institutional coercion, Holdsworth and Brewis (2014) found higher education students felt pressured to volunteer in order to enhance their employability. Ellis Paine et al.'s (2010) model considers such coercion to become

problematic when it becomes stronger and directed. Thus, while the students may experience pressure to volunteer, this is 'not the same as being *required* ... or being forced to do the work' (Musick & Wilson, 2008, p. 12, emphasis in original).

In addition to these characteristics, some researchers add a fourth – organisational structure. Activities occurring in an organisational setting are known as formal volunteering, while activities beyond such settings – 'giving unpaid help as an individual to people who are not relatives' – are referred to as informal volunteering (Rochester et al., 2010, p. 20). Ellis Paine et al. (2010) treat organisational setting as a dimension rather than a defining feature of volunteering. Yet, academic attention to informal volunteering (Dean, 2013a; Williams, 2003a; Woolvin, 2011) contrasts with public perception. Cnaan et al. (1996) found the net-cost of volunteering to be of central importance to the public in their assessments of who can be called a volunteer. Volunteering through an organisation was perceived to generate a greater cost to the actor and was considered a 'more pure volunteering' (Cnaan et al., 1996, p. 381). More recently, researchers have posited it is unlikely that public perception of volunteering would include more informal acts (Rochester et al., 2010).

The Scottish Government (2017g, p. 190) defines volunteering as:

[The] giving of time and energy through a third party, which can bring measurable benefits to the volunteer, individual beneficiaries, groups and organisations, communities, environment and society at large. It is a choice undertaken of one's own free will, and is not motivated primarily for financial gain or for a wage or salary.

The Scottish Government's stipulation that volunteering occurs 'through a third party' means it takes formal volunteering as its focus. As discussed in section 1.2, this is consistent with government interventions into volunteering. Accordingly, it is

formal volunteering that is pulled in different directions to meet policy ends while informal modes of participation are relegated 'below the radar' (Woolvin & Hardill, 2013, p. 281). This differs from definitions used in the other UK nations to measure rates of volunteering, thus problematizing comparisons between rates of volunteering across the countries (Volunteer Scotland, 2017b). In addition to this, the Scottish Government's condition that volunteering should not be motivated 'primarily for financial gain' implies this may be part of an actor's motivation and is somewhat at odds with the notion that volunteering is an unpaid activity. Furthermore, the contention that volunteering can bring a 'measurable' benefit is ambiguous – must an act create benefits or simply have the potential to do so? How is the benefit to be measured?

Thus, although the defining features of volunteering are not black and white, an act must satisfy certain characteristics in order to be referred to as such. Volunteering is not, therefore, confined to specific areas of activity but can take place across a range of settings. To capture this diversity, Rochester et al. (2010) highlight three broad areas in which volunteering occurs:

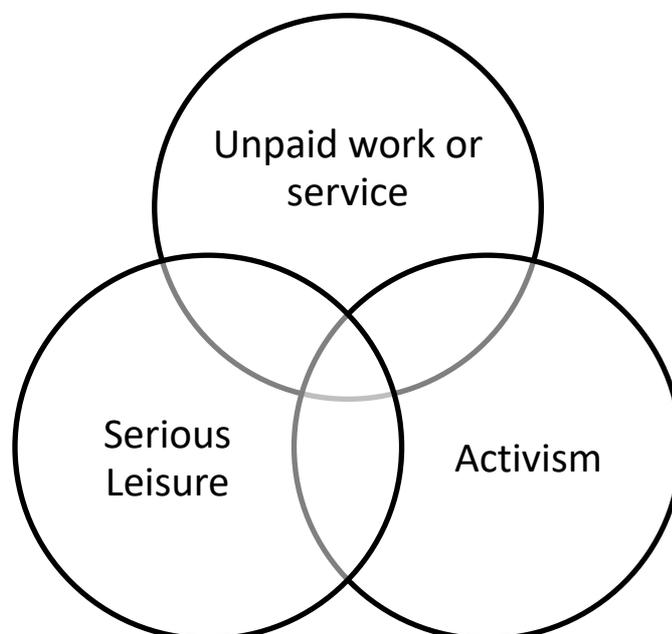


Figure 2.1 A three perspective model of volunteering (Rochester et al., 2010, p. 15)

Rochester et al. contend unpaid work or service is the normative approach towards volunteering in developed Western societies and refer to it as the 'dominant paradigm'. Within this framework, volunteering is viewed as an altruistic act motivated by a desire to help those less fortunate than oneself, taking place through predefined roles in 'large, professionally staffed and formally structured organisations' (Rochester, 2013, p. 177). The activist strand, in contrast, is said to characterise voluntary action in the developing South. It is more strongly motivated by mutual aid and is more likely to occur through self-help groups than formally structured organisations. Rochester (2013) contends the scale of this paradigm is underestimated in the UK, as are the contributions made by volunteers acting in this way. The final perspective, serious leisure, places greater emphasis on the enjoyment and fulfilment volunteers receive from arts, culture, sports and recreational voluntary activities (Harflett, 2015; Rochester, 2013; Stebbins, 2004). The three perspectives are not, however, hermetically sealed from each other. One can, for instance, engage in serious leisure volunteering while also providing unpaid work or services for others.

The variety of voluntary activities is not necessarily captured in public opinion (Pye, Lister, Latter, & Clements, 2009). Eliasoph (2013) suggests individuals were less likely to consider the activist strains of volunteering than they were those orientated towards helping persons in need. Not only this, but studies have reported those engaging in voluntary activities do not always think of themselves as volunteers (Cnaan et al., 1996; Department for Education and Skills, 2007; Hurley, Wilson, Christie, & Stevenson, 2008). Moreover, researchers have posited there may be a classed dimension to the extent to which individuals identify with the term – those from more affluent backgrounds being more likely to do so (Guild, Harrison, & Saxton, 2014). Indeed, research with socially excluded adults suggests volunteering can be seen as something a 'certain group' of people do, leading to disengagement with the concept (Smith, Ellis, Howlett, & O'Brien, 2004, p. 24).

Scholars have argued volunteering can be an 'exclusive construct', particularly for young people, who, due to persistent stereotypes about the social attributes of volunteers, do not see it as something that applies to them (Lukka & Ellis, 2001). A recent study in Scotland, however, found adolescent respondents held positive attitudes towards volunteering and that the proportion of those who considered it 'boring' had fallen (Harper & Jackson, 2015). Despite this, and in keeping with prior evidence that negative attitudes were notable among young males (Gaskin, 2004; Smith, 1999), there is evidence to suggest males are less likely to indicate the prospect of volunteering would interest them (Linning & Jackson, 2017). Furthermore, young people with prior experience of volunteering are more likely to hold positive attitudes than those without (Henderson, Brown, Pancer, & Ellis-Hale, 2007), who have been reported to lack knowledge about the diversity and breadth of volunteering (Ellis, 2004). Such evidence indicates exposure to volunteering is important in developing attitudes and that there is a gendered nature in how it is framed. It is unclear, however, how attitudes develop in deprived areas.

In light of the issues discussed in this section, it is feasible that statistics may underrepresent the true nature of participation. Indeed, although past research has examined public definitions of volunteering (Cnaan et al., 1996), there is little evidence on the understandings young people (NatCen, 2011), particularly those in disadvantaged areas, have of the concept. If persons are not identifying as volunteers, is this because they have different understandings of what constitutes volunteering to that proposed in policy, practice and academic contexts? If they have similar understandings, is the issue to do with attitudes and a disinclination towards identifying with something that is not held in a favourable light? Having examined what volunteering is and where it takes place, the following section looks at who engages with it.

### 2.1.2 Rates of volunteering

This subsection primarily draws on successive waves of the *Scottish Household Survey* and *Young People in Scotland* survey to explore how rates of formal volunteering vary by age, gender, geography, deprivation and over time. The *Scottish Household Survey* is Scotland's largest annual dataset on volunteering behaviour (Scottish Government, 2014a, 2015a, 2016b, 2017g). Roughly 10,500 households take part across 32 local authority areas. The survey is administered on a face-to-face basis with adults aged 16 years and over. A shortcoming of the survey for this thesis is that it does not include students' halls of residence and therefore may underrepresent this section of the population (Scottish Government, 2017f), who are most likely to belong to the survey's youngest age bracket (16-24). The *Young People in Scotland* survey (Harper & Jackson, 2015; Linning & Jackson, 2017) is administered to secondary school pupils aged 11-18. The most recent wave was completed by 1,550 pupils in schools across 24 local authority areas. Unlike the *Scottish Household Survey*, the *Young People in Scotland* survey is administered on a self-completion basis meaning respondents cannot ask interviewers for assistance. The survey uses secondary schools as research sites and therefore does not include those who had left school aged 16 or were excluded from school, a phenomenon which is higher in the 'most deprived' areas (Scottish Government, 2015b). Unless otherwise stated, the data below refer to instances where respondents had volunteered at least once 12 months prior to the surveys.

Although employing different methodologies and phrasing questions slightly differently, the two surveys enable an examination of patterns of volunteering if not direct comparisons.<sup>10</sup> Regarding overall levels of volunteering, adult rates remained at 27 percent from 2014 to 2016 while young people's rose from 45 percent in 2014

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<sup>10</sup> To assess levels of volunteering, the *Scottish Household Survey* asks, 'Thinking back over the last 12 months, have you given up any time to help any clubs, charities, campaigns or organisations. I mean in an unpaid capacity?'. The *Young People in Scotland* survey asks, 'Thinking back over the last 12 months, have you given up any of your time to help out with things like clubs, campaigns or organisations without being paid?'

to 52 percent in 2016. The increase in youth volunteering may be a symptom of pressures young people experience to volunteer to enhance their CVs and university applications (Dean, 2014; Holdsworth, 2015). The overall difference between adults and young people may be related to their different life-stages and the opportunities and time available to them. Adults are not targeted by volunteering initiatives to the same degree as young people (see section 1.2) and may have to balance volunteering with other tasks such as work and childcare.

When examining the data by gender, a notable imbalance emerged. Figure 2.2 shows that, between 2007 and 2016, female adults consistently volunteered more than males.

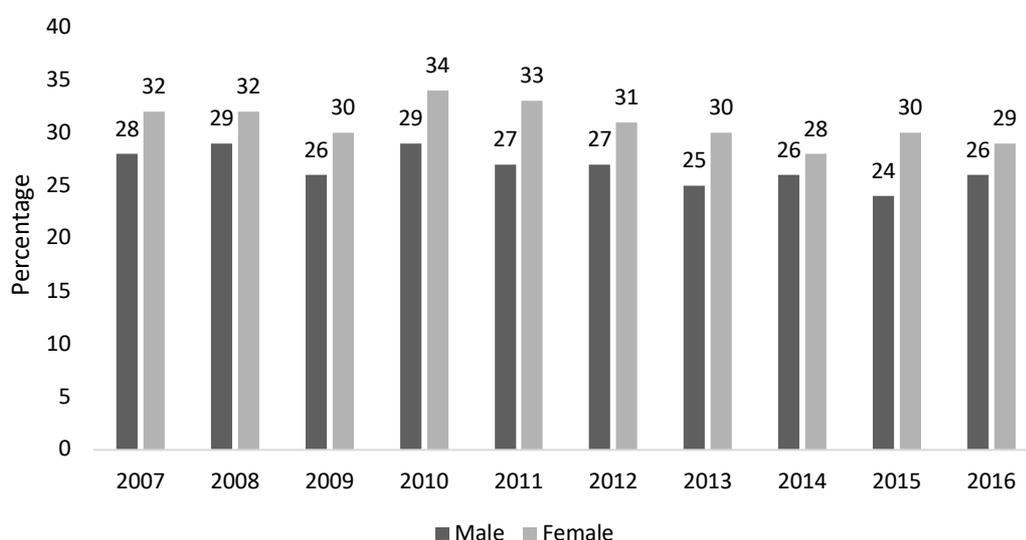


Figure 2.2 Percentage of adults who provided unpaid help to organisations or groups in the past 12 months by gender (source: *Scottish Household Survey* reports published between 2008 and 2017)

This trend differs slightly from data in England, where narrower and less consistent patterns were found (NCVO, 2017). In 2015/16, for instance, there was only a one percentage point difference between females (42 percent) and males (41 percent), while in 2010/11 a greater proportion of males (39 percent) than females (38

percent) volunteered.<sup>11</sup> Data from the *Young People in Scotland* surveys, however, paints a similar picture to the *Scottish Household Survey* data. In 2016, 58 percent of female respondents indicated they had volunteered compared to 46 percent of males. These findings are consistent with other studies of young people in Scotland (Scottish Executive, 2005; YouthLink Scotland, 2009) and the UK (Bennett & Parameshwaran, 2013; NatCen, 2011; Pye et al., 2014). In addition to overall rates being structured by gender, so too were the types of organisations respondents volunteered with.

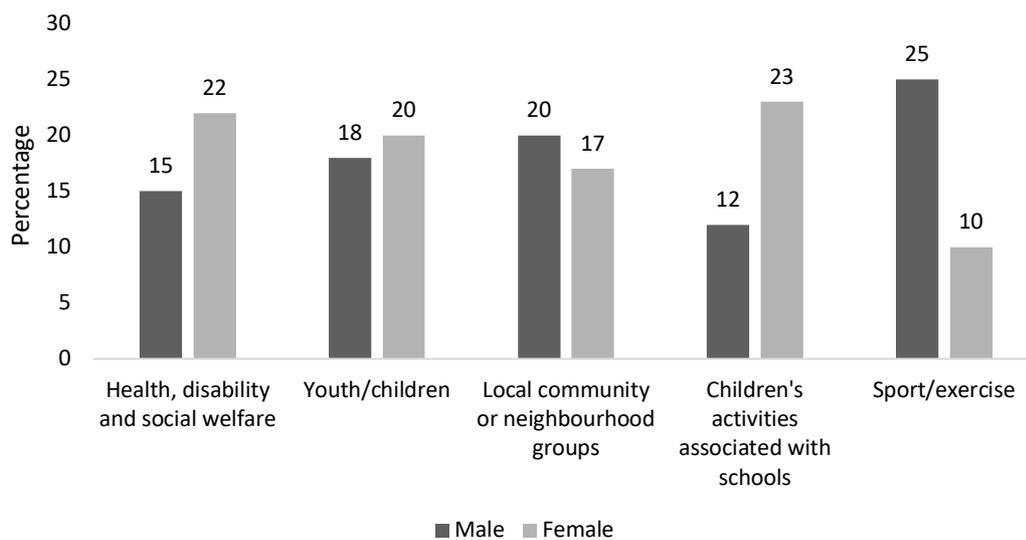


Figure 2.3 Types of organisations or groups for which adults provided help for in the past 12 months by gender. Respondents were allowed multiple responses (Scottish Government (2017g))

Figure 2.3 indicates females were more likely to indicate they volunteered in organisations dealing with social welfare, children and young people, while males more frequently reported volunteering in sporting and neighbourhood groups. This finding suggests not only was participation in volunteering shaped by gender but so too was the manner in which it was engaged with. This pattern was also mirrored in

<sup>11</sup> Scholars have argued divergent geographies of volunteerism policy exist in England, Wales and Scotland, which may account for variations in levels of participation (Woolvin, Mills, Hardill, & Rutherford, 2015). However, they also note different methodologies inhibit comparisons (see also Volunteer Scotland, 2017b).

the youth surveys. In the 2016 edition, 57 percent of males volunteered in sporting organisations compared to 44 percent of females, while greater proportions of females volunteered with child-related organisations both in and outside school settings, 38 and 46 percent respectively compared to 23 and 30 percent for males. Although this data does not tell us about motivations or the nature of involvement in these organisations, it is nonetheless indicative of gendered engagement with volunteering.

Spatial variations were also evident in the two surveys, urban and rural as well as more and less deprived areas exhibited different rates of volunteering. In 2016, 26 percent of adults in 'large urban areas' volunteered compared to 41 percent of those in 'remote rural' locations. The same pattern was evident in the 2016 wave of the youth survey, for both in-school volunteering and volunteering during spare time. Young volunteers in rural areas exhibited a 24 percentage point difference between volunteering in their spare time (56 percent) compared to school time (32 percent). Urban volunteers, by contrast, had only a 10 percentage point difference between spare time (36 percent) and school based (26 percent) volunteering. The lower level of engagement in urban settings, in addition to the proportionately smaller rate of volunteering in non-school settings, suggest urban young people lack awareness of, access to or interest in volunteering opportunities beyond school environments. Accordingly, it is important to explore the role they perceive their schools to play in facilitating volunteering, as well as their awareness of opportunities beyond these settings.

Lower levels of volunteering were also evident in deprived areas. Since 2014, the *Scottish Household Survey* has provided data on rates of volunteering among households located in the 20 percent 'most deprived' areas. As shown in Figure 2.4, levels of engagement were notably lower in such areas.

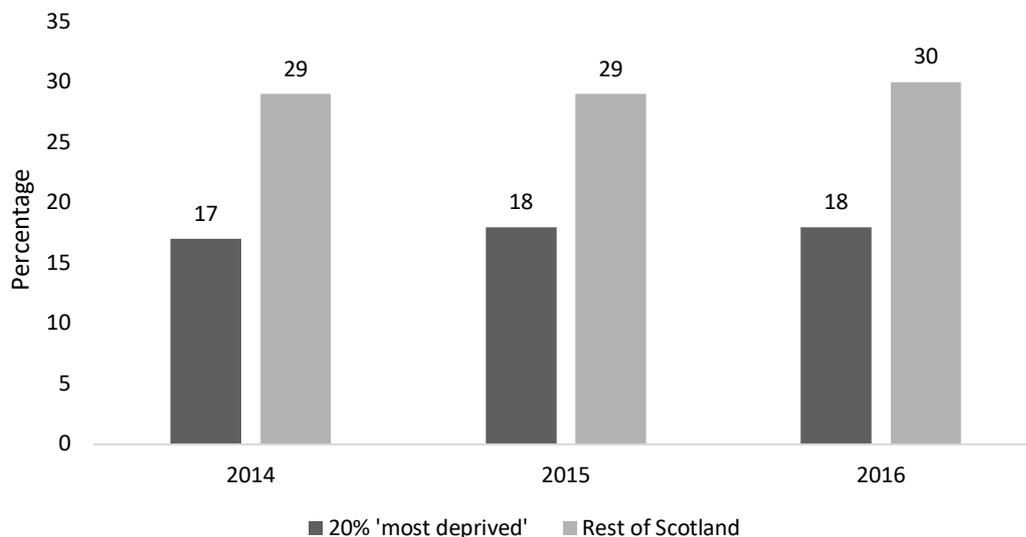


Figure 2.4 Provision of unpaid help to organisations or groups in the last 12 months by Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (source: *Scottish Household Survey* reports published between 2015 and 2017)

Prior to this, data was provided on volunteering rates among those in the 15 percent 'most deprived' areas. As shown in Figure 2.5, the same pattern was evident as in the more recent waves of the survey. When looking at the data over time, deprived areas can be seen to exhibit relatively stable levels of volunteering. This highlights Lim and Laurence's (2015) contention that the relative stability of formal volunteering is related to its capacity to produce collective goods that support community life. Despite the challenging austerity environment, particularly for voluntary sector organisations in deprived areas (Jones, Meegan, Kennett, & Croft, 2016), the 'importance of organizational resources might increase during a period of recession' (Lim & Laurence, 2015, p. 338). Accordingly, while volunteering rates are lower in deprived areas, their consistency suggests individuals consider the goods they generate to be significant and consequently invest their time and energy volunteering in organisational settings to preserve them.

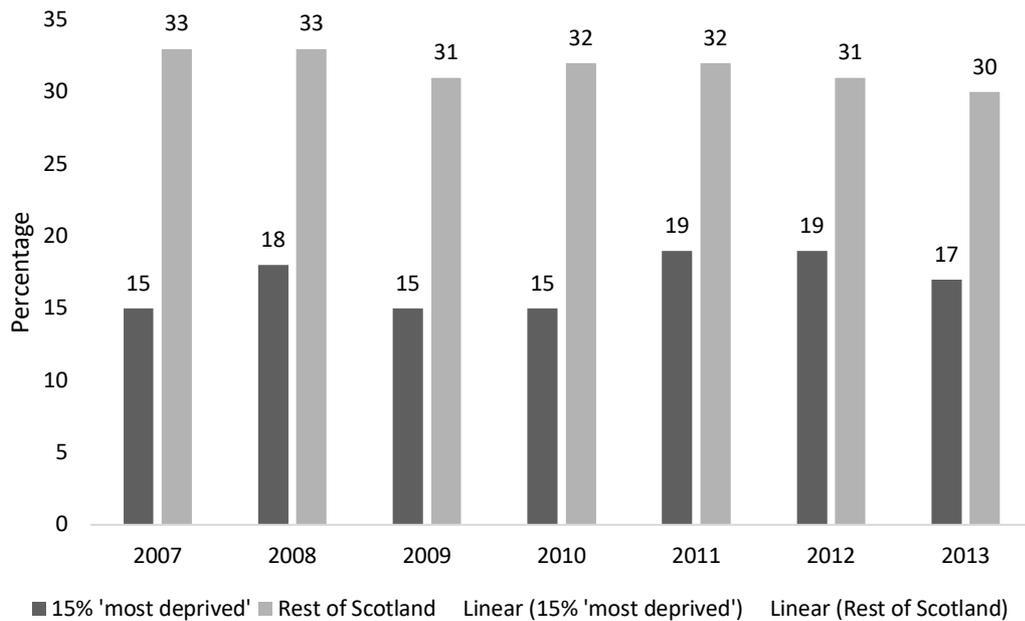


Figure 2.5 Provision of unpaid help to organisations or groups in the last 12 months by Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (source: *Scottish Household Survey* reports published between 2007 and 2013)

Although rates of volunteering were notably lower in deprived areas, differences concerning time spent volunteering were less stark. Indeed, during 2016, of those who had volunteered in the past 12 months, adults in the ‘most deprived’ areas were slightly more likely to have done so several times a week compared to those in the rest of Scotland (19 and 17 percent respectively). Timbrell (2007, p. 173) characterised the frequent volunteering of respondents in deprived areas as ‘routine’, in contrast to the less often, ‘diffuse’, volunteering of those in affluent areas. She argued participants in deprived and urban areas were more likely to volunteer to fill their spare time than those in rural and affluent locations.

Using the postcodes of schools to assess levels of deprivation, the 2014 wave of the *Young People in Scotland* survey painted a similar picture to the *Scottish Household Survey* data. Those in the ‘least deprived’ areas were more likely to volunteer in school (23 percent) and their spare time (46 percent) than those in the ‘most

deprived' areas (16 and 29 percent respectively). The 2016 wave, however, assessed deprivation differently and generated a divergent picture. Rather than using the postcodes of schools, participating schools were classified based on the proportion of pupils residing in the lowest quintile of the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation.

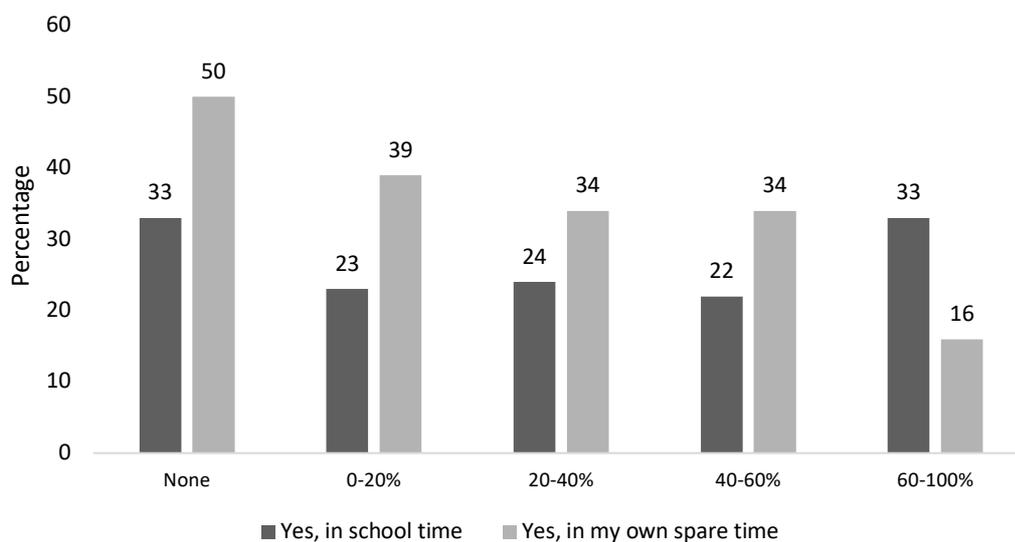


Figure 2.6 Proportion of pupils in the 'most deprived' areas according to the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation who gave up any of their time to help out with things like clubs, campaigns or organisations (Linning & Jackson, 2017)

Figure 2.6 shows 'spare time' volunteering was much more common among respondents who attended schools containing no pupils in the 'most deprived' areas (50 percent) compared to those with the highest proportions of pupils from such areas (16 percent). When examining in-school rates of volunteering, however, schools with the highest and lowest proportions of pupils from the 'most deprived' areas exhibited the same levels of engagement (33 percent). As with the urban youth volunteers above, it may be the case that those in deprived areas lack knowledge about, or access to volunteering environments beyond their school settings. This would be consistent with the lower levels of volunteering adults exhibit in the 'most deprived' areas. The institutional context of schools, therefore,

appeared proportionately more important to respondents in urban and deprived settings than rural and less deprived areas. It was thus important to understand how young people in deprived urban areas reflected on the roles of their schools in facilitating access to volunteering opportunities.

As discussed in section 1.5, Glasgow was used to identify research sites due the high levels of deprivation found in the city – 48 percent of which is classified as falling within the 20 percent ‘most deprived’ areas, a higher proportion than any other local authority area (Scottish Government, 2016a). In addition to this, a greater proportion of Glasgow’s population reside in a ‘large urban area’ than any other local authority in Scotland (Scottish Government, 2014b).<sup>12</sup> In keeping with the trends identified in this subsection, as a large urban and deprived area, adults in Glasgow exhibited lower than average levels of volunteering.

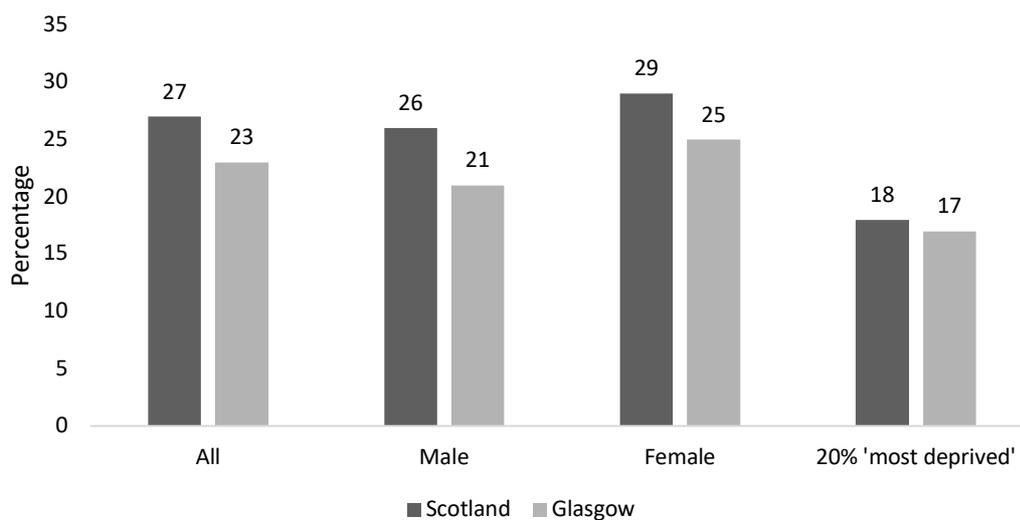


Figure 2.7 Provision of unpaid help to organisations or groups in the last 12 months in Scotland and Glasgow by gender and Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (Scottish Government, 2017b)

<sup>12</sup> The term ‘large urban area’ refers to settlements of 125,000 people or more. At the time of writing, the population of Glasgow was 615,070, roughly 11 percent of the total population of Scotland (National Records of Scotland, 2016).

Despite its urban topography and high levels of deprivation, the lowest levels of volunteering in Scotland were not found in Glasgow. During 2016, seven local authority areas reported lower rates of volunteering.<sup>13</sup> In accordance with the patterns discussed above, these districts were predominantly 'large' or 'other urban areas' and contained relatively high levels deprivation.<sup>14</sup> The reduced rates of volunteering found in these local authorities may be related to their relative lack of infrastructure to support volunteering compared to Glasgow. For instance, following the 2014 Glasgow Commonwealth Games, legacy projects such as Glasgow Sport Volunteer Bureau and Active East were established, providing the city's inhabitants with opportunities to volunteer not found elsewhere. The impact of Glasgow's high levels of deprivation on rates of volunteering may, therefore, be mitigated by its status as Scotland's largest city and the opportunities this gives rise to.

This subsection used available statistical data to examine patterns of volunteering. In support of the stereotype discussed at the beginning of this section, volunteers were shown to be more likely to be female and from less deprived areas. However, rather than being middle-aged, young people were shown to volunteer in greater numbers than adults and volunteering by deprivation varied by institutional factors and the environment in which it occurred. Yet, while young people were reported to volunteer in greater proportions than adults, their rates of engagement were also structured by gender, deprivation and geography. The patterning of volunteering in this way suggests youth is an important stage in the development of a habit of volunteering (Brodie et al., 2011) and that certain structures shape possibilities for volunteering from youth into adulthood. The following section examines the literature on how and why people engage with volunteering as well as what obstructs them.

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<sup>13</sup> This information was taken from the *Scottish Household Survey* 2016 local authority tables, see <http://www.gov.scot/Topics/Statistics/16002/LAtables2016> (accessed 15 January 2018).

<sup>14</sup> The term 'other urban area' refers to settlements containing 10,000 to 124,999 people.

## 2.2 The nature of engagement

Volunteering has been considered to provide a 'double benefit' to individuals, who can gain skills and enhance their wellbeing, and society, through the amelioration of social concerns and financial returns on investment (Birdwell, Scott, & Reynolds, 2015). Volunteers are frequently viewed as 'sacred figure[s]' (Eliasoph, 2013, p. 9) whose actions constitute cure-alls to society's ills (Sheard, 1995). As this section contends, however, the promises of volunteering need to be balanced against the evidence. While studies have found respondents to report enhancements to their employability and wellbeing following volunteering, methodological issues make demonstrating such benefits problematic. In addition to this, certain sections of the population are underrepresented in statistics about volunteering suggesting it is not accessible, or desirable, to all. This section argues different environments and life-stages present varying opportunities for volunteering. It starts by examining motivations for volunteering and pathways to participation.

### *2.2.1 Motivations and pathways to participation*

Initiatives which seek to increase the numbers of young people engaging in volunteering need to understand how they start doing so. One way of doing this is to ask about motives. Motivations, however, are a notoriously difficult subject to study (Musick & Wilson, 2008; Rochester et al., 2010). This area of research is problematised by issues to do with whether or not individuals know what motivates them, the extent to which motivations alter over time and the extent to which they are framed retrospectively to make sense of prior or current action. Furthermore, by focusing on motivations there is an assumption that volunteering fulfils a specific purpose when it may lack a strategic goal. Understanding motivations and pathways to participation requires exploring a complex mix of individual and social factors. This subsection will look at psychological and sociological approaches to motivations and pathways and examine their explanatory power in comprehending why people volunteer, as well as make the case for the necessity of exploring young people's pathways to participation in areas of multiple deprivation.

One of the most widely known approaches to understanding volunteer motivations is the Volunteer Functions Inventory (VFI). The model, proposed by Clary, Snyder, and Ridge (1992, p. 347), focuses on 'the personal motivations of each volunteer as an individual'. It does so by asking respondents to identify the extent to which they agree with the following six motivations (Clary et al., 1998, pp. 1517-1518):

1. *Values*: volunteering provides a way for individuals to express values they hold, such as altruistic or humanitarian concern for others.
2. *Understanding*: volunteering provides new learning experiences and opportunities to use knowledge, skills and abilities that might otherwise remain dormant.
3. *Social*: volunteering offers opportunities to be with friends, to socialise or engage in activities viewed favourably by peer groups.
4. *Career*: volunteering offers ways of enhancing employment-related skills and furthering career prospects.
5. *Protective*: volunteering provides a way of escaping or coping with personal troubles or negative feelings.
6. *Enhancement*: volunteering offers opportunities for personal growth and development. This is about the positive strivings of the ego rather than the protective function's elimination of negative aspects surrounding the ego.

The functional approach views volunteering as an individual response to meeting personal need. For example, an actor may feel the need to enhance their skills to improve their employability prospects, or interact with others to avoid feelings of isolation and depression. In such instances, volunteering may be viewed as a way of achieving these ends. The model allows for the notion that volunteering can perform different functions for different people (Clary et al., 1998) and that an individual can volunteer for multiple reasons (Clary, Snyder, & Stukas, 1996). Clary et al. (1996, p. 502) argued the model was supported by their empirical work which

found the six functions to be 'associated with reports of actual volunteer activity' and 'distinguished current volunteers from non-volunteers'. Although the model has proven influential, Francis (2011) found it underplayed the significance of peer and family groups. She argued the functional focus needed revising to better account for the role of social norms in shaping participation.

Francis draws attention to a central limitation of the model. By focusing on the individual, the model does not account for the ways in which social context shapes opportunities and motivations for volunteering (Musick & Wilson, 2008). As shown in subsection 2.1.2, rates of volunteering are patterned by demographic factors suggesting social, economic and political factors influence voluntary action. Timbrell (2007), for example, found volunteers in deprived settings were more likely to be motivated to improve their local areas, establish new services and to have something fun to do than those in affluent communities. Furthermore, the notion that individuals volunteer to meet specific needs is challenged by studies which report volunteers are not driven by strategic purposes, but rather volunteer unintentionally (Bradford, Hills, & Johnston, 2016) or on a whim (Holdsworth, 2010). Indeed, the significance of social context to understanding routes into volunteering is emphasised by the widespread finding that word-of-mouth is a key instigator (Low et al., 2007; Rochester et al., 2010). In keeping with this, some researchers have argued motives need placing alongside 'triggers', such as being asked, to generate a more complete picture of how people start volunteering (Rochester et al., 2010, p. 132). Hogg's (2016) examination of volunteering across the life-course, however, concluded that, although motivations and triggers were important, so too were context, social circumstance and life events. Accordingly, volunteering ought to be understood as 'highly situated within the rhythms and relations of everyday life' (Hogg, 2016, p. 186). The relationship between individual circumstances and wider social factors was summarised by Musick and Wilson (2008, p. 80):

Micro and macro processes establish parameters for each other. Motives need a macro-link because the actualization of goals, even their recognition as goals, is limited by social structures. Social structures need a micro-link because structures that ignore or suppress motivations will not endure.

At the macro level, Handy et al. (2010) examined university student motivations across 12 countries. They found a 'complex set of dynamics' shaped volunteering in ways that were not solely connected to the value volunteering had for their participants. They posited national effects were related to the 'broader social and cultural origins of the nonprofit sector' in each country (Handy et al., 2010, p. 519). In their study of the same topic, Hustinx et al. (2010) contended national variations in university student motivations could be explained by examining the signalling effect volunteering had in different countries. Participants in countries where volunteering was perceived to signal a desirable set of qualities to employers were found to be more likely to emphasise CV-related motives. Such studies show how individual motivations are shaped by the social and cultural norms of different societies.

Cultural and economic changes over time have been argued to alter the ways in which individuals engage with volunteering. Scholars contend volunteering has undergone 'radical change' from 'traditional' or 'collective' forms of participation, based on altruism and long-term commitment, to 'new' or 'reflexive' forms, based on individualism and episodic engagement (Hustinx, 2001; Hustinx & Lammertyn, 2003; Hustinx et al., 2016). This is evident in policy approaches which encourage instrumental attitudes towards volunteering (Dean, 2014) and organisational re-embedding strategies that seek to better accommodate volunteers in light of social individualising processes (Hustinx & Meijs, 2011). In terms of episodic engagement, evidence from England and Wales indicates that, on average, individuals spent less time per day volunteering in 2015 than in 2005 – 14.5 and 13.7 minutes respectively – but that the time young people spent doing so rose from 9 to 17 minutes (Office

for National Statistics, 2017a). Despite this rise, other studies indicate young people participate on an episodic basis. One study of youth social action found that of the 58 percent of respondents who participated during the preceding year, 25 percent had done so monthly while 33 percent participated less frequently (Pye & Michelmore, 2016).

The notions of ‘collective’ and ‘reflexive’ volunteering are, however, ideal-types (Hustinx & Lammertyn, 2003). Numerous empirical studies have reported young people express both altruistic and individualistic motives (Brooks, 2007; Cornelis, Van Hiel, & De Cremer, 2013; Haski-Leventhal, Ronel, York, & Ben-David, 2008; MacNeela & Gannon, 2014; Shannon, 2009). There is, however, evidence to indicate young people are more likely than adults to be motivated to learn new skills and help their careers.

Table 2.1 Reasons for starting to volunteer (Low et al., 2007, p. 35)<sup>15</sup>

Reasons for starting to volunteer	Age	
	16-24 (%)	16+ (%)
I wanted to improve things, help people	56	53
To learn new skills	46	19
To help my career	27	7
<i>Base (unweighted)</i>	<i>64</i>	<i>1351-1352</i>

When viewed from a life-course approach, the differences in Table 2.1 can be seen to result from the different circumstances young people and adults encounter rather than being evidence of a different set of values. Indeed, the most cited reason for volunteering by both groups was indicative of an altruistic motive. The notion of generational differences in values and attitudes towards volunteering was explored by Nicholas and Ralston (2016). Although young people in their study frequently expressed employability-related motives, while older volunteers

<sup>15</sup> The percentages do not add up to 100 as I only selected rows from Low et al.’s (2007) table that were relevant to my discussion.

appeared stronger on altruistic reasons, the authors cautioned against taking this as evidence of generational differences in values. Partly, this was because older volunteers also exhibited self-interested motives, such as expressing their identities as volunteers, but also because their older participants were retired and thus less likely to be motivated to enhance their employment prospects. By contrast, their young respondents, who are at the beginning of their working lives, faced volunteering opportunities from a different standpoint.

Differentiating between altruistic and individualistic motives as well as generational differences is challenging and complicated by social circumstance. In much of the preceding discussion, young people have been treated as a homogeneous group, yet important demographic differences exist in how they approach volunteering. Table 2.2, based on data from the 2014 wave of the *Young People in Scotland* survey, attests to such variations.

Table 2.2 Factors that would encourage young people to volunteer (Harper & Jackson, 2015)

<b>Motivation</b>	<b>Age (%)</b>							<b>Gender (%)</b>	
	11	12	13	14	15	16	17-18	Male	Female
If I could volunteer with my friends	54	55	61	55	56	54	53	49	62
If I could try volunteering to see if I liked it	24	22	21	23	21	17	24	19	24
If someone asked me to do something	13	18	22	16	19	26	12	16	21
If it would improve my skills	17	21	31	27	28	38	40	29	30
If it would improve my career/job prospects	18	21	34	31	45	55	45	35	38
If I could volunteer outside school time	11	12	13	9	9	13	11	7	16
If I could volunteer in school time	11	14	19	19	20	19	19	17	20
None of these	2	5	6	6	9	4	4	9	3
<i>Base</i>	<i>95</i>	<i>325</i>	<i>346</i>	<i>393</i>	<i>354</i>	<i>306</i>	<i>185</i>	<i>999</i>	<i>987</i>

In relation to motivations about 'career' and 'skills' enhancement, Table 2.2 reveals that, although these were cited across the age range, they were most salient for respondents aged 16 – the age at which young people in Scotland can leave school and enter full-time work. This resonates with studies that report younger youth are less likely to volunteer for employability reasons (Hill, Russell, & Brewis, 2009) and points to the importance of having age sensitive promotional strategies. Indeed, Shannon's (2009) study with young people aged 8-12 concluded the employability focus of youth volunteering initiatives was particularly unsuitable for younger youth, due to their distance from the labour market.

Table 2.2 also reveals motivations were shaped by gender and that female respondents were more strongly motivated by all the factors listed than males. In keeping with these figures, there is evidence to suggest young females are more strongly motivated by social drivers than males (Gaskin, 2004). Data from across the EU states indicates female young adults exhibit 'significantly higher levels of prosocial behaviour' than males (Gil-Lacruz, Marcuello-Servós, & Saz-Gil, 2015, p. 986). These findings suggest that, in relation to the available responses, females expressed a greater interest in volunteering than males. Indeed, in Table 2.2 male respondents were only more likely to report that 'none of these' would motivate them, thus highlighting the need to build a stronger evidence base concerning the factors that would encourage them to volunteer.

In addition to age and gender, the *Young People in Scotland* survey data revealed motivational differences by area-based deprivation. Thirty percent of respondents in the 'most deprived' areas indicated they would be encouraged to volunteer to 'improve my career prospects' compared to 40 percent of those in the 'least deprived' areas. While this suggests career motives were weaker among disadvantaged youth, evidence from elsewhere suggests this is not so clear-cut. In educational settings, for instance, there is evidence to suggest those from less advantaged backgrounds, as assessed by parental occupation and level of

education, are more likely to identify with employability motives (Brewis, Russell, & Holdsworth, 2010), as well as reports that those from prosperous middle-class areas view volunteering as a way of presenting a 'rounded self' when applying to university (Brooks, 2007, p. 426). Brewis et al. (2010) note, however, that employability motives did not map onto their participant's backgrounds in a clear-cut fashion. It may, therefore, be the case that employability motives are expressed by young people from a variety of backgrounds but put towards different ends. For instance, an evaluation of the v Initiative found young people who were not in education, employment or training and who were struggling to find work viewed volunteering as a 'fundamental stepping stone to becoming more employable' while those looking to transition into further education viewed it as adding 'supplementary value' to their applications (NatCen, 2011, p. 53). This suggests career-related motives manifest in different ways, yet it is unclear how they do so for those in deprived areas.

Evidence that motivations vary with demographic factors suggests lived experiences present different opportunities for the development of dispositions towards volunteering, thus highlighting the significance of social context. Indeed, Roberts and Devine (2004, p. 287) found engagement with volunteering 'had more to do with arbitrary factors than it did with self-motivation'. In Scotland, parents, teachers and friends have been found to be the most prominent facilitators of volunteering among secondary school pupils (Harper & Jackson, 2015) – a finding consistent with other research (Law, Shek, & Ma, 2013). Yet, the influence of such groups is contingent on their cultural capital and knowledge of volunteering. For instance, a study of young adults found families had a positive influence on volunteering, except regarding leisure activities, while friends had a negative impact, except on political activities (Gil-Lacruz et al., 2015). It thus follows that although family, friends and teachers may be important actors for encouraging volunteering, they do not do so in a social vacuum – contexts, such as schools and neighbourhoods, are key.

Schools have been described as 'one of the primary institutions for teaching young people how to do volunteer work' (Musick & Wilson, 2008, p. 308). Musick and Wilson (2008) argue that most significant to this is whether or not schools have specific policies for volunteering and, if they do, the extent to which pupils are able to exercise choice and reflect on their experiences. One study of youth workers' experiences of recruiting pupils from grammar and comprehensive schools to volunteering opportunities in England reported the latter was a more challenging environment (Dean, 2016b). Respondents felt comprehensive schools were less likely to view volunteering as an integral part of pupils' education, unlike grammar schools where the environment habituated pupils to it. Although studies have found young people resist being coerced into volunteering (Holdsworth & Brewis, 2014; Warburton & Smith, 2003), one project into school based mandatory civic engagement reported no detrimental impact on later civic attitudes and engagement (Henderson et al., 2007). Another study of two American private schools, one with and one without mandatory community service, found participants in the school without to express slightly more positive civic attitudes (Ballard, Caccavale, & Buchanan, 2015). The authors posited that, in order to build civic values, it was important to integrate these into the identity of a school rather than viewing civic action as an add-on. Schools can, therefore, be important facilitators of voluntary action, yet their success appears contingent upon the opportunities they provide and the degree of choice they allow. Success is also associated with the relationship pupils have with their schools. Being excluded from school can negatively impact later civic engagement due to the self-perceptions this generates among those excluded as powerless persons with little to contribute (Kupchik & Catlaw, 2015).

Neighbourhood conditions also present varying opportunities for volunteering. As Musick and Wilson (2008) note, 'problem neighbourhoods' can both facilitate and hinder volunteer activity. MacDonald (1996) found adult volunteers in a deprived

deindustrialised area were partly driven by the desire to maintain social bonds that had been damaged through economic transformations. Yet, another study found young people in a disadvantaged area sought to avoid forms of social responsibility in their neighbourhood, as they believed increasing their involvement in it would decrease their chances of getting out and moving on (France, 1998). Attitudes towards young people in Scotland are less positive in more deprived areas (Scottish Government, 2017e), where young people have reported feeling stereotyped and disconnected from their neighbourhoods (Neary, Egan, Keenan, Lawson, & Bond, 2013). It is thus important to understand how young people's relationships with their local areas presents opportunities for engaging in volunteering opportunities.

This subsection has shown how motivations and pathways are shaped by a range of individual and social factors. It has argued that in order to understand volunteering it is essential to explore the social circumstances of volunteers as motivations alone are unable to fully account for participation. There is thus a need to explore the ways in which motivations for volunteering develop in deprived areas as well as the factors that facilitate access to opportunities.

### *2.2.2 Benefits of volunteering*

Measuring the benefits of volunteering is a complex task due to the often intangible nature of its impact (Rochester et al., 2010). One way in which researchers have sought to assess benefits has been to calculate the economic value of participation. For example, based on the 2016 wave of the *Scottish Household Survey*, Volunteer Scotland (2017a) estimated volunteers contributed £2 billion to Scotland's economy. Such models, however, are problematised by methodological issues (Ola & Anderson, 2017) and risk framing volunteering primarily as a way of saving money (Rochester et al., 2010), thus undermining its more intrinsic values such as opportunities for association (de St Croix, 2017).

To understand the nature of engagement and the impact it has on people, this subsection focuses on individual benefits rather than wider social impacts. Distinguishing between individual and social benefits is not straightforward. As Musick and Wilson (2008) note, benefits accrued by volunteers can be both public and collective goods. For instance, a volunteer football coach may develop personal skills and enhance their employability, but also cut costs for their football club and provide a service for amateur players. Isolating individual benefits is also challenging. For example, while volunteering may enhance a person's wellbeing, it may also provide employment contacts. Individual benefits are often associated with employability enhancement and personal wellbeing, these broad areas are used to structure the following discussion.

Musick and Wilson (2008) suggest three reasons why volunteering improves employability: i) volunteers tend to do better in school, resulting in better jobs, ii) volunteering offers opportunities for skills development, improving chances of gaining work, and iii) volunteering broadens social networks, increasing the chance of hearing about employment opportunities. Causality and attribution are two significant issues in research about the impact of volunteering (Rochester et al., 2010). Although volunteering may improve educational attainment (John, 2005), thereby aiding entry into the labour market, persons with higher levels of education may be more likely to volunteer in the first place (Office for National Statistics, 2017b), thus problematizing the causal link between volunteering and employment.

Such issues are reflected in the mixed evidence concerning the impact of volunteering on employment. Ellis Paine et al. (2013) explored the association between volunteering and employment using successive waves of the *British Household Survey* and found variations according to the frequency of volunteering and volunteers' age. Monthly volunteering had a positive impact while weekly and yearly volunteering lowered chances of moving into work. Notably for this study, there was no effect for young people, aged 16-24, regardless of how frequently

they volunteered. In contrast, researchers using data from the US found a positive relationship between volunteering and employment that was consistent across demographic characteristics, including age (Spera, Ghertner, Nerino, & DiTommaso, 2015). They found this was particularly true of individuals with low levels of formal education, which they hypothesised was related to the ability of volunteering to 'level the playing field' (Spera et al., 2015, p. 902). Other evidence, however, suggests the benefits of volunteering among the unemployed are limited, unevenly distributed and that, in the context of short-term volunteering, those furthest removed from the labour market are least likely to develop skills or widen their social networks (Gornostaeva & McGurk, 2013).

Quantitative data on this relationship is further complicated by the fact that, in these instances, respondents were unable to say why they were out of work or the nature of the voluntary activities they were involved in. Ellis Paine et al. (2013, p. 370) suggest their 'particularly surprising' finding about young people could be explained if it transpired they were picking up first or second year university students who would not yet be expected to have moved into employment. Thus, rather than viewing volunteering as a 'magic wand' leading directly into employment, it might more fruitfully be viewed as 'providing a better chance of entering the labour market' (Rochester et al., 2009, p. 7).

Evidence on the actual impact of volunteering on employment for young people is relatively sparse. One exception is Newton, Oakley, and Pollard's (2011) analysis of v Inspired's yearlong v Talent volunteering programme and its role on transitions into education and employment. Volunteering was viewed by their participants, many of whom were not in education, employment or training, as a way of improving their employability and developing generic and specific skills to enhance their CVs. In addition to this, the authors found that, following their placements, some participants had moved into education while others had entered the labour market. Only a minority fell into the latter category, however, suggesting much of

the value of volunteering lay in its capacity to enhance human capital – ‘personal development and the acquisition of skills as a result of volunteering’ (Rochester et al., 2010, p. 171).

Evidence on self-reported benefits indicates younger adults are more likely to emphasise opportunities to gain new skills, qualifications and enhance their career prospects than older groups (Low et al., 2007). As with the motivational differences discussed above, such variations may be an outcome of different life-stages. Indeed, the salience of skills and employment-orientated benefits among young volunteers was found to rise with age in the 2016 wave of *Young People in Scotland* survey.

Table 2.3 Employability benefits experienced following volunteering (Linning & Jackson, 2017)

Benefit	Gender (%)		Age (%)						
	Male	Female	11	12	13	14	15	16	17-18
Learning new skills	64	73	64	63	68	65	72	71	78
Feeling I've improved my job prospects	33	35	21	32	30	30	24	47	45
<i>Base</i>	<i>341</i>	<i>462</i>	<i>29</i>	<i>110</i>	<i>102</i>	<i>145</i>	<i>187</i>	<i>153</i>	<i>90</i>

Table 2.3 shows the importance of ‘learning new skills’ and the feeling of having ‘improved my job prospects’ peaked around the age at which respondents could leave school and enter further education or employment. The increase was more pronounced for ‘job prospects’ than ‘new skills’, suggesting the explicit focus on career benefits increased with age. A survey of youth social action found a similar trend (Pye et al., 2014). Table 2.3 also indicates females were more likely to identify career-orientated benefits, a finding consistent with studies of adults (Low et al., 2007).

Policy interventions and research on the impact of volunteering tend to focus on the supply, rather than demand, side. This can lead to a ‘mismatch’ between the skills volunteers develop and those desired in the labour market (Kamerāde & Ellis Paine, 2014, p. 268). Participants in an evaluation of the Millennium Volunteers

initiative expressed concern that employers were unaware of the programme, thus undermining the CV enhancing aspects of the scheme (Smith, Ellis, & Howlett, 2002). Evidence on employers' views on the value of volunteering suggests a preference for 'career builders' who can articulate how the skills they have developed are suited to the jobs they are applying for, rather than 'job hopefuls' (Reilly, 2013). Scholars have also noted the need to bridge the gap between volunteering and the labour market such that persons in the latter better recognise the soft skills developed through volunteering (Rego et al., 2016). Nonetheless, while there are important caveats to the association between volunteering and employment, formal volunteering can, as Rego et al. (2016) note, enable volunteers to develop 'soft skills' that enhance their employability. Accordingly, the underrepresentation of young people from deprived areas in such opportunities indicates they are disadvantaged in terms of accessing such benefits.

Yet, it is important to recognise that volunteering can give rise to social inclusion benefits beyond the narrow focus on employment (Nicholas & Ralston, 2011). In addition to the problematic nature of defining wellbeing (Rees & Main, 2016; Tisdall, 2015), efforts to assess volunteering's impact on it encounter similar issues faced when examining employment benefits. Issues of attribution were evident in De Wit et al.'s (2015) study, in which volunteering was found to have a small positive impact on measures of subjective wellbeing. However, given the stability of this relationship over time, De Wit et al. queried whether those with higher levels of wellbeing were more likely to volunteer in the first place. Kamerāde and Bennett (2015) found the relationship between volunteering and wellbeing among unemployed persons across 29 European countries was shaped by the generosity of national unemployment benefits. Regular volunteering in countries with low benefits was found to have negative effects on mental wellbeing. The authors argued generous welfare provided space for volunteering without generating concerns over daily survival. Furthermore, the amount of time spent volunteering is important. Life-satisfaction has been found to increase alongside sustained and

frequent engagement, suggesting such benefits take time to be realised (Binder & Freytag, 2013). The capacity for volunteering to have a positive impact on wellbeing is therefore not automatic. Indeed, in circumstances where volunteers feel overworked and undersupported, volunteering can lead to feelings of disillusionment and burnout (Talbot, 2015).

Despite these caveats, there is evidence to suggest volunteering can have significant positive impacts on personal development and sense of self. Table 2.4 shows the extent to which wellbeing-related benefits were cited by participants in the 2016 wave of the *Young People in Scotland* survey.

Table 2.4 Wellbeing benefits experienced following volunteering (Linning & Jackson, 2017)

Benefit	Gender (%)		Age (%)						
	Male	Female	11	12	13	14	15	16	17-18
Having fun	67	77	76	77	77	74	69	66	70
Increased confidence	45	51	31	47	42	46	41	59	64
Feeling happier	43	50	42	63	58	41	45	37	42
Feeling appreciated	46	44	40	48	43	43	39	48	53
Making new friends	36	48	51	51	54	42	43	31	29
Feeling I've made a difference	42	40	25	40	46	38	32	47	48
Feeling better about myself	36	38	31	45	42	34	27	38	37
<i>Base</i>	<i>341</i>	<i>462</i>	<i>29</i>	<i>110</i>	<i>102</i>	<i>145</i>	<i>187</i>	<i>153</i>	<i>90</i>

The finding that ‘having fun’ was the most widely recognised benefit in relation to wellbeing is consistent with evidence about adults (Low et al., 2007; Roberts & Devine, 2004) and young people’s experiences (Gaskin, 2004; Smith et al., 2002). Although a widely cited benefit, demographic variations exist in the extent to which it was valued. Table 2.4 shows the significance of ‘having fun’ decreased as participants aged, albeit in a non-linear fashion, as did the importance of ‘feeling happier’ and ‘making new friends’. Furthermore, these benefits were more frequently cited by female respondents. These findings suggest experiences of volunteering are shaped by different life-stages, even among young people – employment-related benefits increased with age (Table 2.3) while social impacts

decreased (Table 2.4) – and that females experience benefits in a different way to males.

In addition to being fun, social benefits can positively impact an individual's mental health (Musick & Wilson, 2008). Among older persons, volunteering has been found to reduce social isolation (Toepoel, 2013) and reduce depression (Lum & Lightfoot, 2005). The effects on younger groups, however, are less clear. Using longitudinal data from the US, Musick and Wilson (2003) examined the relationship between volunteering and depression among different age groups. They found volunteering had a positive impact on alleviating depression only among those aged 65 and over. The researchers suggested this was related to the notion that volunteering provided a role where others had diminished. In their later work, Musick and Wilson (2008) raised the issue as to whether mental health benefits were an outcome of volunteering itself or the social connectivity accompanying it. This issue was evident in Haski-Leventhal et al.'s (2008) study of at-risk young volunteers, for whom 'all the important benefits ... were related to their relationships with others'.

One positive impact volunteering may offer, in addition to social interaction, is the opportunity it provides to act with agency. Levy, Benbenishty, and Refaeli (2012) found volunteering experiences entailing opportunities to provide meaningful services to those in need, in addition to developing social connections, increased at-risk young people's sense of life satisfaction. Furthermore, Table 2.4 shows the significance of 'feeling like I've made a difference' increased with age. This may be related to older groups' awareness of the impact volunteering has on others, compared to younger groups' emphasis on 'having fun'. Overall, however, this benefit was the eighth most cited out of possible 15, suggesting it was considered less significant than other factors. In contrast, studies with young care leavers, who are more likely to have mental health problems and poorer levels of educational attainment (Rees & Stein, 2016), suggest the opportunity to act with agency has added significance. Alongside structured and personalised support from youth

workers, being able to help others emerged as a 'strong self-esteem factor' for the participants in Webb et al.'s (2016, p. 899) research. Volunteering has also been found to provide care leavers with a sense of normalcy by facilitating a transition from requiring support to being able to provide it (Melkman, Mor-Salwo, Mangold, Zeller, & Benbenishty, 2015). The opportunity to act with agency may, therefore, acquire increased salience among disadvantaged people. This contention is partially supported by data from the 2016 wave of the *Young People in Scotland* data. Fifty-nine percent of participants who attended schools where 80-100 percent of pupils resided in the 'most deprived' areas cited 'feeling like I've made a difference' compared to 35 percent of those in schools containing no pupils from such areas. However, as the data could not be tested for significance, due to the small number of responses to the question, this remains an underexplored area.

This subsection has explored links between volunteering and its benefits. It has argued issues of causality and attribution make evidencing impacts problematic. The subsection demonstrated the difficulties of linking volunteering with employment and contended the value of volunteering may lie elsewhere, for example, in its ability to enhance skills and personal capital. Despite the employability emphasis in policy, the section showed volunteering was most commonly experienced as an enjoyable and fun activity which could have positive mental health and wellbeing implications. Again, evidencing these factors was shown to be problematic despite participants in existing studies, particularly those experiencing disadvantageous circumstances, frequently perceiving themselves to have received such benefits. Yet, there remain gaps in our understanding. Evidence on wellbeing has tended to focus on older groups or specific cohorts of younger people, leaving unanswered questions concerning the impact on those in deprived areas. Additionally, there is a need to understand how benefits arise. For example, is it the activity, support, relationships or length of engagement that provide benefits for volunteers?

### 2.2.3 Barriers to volunteering

The discussion of rates of volunteering in subsection 2.1.2 demonstrated participation was patterned by demographic characteristics, evident in lower levels of volunteering among males, those in urban areas and those in deprived locations. Despite the lower levels of volunteering characteristic of urban areas, the 2016 wave of the *Young People in Scotland* survey found urban non-volunteers were more likely than their rural counterparts to state they would be interested in volunteering (22 and 16 percent respectively). This suggests an appetite for volunteering curtailed by barriers. Scholars have argued there is ‘little research focusing on barriers to volunteering among young people’ (Haski-Leventhal et al., 2016, p. 687). This subsection draws on available evidence from research with adults and young people to identify gaps in knowledge.

Volunteering is deeply intertwined with the social circumstances individuals face – social networks, environments and life-stages all shape opportunities for participation (Brodie et al., 2011). The *Scottish Household Survey* data indicates changes to social circumstance were significant factors in why respondents stopped volunteering.

Table 2.5 Reasons why adults stopped volunteering (Scottish Government, 2017g, p. 202)

<b>Reasons for stopping volunteering</b>	<b>Adults in Scotland (%)</b>
I didn't have the time any longer	34
I moved house	13
Through illness	10
I started paid employment	8
My circumstances changed	8
I had children	7
<i>Base</i>	<i>1,660</i>

Hogg (2016, p. 182) found 'instability in life ... was mirrored by instability in volunteering'. This idea is reflected in Table 2.5 where each reason indicates a (temporary) change in respondents' day-to-day lives. It can also be seen in evidence that, although lack of time is a widely cited barrier, it is not felt evenly across the life-course. Low et al. (2007), for instance, found 87-93 percent of their respondents aged 16-64 cited lack of time as a barrier compared to only 42 percent of those aged 65 and above, suggesting the transition into retirement presents different possibilities for volunteering. The finding that adults in Scotland would start volunteering if it fit with their other commitments (Scottish Government, 2017g) further highlights the notion that an individual's capacity to volunteer is shaped by other events in their life.

Young people have also been reported to cite lack of time as a barrier to volunteering (Gaskin, 2004; Hill et al., 2009; Pye & Michelmore, 2016). One study found this was the most significant obstacle their participants face, who had to balance volunteering with other demands on their time (Ellis, 2004). University students have been found to cite lack of time due to study and employment commitments (Brewis et al., 2010). This issue was also evident in a study of secondary school pupils in an affluent area of Scotland, particularly in the years where exam pressures intensified and pupils started applying to university (Clement & Lafferty, 2015). Among younger youth, parents have been reported to resist allowing their children to volunteer due to the desire to preserve time for family commitments (Shannon, 2009). Each of these instances highlights how different life events can reduce the actual or perceived amount of time available to volunteer. The distinction between perceived and actual time is made on the grounds that research generally deals with respondents' perceptions of their time and that, when probed, it is often fear of overcommitting and lack of knowledge about volunteering that are central concerns (Rochester et al., 2010).

Lack of information about volunteering is another notable barrier to participation which, according to Low et al.'s (2007) survey, appears particularly significant to younger groups. Fifty-six percent of those aged 16-24 felt they did not know how to find out about volunteering compared to 39 percent of respondents aged 16 and above. This is consistent with another study that reported access to information was a 'considerable barrier' for young people (Ellis, 2004, p. 18). Somewhat paradoxically, the author reported that while respondents initially felt there was a deficit of information, once found, there was too much to the extent that it became confusing. Not knowing how to start has also been found to prevent university students from volunteering, particularly those in their first year and those who worked during term time (Brewis et al., 2010). This further indicates the importance of changed circumstances, such as starting university, and the balancing of volunteering with other demands, such as employment.

Related to lack of information is the issue of lack of confidence. In addition to not knowing how to start volunteering, the university students in Brewis et al.'s (2010) study were put off due to fear of not knowing anyone. Ellis (2004) reported lack of confidence was a particular concern for her disaffected young participants who were concerned they would not have anything to contribute. When contrasted with adults, young people have reported not possessing the right skills or experiences was a more significant barrier to volunteering (39 and 47 percent respectively) (Low et al., 2007). One study found, among adults, lack of confidence was acutely felt among respondents who had experienced social exclusion (Smith et al., 2004). Related to this was the perception participants had of themselves as being unable to contribute and not feeling they fit the image of the stereotypical volunteer.

Stereotypical or negative images about volunteering constitute a longstanding barrier to participation (Gaskin, 1998; Lee, Morrell, Marini, & Smith, 2012; Lukka & Ellis, 2001; Smith, 1999). Shortly after the turn of the millennium, Lukka and Ellis (2001) argued volunteering was primarily viewed as the domain of white, middle-

class and middle-aged females who volunteered in social care settings or charity shops. They contended this made volunteering an 'exclusive construct' that did not resonate with young people. One study reported this to be a particular concern among young men (Smith, 1999). Evidence indicates lack of experience of volunteering is likely to reduce knowledge of its breadth and diversity, particularly among disaffected young people (Ellis, 2004). More recently, scholars have contended the dominant paradigm (see subsection 2.1.1) continues to frame volunteering in a narrow way, leading to four principal issues: i) limited understanding of the range and scope of activities, ii) uncertainty over the nature of rewards and benefits, iii) stereotypical notions concerning the kinds of people who volunteer, and, as a result of these, iv) the low status of volunteering (Rochester et al., 2010). Despite this, the 2014 wave of the *Young People in Scotland* survey found only a minority of participants considered volunteering in negative terms and that the proportion of those who thought it was 'boring' had fallen from 19 percent in 2009 to 10 percent in 2014.

Rochester et al. (2010, p. 197) contend there exists a 'danger that those who are not connected to relevant social networks will simply not be asked to get involved'. In light of the lower levels of volunteering found in urban and the 'most deprived' areas, particularly among males, it is feasible such individuals may lack access to volunteering networks, thereby exacerbating lack of information and negative attitudes as barriers to participation. Given the evidence suggesting negative views of volunteering among young people in Scotland have fallen, it is important to understand whether, and the extent to which, this remains a hindrance to participation. In addition to this, although lack of time is a notable barrier in the literature, subsection 2.1.2 showed that adults in the 'most deprived' areas of Scotland were slightly more likely to volunteer several times a week than the rest of the population. Accordingly, there is a need to explore how such barriers manifest for younger people in such locales.

In addition to personal and attitudinal barriers, hindrances can arise from broader social factors such as neighbourhood effects.<sup>16</sup> Musick and Wilson (2008, p. 319) argue volunteering is a predominantly 'local phenomenon' and that most people travel only short distances to volunteer. Thus, one reason given for the lower levels of volunteering in deprived areas is the lack of infrastructure to support such action (Duke, Borowsky, & Pettingell, 2012; Musick & Wilson, 2008). This is supported in Lim and Laurence's (2015) analysis of volunteering rates in England and Wales following the financial crash. They argued declining levels of participation could not be explained by individual economic hardship alone but also community level factors such as organisational infrastructure. The role of organisational infrastructure may explain why, despite the high levels of deprivation found in Glasgow, the city does not exhibit the lowest levels of volunteering across Scotland (see subsection 2.1.2).

Relationships between young people and adults are another way in which neighbourhood conditions may shape opportunities for volunteering. In 1996 the Commission on the Future of the Voluntary Sector argued 'perhaps the greatest obstacle is the negative attitude to young people as volunteers: many organisations continue to see young people as problematic and not capable of playing a significant role in their activities' (cited in Gaskin, 2004, p. 27). Over 10 years later, the same issue was reported in a study of young volunteers who were not recognised as assets by those offering opportunities (Shannon, 2009). In circumstances where young people are marginalised by adults, it has been argued it is perhaps unsurprising they do not seek to participate in acts of civic engagement (Mason, Cremin, Warwick, & Harrison, 2011). Evidence indicates adult attitudes towards young people are more negative in deprived areas than less deprived locations (Scottish Government, 2017e) and that young people in such areas feel

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<sup>16</sup> Distinguishing personal from social barriers is not straightforward. Life circumstances, lack of time, lack of information and negative perceptions of volunteering are contingent upon and shaped by the positions individuals occupy in society. The distinction is made in this subsection to explore how participation is shaped from different perspectives.

stereotyped, giving rise to feelings of alienation and marginalisation (Neary et al., 2013). Given that attachment to place is considered to facilitate volunteering (Musick & Wilson, 2008), it may therefore be the case that lower levels of volunteering are a symptom of young people's detachment from their local areas.

This subsection has argued volunteering is embedded in the life-course and that changes in circumstances could create barriers to participation. Time, or lack thereof, was shown to be a potential barrier linked to knowledge of volunteering and confidence about participation. Negative and stereotypical images of volunteering were also shown to restrict willingness to volunteer. Just as the trigger factors discussed in subsection 2.2.1 were important in facilitating access, their absence was noted to inhibit it. At a broader level, the subsection explored the ways in which neighbourhood characteristics, namely levels of deprivation, trust and relationships between residents, could pose challenges to the availability of opportunities and access to them. Despite these contributions, gaps remain in our understanding. Time, for example, is one of the most common barriers in the literature, but adults in deprived areas volunteer slightly more frequently than the rest of the population. Given the significance of the life-course to volunteering, it is important to understand if this is also a barrier for younger persons in such areas. Furthermore, given that negative attitudes towards volunteering appear to be decreasing among young people in Scotland, it is necessary to explore whether this is still an issue for those in the 'most deprived' areas where levels of participation are lower.

### **2.3 Summary of the literature and research questions**

This chapter has analysed literature relating to young people and volunteering. It examined definitional debates as well as the areas in which volunteering occurs, rates of participation, policy interventions and the nature of engagement. In doing so, the chapter highlighted the complexity of understanding how and why individuals volunteer as well as the challenges of assessing its impact. The

remainder of the chapter summarises key issues in the literature and highlights gaps the thesis seeks to address.

The first section explored definitions of volunteering and noted three commonly cited criteria, volunteering as i) unpaid, ii) non-coerced action that, iii) generates benefits for other individuals, groups or society. The Scottish Government's definition was discussed and shown to add a fourth criterion, organisational structure, thereby focusing on formal volunteering. While volunteering was shown to take place in a range of settings, it was argued the pervasiveness of the dominant paradigm narrowed public perceptions of what constitutes volunteering. Resultantly, evidence was presented indicating volunteers did not always identify themselves as such and that negative images could lead individuals to disengage from participation.

In addition to this, the first section examined rates of participation across Scotland by age, gender, geography and deprivation. It argued the stereotype of the middle-aged, middle-class female volunteer did not accurately capture the nature of participation. While females were shown to volunteer more than males, young people were reported to volunteer at significantly higher rates than adults. Rates of volunteering were consistently lower in deprived areas, yet also relatively stable, suggesting people exert effort to sustain this form of volunteering during periods of austerity. Adults in Glasgow were shown to have lower than average levels of volunteering. However, despite having higher levels of deprivation than any other local authority area, the city did not have the lowest rates of volunteering. It was suggested this might be related to the size of the city and investment in its volunteering infrastructure. Regarding young people, evidence was presented showing levels of in-school volunteering were equal for schools with the highest and lowest proportions of pupils residing in the 'most deprived' areas, but unequal for 'spare time' volunteering, indicating the importance of institutional support for volunteering in deprived areas.

The second section explored the nature of engagement by analysing motivations and pathways to participation, the benefits of volunteering and barriers to opportunities. It contended that in order to understand how individuals start volunteering, it was necessary to examine both individual motivations and social context. Although motivations were shown to be an important aspect of participation, the assumption that individuals volunteer for functional reasons was problematised for being overly individualistic and underplaying the significance of social context. Changes in society were argued to have caused a shift from 'collective' to 'reflexive' forms of volunteering which was supported by evidence indicating young people were more likely than adults to volunteer for CV reasons and on an episodic basis. While some studies indicated males were more likely to cite employment motives, others reported no significant differences. Yet, overall, evidence was presented indicating young people were more strongly motivated by altruistic drivers and that neatly demarcating motives was challenging due to changes over time and, in some cases, the absence of a clear motive for initial participation. Parents, teachers and friends were shown to be significant actors for encouraging volunteering, while schools and neighbourhoods were also argued to have important roles. The role of these actors, however, was dependent on a number of factors such as whether individuals had access to volunteer-involving networks, the manner in which schools promoted volunteering and the extent to which individuals were attached to their communities.

Evidencing the impact of volunteering was shown to be a challenging task. In terms of employability, studies were mixed on the extent to which volunteering aided transitions into paid work. They were further problematised by issues of causality and attribution that made it difficult to disentangle volunteering from other factors. Despite this, research was cited indicating young respondents perceived themselves to have enhanced their employability. These benefits rose in importance from the age of 11-18, giving weight to the notion that the CV enhancing aspects of

volunteering were important for this cohort. However, it was argued volunteering was limited in its capacity to enhance employment unless volunteers developed the skills employers required and jobs were available. Additionally, wellbeing impacts were explored. Again, methodological issues made evidencing benefits challenging, although subjective measures indicated volunteering could have a positive impact. It was unclear whether volunteering *per se* or the social aspects of participation created wellbeing impacts. Studies with young care leavers indicated the opportunity to act with agency was an important benefit of volunteering, but it was unclear how this related to other young people.

Finally, the chapter explored barriers to volunteering in relation to life-course factors. Lack of time, either actual or perceived, was widely cited and linked to lack of information and fear of overcommitting. Young people were shown to be particularly likely to cite lack of information alongside lack of confidence. This latter barrier was notable among disaffected young people and socially excluded adults who did not always see themselves as having something to contribute or fitting what they perceived to be the image of a volunteer. Negative images of volunteers were argued to be a longstanding barrier. However, evidence was presented indicating such attitudes had fallen among young people in Scotland. Neighbourhood effects were also shown to raise issues for volunteering due to infrastructure, attachments to place and relationships to others.

Reviewing the literature highlighted areas in need of further research. While the image of volunteering was noted as a longstanding barrier to participation, evidence suggested negative attitudes were decreasing among young people in Scotland. Yet, due to the low levels of participation in deprived areas, young people may be less likely to encounter volunteer-involving networks. It is therefore important to understand the extent to which this remains a barrier. Lower levels of volunteering also raise questions relating to the nature of participation. While evidence indicates young people value the employability enhancing aspects of

volunteering, as in policy, these are often of secondary importance to helping others and having fun. Accordingly, it is necessary to explore the ways in which young people in deprived areas are motivated to volunteer, what participation means to them as well as analysing the extent to which they adopt a functional approach.

The chapter discussed the importance of social context, trigger factors and life-course events in explaining volunteering. Given the culture of non-participation in deprived areas, particularly among males, it is important to understand what social conditions facilitate volunteering. Attachments to place were argued to instigate volunteering, yet contradictory evidence was presented about young people's attachments to disadvantaged neighbourhoods, raising questions concerning how relationships to place shape volunteering. Furthermore, although lack of time was reported to be a significant barrier, data was presented indicating adults in deprived areas volunteer more frequently than the rest of Scotland, raising questions as to how this manifests for younger groups. The significance of schools was shown to be proportionately more important for young people in urban and deprived settings. As such, there is a need to explore how young people feel supported by educational institutions. Moreover, the relative stability of formal volunteering rates in deprived areas, despite a challenging environment for the voluntary sector, suggest the goods it produces are valued by those in disadvantaged neighbourhoods. It is thus important to understand the possibilities and challenges such environments create for volunteering as well as the reasons for which it is valued.

Important issues were also raised relating to the benefits of volunteering. In relation to wellbeing, it was unclear whether benefits arose as a result of social interaction or volunteering itself. Accordingly, it is important to understand how benefits arise through volunteering as well as the form they take. The Literature Review suggested the capacity to act with agency was important for care leavers, yet it remains unclear how this aspect is experienced by those in deprived areas. Furthermore, it was suggested that while the impact on employment was difficult to

assess, such gains were nonetheless reported by young people, particularly among females and at the ages when they could enter the labour market and further education. It is necessary to explore the extent to which younger youth value such aspects, especially in light of the manner in which volunteering is framed in policy.

Based on the issues identified in this chapter, the thesis addresses the following research questions:

1. *What understandings and attitudes do young people in areas of multiple deprivation express in relation to the notion of volunteering?*

This question will provide insights into what this cohort of young people think volunteering is and what they think about it. In light of evidence that negative attitudes towards volunteering have decreased among young people in Scotland, it is important to explore how attitudes manifest in areas where volunteering is not widely practiced. The question has implications for understanding what this group think the role of volunteering is and whether they or not they see it as having relevance to their lives.

2. *What motivates and facilitates young people's involvement in volunteering opportunities in deprived areas?*

This question will enhance understandings of how and why young people start volunteering in areas characterised by non-participation. It will provide information on who the significant actors are in facilitating engagement as well as how volunteering is related to social circumstance. Moreover, it will enhance understandings of what interests this cohort about volunteering and how motives emerge in relation to events in participants' lives. This question has implications for understanding the extent to which volunteering is driven by motives relating to 'traditional' and 'new' volunteerism as well as how trajectories towards volunteering develop in the context of localised cultures of non-participation.

3. *What do those who volunteer in deprived areas value about doing so?*

This question addresses the gap in understanding about the meanings and significance volunteering acquires for young people in deprived areas. While there is evidence that volunteering can give rise to employability and wellbeing benefits, it is unclear how and to what extent these are felt among this cohort and how they relate to their life circumstances. It is also important to understand which aspects of volunteering give rise to such benefits. Furthermore, the question has implications for understanding the nature of volunteering in terms of its 'traditional' and 'new' forms.

4. *What factors hinder or obstruct young people's access to volunteering opportunities in deprived areas?*

This question will provide insights into the factors obstructing young people from volunteering in deprived areas. It will explore the roles they feel their neighbourhoods and schools play in facilitating volunteering as well as looking at how their attitudes and those of their peers' shape willingness to engage in volunteering. Furthermore, the question will examine why males appear less likely to volunteer than females and why they are more likely to say it would not interest them.

In light of the demographic variations reported in the Literature Review, the analysis of these questions will be sensitive to gender differences, variations between younger (aged 11-15) and older (aged 16-18) participants, as well as differences between volunteers and non-volunteers. An account of the methods used to address the research questions is provided in Chapter 4. Before outlining the methodological approach, Chapter 3 discusses the theoretical tools that will be used to analyse the data generated through the fieldwork.

## **3 Conceptualising volunteering, practice and relationships**

This chapter outlines the theoretical concepts that will be used in subsequent empirical chapters. The first section examines conceptualisations of volunteering from the 19<sup>th</sup> century to the present day. In doing so, it argues that, over time, attitudes towards volunteering have involved a mixture of individualistic and altruistic sentiments. Accordingly, it provides a framework for examining participants' attitudes towards volunteering as well as understanding change in the nature of voluntary action. The second section draws on Bourdieu's theory of practice to provide a way of analysing how subjective dispositions develop in relation to social structures. The concepts of 'habitus', 'field' and 'capitals' are argued to facilitate an examination of why some young people volunteer in areas exhibiting low levels of participation while others do not. They also offer a way of exploring how, in certain circumstances, volunteering may be stigmatised due to its perceived incompatibility with subjective dispositions. The third section examines the notion of 'social capital', focusing on its 'bonding' and 'bridging' dimensions. It argues these concepts have analytic utility in understanding how relationships present different opportunities for engaging with volunteering as well as the nature of relationships developed through volunteering.

### **3.1 Perspectives on volunteering**

The Literature Review started by examining the characteristics an act must have in order to be referred to as volunteering. This section adds to this by exploring the nature of volunteering. Rather than providing a way of assessing whether an act is or is not volunteering, it offers a way of examining the kind of activity volunteering constitutes by looking at it from three different angles. The first explores volunteering in terms of the provision of aid. The notions of 'mutual aid' and 'philanthropy' are used to explore volunteering within and across social classes. The

second approach looks critically at volunteering as a way of encouraging democratic participation and developing citizenship qualities. The third examines debates about changes in the nature of volunteering from 'traditional' and 'collective' to 'new' and 'individualised' forms. The aim of this section is to explore how volunteering has manifested in the past in order to provide a way of understanding how the assumptions underpinning it may or may not be changing. As discussed, while there are continuities across these perspectives, there exists a notable individualistic emphasis in contemporary debates about volunteering.

### *3.1.1 The provision of aid*

Rochester et al. (2010) argue the dominant paradigm conceptualises volunteering as an altruistic act, a gift of time, offered by an individual towards those in less fortunate circumstances. In this way, volunteering is conceived as the provision of aid from one person or group to another. Such an approach resonates with Beveridge's (1948, p. 8) report on the nature of voluntary action, a term he used to describe actions 'outside each citizen's home for improving the conditions of life for him [*sic*] and his fellows'. In his report, Beveridge discussed two impulses, mutual aid and philanthropy, which have been used by historians as frameworks for analysing the nature of voluntary action among and between social groups (Harris, 2004; Rochester, 2013; Smith, 1995). Beveridge used motive to differentiate mutual aid and philanthropy, yet, as subsection 2.2.1 demonstrated, motivations are challenging to compartmentalise and rarely straightforward. This subsection will explore the altruistic, individualistic and social aspects associated with Victorian voluntary action and examine their implications for understanding volunteering today.

Beveridge (1948, p. 9) argued mutual aid was motivated by an individual's recognition of their 'own need for security against misfortune' and their realisation that this need is shared among those in their networks and communities. Accordingly, 'by undertaking to help one another all may help themselves'

(Beveridge, 1948, p. 9). Although anthropologists have dated the existence of mutual associations to the Neolithic period, at least 10,000 years ago (Munn-Giddings et al., 2016), much historical writing on mutual aid focuses on the friendly societies, trade unions and cooperative movements of the 19<sup>th</sup> century (Harris, 2004; Hopkins, 1995). Hopkins (1995) argued social changes brought on by the industrial revolution and movement of individuals from the countryside into rapidly expanding urban centres meant the working-classes were forced to rely on themselves and each other to provide insurance against sickness. Friendly societies offered a way of doing this, members (predominantly male) contributed a weekly sum which was paid out as sickness benefits and to cover funeral costs (Harris, 2004). As beneficiaries were members, participation in such organisations gave rise to both individual and collective motivations and benefits. Yet, friendly societies also provided important social functions, meetings took place in pubs, while social events and excursions were planned throughout the year (Smith, 1995).

Mutual aid is sometimes conflated with self-help, a term associated with Smiles (1986 [1859]) whom Smith (1995) contends was misinterpreted as arguing for selfishness at the expense of communal activity. In his analysis of working-class self-help in 19<sup>th</sup> century England, Hopkins (1995, p. 3, emphasis in original) argued instances of individual striving did exist, as persons sought to make provisions for their families, however the 'strongest characteristic' of self-help 'was not individualism, but *co-operation*' to safeguard employment and make provision for sickness. This can be seen in the trade union movement, which acquired a political dimension to campaign for fair wages and good working conditions (Hopkins, 1995). Thus, in addition to the individual, social and altruistic dimensions of mutual aid, a political element, in the form of campaigning, was also evident.

Although Smith (1995, p. 29) argued friendly societies were 'perhaps the most important working-class movement', others have examined the extent to which all forms of mutual aid can be characterised as solely working-class. Studies examining

the amounts deposited in some friendly societies have lead historians to question the extent to which working-class persons would have been able to contribute (Harris, 2004). Indeed, during the Victorian period, 'the very poorest did not have the resources to help themselves' (Hopkins, 1995, p. 227). Furthermore, some friendly societies were controlled and used by middle-class professionals (Smith, 1995). Munn-Giddings et al. (2016) argue an important development in mutual aid organisations during the 1950s was the emergence of women's, disabled, gay and civil rights groups. Accordingly, just as the working-class of the early industrial period came together to meet shared needs, so too did stigmatised and marginalised groups in later periods, and just as the former were motivated by a range of impulses, so were the latter (Munn-Giddings et al., 2016). Mutual aid, therefore, comprises voluntary action between persons with shared experiences. Although historically a working-class movement, this form of association is evident among a range of groups. Mutual aid is motivated by an individual desire to improve one's situation, as well as those in similar circumstances, and thus can give rise to a range of individual and collective benefits (Munn-Giddings et al., 2016).

The other form of voluntary action identified by Beveridge was philanthropy. The 19<sup>th</sup> century has been characterised as the 'golden age' of philanthropy (Smith, 1995, p. 14), due to the 'explosion' of activity that occurred in response to social changes brought on by industrialisation (Rochester, 2013, p. 19). Beveridge (1948, p. 9) contended philanthropic voluntary action was motivated by 'social conscience, the feeling which makes men [*sic*] who are materially comfortable, mentally uncomfortable so long as their neighbours are materially uncomfortable'. His focus on 'social conscience', however, conceals the broader range of motives historians have attributed to philanthropists. Harris (2004), for instance, notes Victorian philanthropists were driven by, amongst other things, feelings of guilt, the desire to compensate for the loss of loved ones or to resolve internal conflicts. Harris also contends philanthropy enabled individuals to establish social contacts and associate with their superiors. Others have argued it offered middle-class women a way of

exerting influence and responsibility in public life, an area they were otherwise denied access to (Smith, 1995). Thus, while philanthropy might refer to movement between the 'haves and the have-nots' (Jones, 1991, p. 42), it should be noted that individuals engaged in it for a variety of reasons.

Rochester (2013) argued, '[m]uch – too much – of the history of voluntary action has been written as the history of philanthropy'. The weight given to philanthropy is argued to have shaped the way volunteering is viewed today. This is evident in the dominant paradigm, discussed in subsection 2.1.1, which frames volunteering as 'an altruistic act often seen as the "gift" of one's time and thus analogous to the gift of money which defines philanthropy' (Rochester et al., 2010, p. 11). In the same way that Victorian philanthropy was viewed as the provision of help from the 'haves' to the 'have-nots', contemporary volunteering is often seen as the delivery of 'immediate help for the needy' (Eliasoph, 2013, p. 1). Ellis-Paine et al. (2016) used the term 'traditional philanthropic volunteering' to refer to the primary way in which volunteering was framed throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> century. They argue that, although altruism is seen as the central motivator, volunteers are often driven by a range of factors which can alter over the course of their experiences. Indeed, in recent decades, scholars have contended volunteering is undergoing 'radical change' with an increased emphasis on personal interest over the needs of others (Hustinx et al., 2016, p. 351).<sup>17</sup> Yet, while the emphasis on individualism in volunteering during the 21<sup>st</sup> century may be related to changes in the nature of the opportunities offered, it is apparent that voluntary action has always been driven by a range of motivations.

Beveridge believed mutual aid and philanthropic approaches to voluntary action could be distinguished by the different motives expressed by actors. This subsection, however, has challenged this position by examining how both approaches entail a blend of individualistic, altruistic and social impulses. Despite

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<sup>17</sup> See subsection 3.1.3 for a fuller discussion of the changing nature of volunteering.

this, mutual aid and philanthropy provide useful ways of understanding the orientation of acts of volunteering. Although there exists overlap between motives, the perspectives enable an analysis of whether volunteering is viewed as the provision of aid to those in less fortunate circumstances or towards those with shared experiences, as well as a way of understanding how voluntary action has changed over time.

### *3.1.2 Schools of democracy and the development of citizenship*

Writing about his travels through America in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Alexis de Tocqueville (2003 [1864]) was struck by the extent to which voluntary participation in public associations and civil life countered what he saw as the individualism of democratic societies. De Tocqueville argued that, unlike aristocratic societies, in which citizens accepted the social order, the promise of equality in democratic nations created conditions of excessive individualism in which persons cut themselves off from society. He wrote: 'Aristocracy had created a long chain of citizens from the peasant to the king; democracy breaks down this chain and separates all the links' (de Tocqueville, 2003 [1864], p. 589). For de Tocqueville, democracy threatened to encourage citizens to retreat into their private affairs and consider themselves separate from one another. The solution to this, he argued, was participation in public matters and civil associations. By taking part in such organisations, individuals would be reminded of their dependence on one another and that it was their 'duty as well as self-interest to be useful to one's fellows' (de Tocqueville, 2003 [1864], p. 595). Highlighting this connectivity would provide citizens with a 'vision of the big picture', thereby revealing 'how they are inevitably part of a great chain' (Eliasoph, 2013, p. 15).

Prochaska (1988, p. 30) posited that, through voluntary organisations, or 'school[s] of democracy', women and working men in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries were able to make choices and decisions about things in their lives, thereby exercising some agency in a world in which they had little control. Garrard (2002) continued this line

of analysis by arguing civil associations played a central role in the democratisation process in Britain. He contended that, for middle- and working-class men, participation in civic organisations reinforced democratic values, provided training in democratic procedures and encouraged individuals to see themselves as having a stake in society.<sup>18</sup> In his discussion of American associational life from the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century onwards, Putnam (2000) similarly argued participation in civil life enhanced connectivity among citizens, multiplying their individual voices and lowering their chances of being deceitful or recruited by extremist groups. This Tocquevillian approach is evident in recent Scottish policy. The *Community Empowerment Action Plan* (Scottish Government, 2009a) seeks to invigorate the democratic process by enhancing the role of citizens in local decision making. Doing so is said to generate a number of benefits, including increased confidence and skills among local people, greater rates of volunteering and increased satisfaction with neighbourhood among inhabitants.<sup>19</sup>

Recent scholarship, however, has challenged assumptions about the causal link between voluntary action and social goods, such as participatory democracy. Despite the tendency to view volunteers as incapable of causing harm (Eliasoph, 2013), there exists a 'dark side' to the voluntary sector (Eng et al., 2016). The terms 'noxious' and 'fundamentally deviant' have been applied to voluntary associations, such as terrorist networks, which, while seeking to promote social or political change, use violence and are self-serving rather than altruistic (Eng et al., 2016, p. 1340). Yet, not all challenges to the development of democracy through voluntary action are so extreme. Both the nature of organisations and the types of activities performed have been found to influence this relationship. Dodge and Ospina (2016) argue organisations must support volunteers to critically frame social problems and provide space for them to exert agency and voice their opinions. Organisations

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<sup>18</sup> Participation was not, however, spread evenly across society. Garrard (2002, p. 6) notes 'associational life was least vibrant amongst working-class women' due, in part, to the separation of public and private spheres.

<sup>19</sup> See <http://www.gov.scot/Topics/People/engage> (accessed 24 March 2017).

must also enable members to build solidarity and permit diversity among volunteers. Without such factors, they posit the development of agency or critical thought cannot be guaranteed. In addition to the internal workings of organisations, their nature is also significant in shaping political behaviour. One study found adult political activity was linked to prior youthful participation in politically-orientated voluntary organisations to a greater extent than non-political groups (McFarland & Thomas, 2006). Thus, while volunteering may offer opportunities for future democratic action, its ability to do so is contingent on the nature of participation.

Related to the notion that volunteering enhances democratic participation is the idea that it develops desirable citizenship qualities. Since the 1980s, the term 'active citizenship' has gained political currency as a way of framing the relationship between individuals and the state (Jochum, Pratten, & Wilding, 2005).<sup>20</sup> In the context of reduced state spending, the Conservative Governments of the 1980s and 1990s framed active citizenship as a way for individuals to take greater responsibility (Holmes, 2009). New Labour promoted a more reciprocal version in which citizens' rights were contingent upon the fulfilment of responsibilities (Jochum et al., 2005). Their approach, however, was criticised for instrumentally framing volunteering as a way of 'supplementing public services' rather than meaningfully engaging individuals and giving rise to social capital benefits for communities (Holmes, 2009, p. 268). The term was also evident in David Cameron's Big Society thesis where individuals were encouraged to take greater roles in the provision of services, despite the austerity agenda (Kisby, 2010). Kisby (2010, p. 490) criticised the model of citizenship promoted as 'a poor version of the real thing' that steered away from political literacy and engagement.

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<sup>20</sup> The notion of active citizenship has a longer history than this. Brewis (2014) argues participation in higher education prior to 1914 gave rise to an ethic of service among students which was underpinned by the concept of active citizenship.

The forms of citizenship promoted in contemporary youth initiatives have also been challenged. As noted in subsection 1.2, the four capacities the Saltire Awards seek to promote have been criticised for depoliticising citizenship and presenting it in a normative fashion. Notions of citizenship are also fractured by the devolved nature of the UK. The form of British citizenship promoted by the National Citizen Service, has been problematised for its English-centricity (Mills & Waite, 2017). Most notably, it is not available to young people in Scotland, thus creating tensions concerning the extent to which it can be referred to as British. Mills and Waite (2017) contend the scheme focuses on a particular form of citizenship, centred on social action and being a 'good' citizen, rather than involving young people in other citizenship activities, such as voting.<sup>21</sup>

Tensions in the delivery of youth volunteering initiatives have the potential to muddle the manner in which desirable citizenship attributes are taken on by young people. Despite policy initiatives seeking to develop responsibility through youth volunteering, youth workers have been found to avoid discussing it with young people due to its perceived 'nebulous' nature, instead focusing on the more instrumental aspects of participation, such as CV enhancement (Dean, 2013b, p. 58). Moreover, the lack of choice in compulsory volunteering initiatives can weaken citizenship identities by diminishing individual agency (Warburton & Smith, 2003). There is also a question over the type of citizenship volunteering leads to. Students, for example, have been found to develop a complex range of socially conservative and critical attitudes following volunteering experiences, both accepting and challenging the status quo (Brooks, 2007; Holdsworth & Quinn, 2012).

Although not all volunteering initiatives and programmes are explicitly about enhancing democratic participation and citizenship qualities, it is a notable policy trend (Strickland, 2010). The notion that volunteering develops young people's skills for the future draws on the notion of young people as 'becomings' rather than

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<sup>21</sup> In 2015 the Scottish Elections (Reduction of Voting Age) Bill was passed, reduced the voting age to 16 for local government elections. Across the rest of the UK, the legal voting age remains 18.

'beings' (James et al., 1998; Leonard, 2016). Mills and Waite (2017) found evidence of this in their analysis of a National Citizen Service project in which participants conducted a pre-designed project rather than designing their own, thereby denying them the opportunity make decisions about the type of contribution they wanted to make. This future orientation is also evident in the Saltire Awards, which seeks to develop citizenship qualities and enhance CVs, and Project Scotland, which is designed to help young people get on in life through volunteering. In light of these tensions, and in contrast to de Tocqueville's contention that voluntary action enhances participatory democracy, scholars have argued the collective aspects of volunteering are being undermined as increasing emphasis is placed on its capacity to act as a form of training for the workplace. It is to debates about the transition from 'traditional' to 'new' forms of volunteering that the chapter now turns.

### *3.1.3 'Traditional' and 'new' forms of volunteering*

During the 1990s, Giddens (1991) and Beck (1992) argued Western societies were increasingly characterised by individualism and risk. They contended political and economic changes meant social issues were no longer understood as 'problems of the system' but 'personal failure' (Beck, 1992, p. 89). Furthermore, individuals were forced to take active steps in the construction of their identities, as traditional factors, such as social class, lost their hold. Giddens (1991, p. 81) emphasised the role of individual agency when he wrote 'we have no choice but to choose'. Within this framework, young people's transitions are seen in terms of individual choice rather than being shaped by social structures (France, 2007; Furlong & Cartmel, 1997). Although this approach has been criticised for giving insufficient attention to the extent to which transitions continue to be shaped by broader social factors (MacDonald & Marsh, 2005), it has proven influential in framing social activities, including volunteering.

In keeping with this body of work, scholars of the voluntary sector have discussed a shift from 'traditional', 'collective' and 'classical' types of volunteering to 'new',

'reflexive' and 'modern' forms (Hustinx, 2001; Hustinx & Lammertyn, 2003; Hustinx et al., 2016). The characteristics of these ideal-types, initially developed by Rommel, Opdebeeck, Lammertyn, and Bouverne-de Bie (1997), are presented in Table 3.1. A key development in the move from classical to new volunteering was the weakening of coherent community bonds and identity and the rise of unpredictable and increasingly individualised forms of participation (Hustinx, 2001). Hustinx and Lammertyn (2003) coined the terms 'collective' and 'reflexive' volunteering to refer to this distinction. They argued the former was 'a way of reaffirming shared group identity and tight integration in a stable community' (p. 175), while the latter functioned within a 'self-constructed biographical frame' (p. 172). Reflexive volunteers were more likely to be choosy about the activities they were willing to perform and were more likely to select opportunities they felt would offer them something in return. Hustinx (2001) argued that while individualism was often configured as a threat to volunteering, it should not be equated with egoism and did not preclude the expression of feelings of solidarity and commitment to volunteering. Indeed, as ideal-types, Hustinx and Lammertyn (2003, p. 171) argued it was inappropriate to view classical and modern forms of volunteering as a 'rigid dichotomy', but rather as a 'flexible continuum reflecting a fundamentally pluriform and dynamic volunteer reality'.

Table 3.1: Classical and new forms of volunteerism (adapted from Hustinx (2001, p. 65))

	<b>Classical volunteerism</b>	<b>New volunteerism</b>
Culture:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identification with traditional cultural norms.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Individualisation.</li> </ul>
Choice of organisation based on:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Traditional cultural identities.</li> <li>• Loyalty.</li> <li>• Solid structure.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Personal interest.</li> <li>• Weak ties.</li> <li>• Loose networks.</li> </ul>
Choice of field of action based on:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Traditional cultural identities.</li> <li>• Inclusion and exclusion.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Perception of new biographical similarities.</li> <li>• Taste for topical issues.</li> <li>• Dialogue between global and local.</li> </ul>
Choice of activity based on:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Traditional cultural identities.</li> <li>• Needs of organisation.</li> <li>• Idealism.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Balance between personal preference and organisation's needs.</li> <li>• Cost/benefit analysis.</li> <li>• Pragmatism.</li> </ul>
Length and intensity of commitment:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Long term.</li> <li>• Regular.</li> <li>• Unconditional.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Short term.</li> <li>• Irregular, erratic.</li> <li>• Conditional.</li> </ul>
Relationship with beneficiary:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unilateral, altruistic, selfless.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reciprocal.</li> </ul>

More recently, researchers have developed this body of work by giving greater attention to the extent to which individuals are re-embedded by organisations in new ways, as opposed to viewing the process of new volunteerism in terms of dis-embedding (Hustinx, 2010; Hustinx & Meijs, 2011). Drawing on the concept of employability, Meijs, Ten Hoorn, and Brudney (2006) proposed the notion of 'volunteerability' to highlight the importance of looking at the micro (individual), meso (organisational) and macro (community and governmental) factors shaping the supply and demand of volunteers. By focusing on what organisations and

institutions can do to accommodate volunteers, re-embedding seeks to manipulate the population's willingness and availability to volunteer (Hustinx & Meijs, 2011). Rather than the shift to new volunteering being solely a result of changes on the supply side, in terms of individual attitudes and dispositions, institutional changes on the demand side have also played a role in individualising volunteering (Hustinx, 2010). Dean (2014), for instance, argued instrumental volunteering motivations are promoted at three different structural levels. Firstly, government policies configure volunteering as a pathway to employment, secondly, volunteer programmes reward short-term and instrumentalised commitments and, thirdly, volunteer brokerage strategies seek to sell volunteering to young people in exchange for private benefits. In certain circumstances, therefore, the manner in which individuals are drawn towards volunteering opportunities encourages attitudes in keeping with the notion of new volunteering.

Within higher education institutions researchers have noted a shift in how volunteering is framed from an extra- to a co-curricular activity (Holdsworth & Brewis, 2014). Holdsworth and Brewis (2014) argue universities increasingly support students to volunteer in order that they are more employable after graduation, a trend referred to elsewhere as the 'job shop' model of volunteering (Anderson & Green, 2012). They contend this shift stems from external drivers, namely the notion that education alone is 'no longer sufficient' and that 'universities and students need to recognise their joint responsibilities in enhancing employability' (Holdsworth & Brewis, 2014, p. 210). Volunteering is seen, therefore, as a way of gaining an edge over other candidates when seeking employment – part of what Holdsworth (2015) refers to as the 'cult of experience'. Volunteering is framed as a way of investing in the self for future rewards (Skeggs, 2004). Although this thesis does not focus on university volunteering, the trend noted in these studies reflects a broader picture of structurally induced individualistic attitudes towards volunteering, evident in the employability-orientated promotion of initiatives such as Project Scotland.

Changes in the nature of volunteering have been argued to pose a challenge to the manner in which society perceives it. Public opinion has been found to conceptualise volunteering as an act generating a greater cost than gain to the volunteer (Musick & Wilson, 2008). Furthermore, volunteering is commonly conceptualised as a freely undertaken act. Hustinx and Meijs (2011, p. 17) argue that in light of re-embedding strategies 'manipulating the freedom to choose and the remuneration' of volunteering, in time, attitudes about it may alter. Some scholars have expressed caution that the introduction of market values into volunteering may damage its meaning by configuring it as an activity to be consumed for personal gain (Dean, 2015; Rochester, 2013). New volunteerism therefore poses challenges for the meaning and nature of volunteering itself.

This section analysed various ways in which voluntary action has been conceptualised, from Victorian notions of 'Lady Bountiful' providing help to the 'poor and needy' (Smith, 1995, p. 16) to contemporary ideas concerning the instrumentality of volunteering. Characterisations such as these, however, were argued to underplay the complexity of motivations for volunteering. Although altruism was evident in 19<sup>th</sup> century philanthropy and mutual aid, so too were elements of individualism and social functions. Furthermore, while the notion of 'active citizenship' may have attained notable prominence from the 1980s onwards, voluntary action in the previous century was also seen as a way of enhancing individual characteristics and facilitating democratic participation. Finally, despite the instrumentalism in contemporary debates about volunteering, altruistic motives are not entirely absent nor are the social aspects of participation.

Dominant narratives about youth volunteering, which frame it as form of citizenship training and preparation for the labour market (Dean, 2014; Mills & Waite, 2017), however, marginalise the complexity of this picture. As discussed in subsection 2.2.1, attitudes towards volunteering are shaped in various ways by micro and

macro processes. While evidence indicates young people emphasise the employability aspects of volunteering to a greater extent than adults, these are often of secondary importance to its social and altruistic dimensions and gain salience at different life-stages and circumstances. Accordingly, it is important to examine how individual dispositions towards, and perceptions of, volunteering develop in the context of lived experience. The following section examines Bourdieu's theory of practice and argues for its utility in meeting this end.

### **3.2 Theory of practice**

Bourdieu (1990, p. 25) considered the division between subjectivism and objectivism to be the 'most fundamental' and 'ruinous' dichotomy in the social sciences. He argued the former excluded analyses of how objective conditions made lived experience possible, while the latter did not account for the social foundations of objective conditions (Bourdieu, 1990, 2010 [1984]). Through the concept of 'habitus', Bourdieu sought to overcome this dichotomy by analysing how practice was shaped by, and gave shape to, social structures. Accordingly, he contended social science needed to account for the '*double structuring*' of the social world (Bourdieu, 1989, p. 20, emphasis in original). Bourdieu did not, however, grant equal analytic weight to either side of the binary. Rather, 'epistemological priority' was accorded to objectivism on the grounds that subjective perceptions and dispositions were contingent upon their bearer's position in social space (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992, p. 11). The Literature Review argued engagement with volunteering could not be wholly understood as the actions of individuals driven by strategic goals. Instead, attitudes and experiences required situating in individual life-stages and socio-economic contexts. The theoretical tools Bourdieu provides offer a way of analysing the relationship between structure and agency and the implications this had for individual and collective voluntary action.

### 3.2.1 *Habitus, field and capitals*

The concept of 'habitus' occupies a central position in Bourdieu's work. It was employed to meet two aims; firstly, to break with the notion of the rational agent and, secondly, to challenge positivistic materialism and intellectualist idealism (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992). Bourdieu contended statistical regularities in the social world countered the notion of rational agents making individualised choices. Furthermore, although social structures shaped thought and action, they did not do so deterministically, but were themselves shaped by the actions of individuals and groups. To overcome the objectivist and subjectivist dualism, Bourdieu (1977, p. 72, emphasis in original) posited habitus as 'systems of durable, transposable *dispositions*, structured structures predisposed to function as structuring structures'. Habitus provides individuals and groups with dispositions, ways of seeing and acting, that are determined by ('structured structures') and determine ('structuring structures') the conditions in which they are positioned. When the dispositions of a habitus are in harmony with the position of its bearer, 'it is like a "fish in water": it does not feel the weight of the water, and it takes the world about itself for granted' (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992, p. 127). Bourdieu (1977, p. 164) used the term 'doxa' to refer to the self-evidence of the social world produce by this alignment.

In order for this feeling to be achieved, habitus must be viewed alongside another of Bourdieu's concepts, 'field'. Bourdieu argued many fields exist in society, each of which functions according to its own rules, shaping the behaviour of individuals who enter it while also being shaped by their actions. Fields are discrete social spaces in which individuals are positioned according to the volume and structure of their capitals (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992). Fields function to the extent that individuals recognise them as legitimate and are willing and able to invest in them. The relationship between field and habitus is one of conditioning, 'the field structures the habitus, which is the immanent necessity of a field' (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992, p. 127). The 'fish in water' effect is thus achieved when field and

habitus align. They are contingent upon one another to the extent that the dispositions of the habitus 'are only formed, only function and are only valid in a field ... the same practices may receive opposite meanings and values in different fields (Bourdieu, 2010 [1984], p. 87). For example, a habitus formed in one field, such as a disposition towards anti-social behaviour developed in relation to neighbourhood conditions, may problematize entry into another, such as the labour market (France, 2015).

History and early experiences have important roles in the generation of habitus. Like social structures, habitus both shapes and is shaped by history. It is 'the product of history', yet also 'produces individual and collective practices, and hence history, in accordance with the schemes engendered by history' (Bourdieu, 1977, p. 82). Through the lens of habitus, consistently low levels of formal volunteering in deprived areas (see Figures 2.4 and 2.5) exemplify what Bourdieu (1977, p. 78) refers to as 'history ... turned into nature'. Barriers to participation exist in the form of institutional factors, such as the closure of volunteer-involving organisations, as well as on a subjective level, in negative attitudes. Accordingly, objective restrictions mean volunteering is 'denied as such' (Bourdieu, 1977, p. 78), a denial which is 'embodied', 'internalized as second nature' (Bourdieu, 1990, p. 59) and consequently reinforced through subjective dispositions away from volunteering. History, therefore, weighs down on individual and collective actions, yet these, in turn, give rise to history through the generation of particular dispositions.

In the development of a habitus, 'disproportionate weight' is given to early experiences, particularly those in the family and home (Bourdieu, 1977, p. 78). For Bourdieu (1990, p. 54), 'familial manifestations' of social and economic forces structure the habitus and form the basis of 'the perception and appreciation of all subsequent experiences'. His contention is supported by Bodovski's (2015, p. 50) finding of 'continuity between parental and adolescents' habitus', evidenced in the relationship between the former's educational expectations and the latter's

educational experiences. Families were shown, in subsection 2.2.1, to be important facilitators of voluntary action. Following Bourdieu's logic, children whose families volunteer are more likely to develop a volunteering habitus than those whose do not. Bourdieu (2010 [1984]) posited formal education also had a role to play in the development of the dispositions of the habitus. In the context of extra-curricular activities, however, he considered education to be of secondary importance to upbringing. As an extra-curricular activity, schools have been reported to approach volunteering in different ways (Dean, 2016b). Accordingly, early domestic and educational experiences offer varying opportunities for naturalising volunteering as a taken for granted aspect of an individual's worldview.

Subsection 2.1.2 highlighted statistical regularities in rates of volunteering; those in urban and deprived areas were shown to volunteer less than those in rural and less deprived locations. These patterns are indicative of a 'class habitus' (Bourdieu, 1977, p. 83), a collective disposition towards or away from volunteering, contingent upon specific locations in the social structure. Dean (2016a) proposed the notions of 'volunteering' and 'non-volunteering habitus' to analyse the collective experiences of middle- and working-class young people. Volunteering habitus captures the experiences of young people who, 'socialized in an environment where participation was standard ... internalized the volunteer ethic as normal' (Dean, 2016a, p. 103). In such circumstances, field and habitus align to the extent that volunteering 'appears as self-evident' (Bourdieu, 1977, p. 164). Non-volunteering habitus, by contrast, refers to situations where the 'volunteer ethic' is hindered from developing by structural constraints. For Bourdieu, a collective habitus does not emerge from 'intentional calculation or conscious reference to a norm' (Bourdieu, 1977, p. 80) – indeed, the 'tradition is silent' (Bourdieu, 1977, p. 167). Instead, class habitus results from the alignment of dispositions and objective conditions, the latter of which place parameters around the former. In such circumstances, motivations and aspirations are closely correlated with objective possibilities. Certain practices are 'excluded' as 'unthinkable' by individuals who

'refuse what is anyway denied' (Bourdieu, 1990, p. 54). In the context of volunteering, in areas where it is minimally practiced, the lack of opportunity to participate may be internalised and aspirations to volunteer become 'unthinkable'.

Bourdieu used the term symbolic violence to refer to circumstances in which individuals experience their exclusion from social practices as natural – 'the violence which is exercised upon a social agent with his or her complicity' (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992, p. 167). This need not be a conscious process, but, through the alignment of habitus and field, can occur without the awareness of those excluded (Bourdieu & Passeron, 1990). The concept has been used to explore the interplay between aspirations and locality among working-class boys and girls (Connolly, 2004; Connolly & Healy, 2004). The researchers argued their participants expressed strong attachments to place which set narrow parameters on future goals to the detriment of educational success. In relation to volunteering, subsection 2.2.3 showed its image could act as a barrier to participation. As a respondent in one study stated, 'It's like: "Do you want to come and do some voluntary work?" Leave off! I've got a reputation to uphold. If my mates see me down there...!' (Gaskin, 2004, p. 12). The participant was thus complicit in their exclusion from volunteering.

Although individual trajectories stem from the structures they are shaped by, not all members of a group or class will share the same experiences. Rather, each habitus 'brings about a unique integration, dominated by the earliest experiences, of the experiences statistically common to the members of the same class' (Bourdieu, 1977, p. 87). It follows, therefore, that individuals in environments characterised by a collective non-volunteering habitus will not uniformly consider volunteering 'unthinkable'. A child growing up in a family which commonly practices volunteering will likely generate a different trajectory to child in a family without such experiences. For instance, while volunteering may have been 'unthinkable' for the 83 percent of adults in the 'most deprived' areas of Glasgow who did not volunteer, it presumably was 'thinkable' for the 17 percent who did (see Figure 2.7).

For Bourdieu (1990, p. 60) structural variations such as these are ‘never more than a deviation in relation to the style of a period of class’. The ‘epistemological priority’ he granted to objectivism meant that while individual trajectories may run ‘in the opposite direction to that of the fraction as a whole’, they remained ‘marked by the collective destiny’ (Bourdieu, 2010 [1984], p. 106). When subjective dispositions are aligned with broader structures, the habitus generates accepted behaviours which are likely to be positively sanctioned. Conversely, behaviours which are ‘not for the likes of us’ are liable to negative sanctioning due to their incompatibility with objective conditions (Bourdieu, 1990, p. 56). This process is evident in the remarks of the respondent, quoted above, who sought to uphold their reputation by rejecting volunteering. In saying so, they indicated participation would generate social costs. Thus, although class habitus does not rule out individual decision making, it necessitates singular trajectories must be ‘defined first in relation to a system of objective potentialities’ (Bourdieu, 1977, p. 76).

Bourdieu (1990) referred to instances where habitus was ill-adjusted to field as the hysteresis effect. He argued practices which were ‘natural and reasonable’ to one group could be ‘unthinkable and scandalous’ to another by virtue of the conditions of existence experienced by each group, leading to ‘different definitions of the impossible, the possible, and the probable’ (Bourdieu, 1977, p. 78). Friedman (2016) employed the concept to explore social mobility. Participants in his study experienced a rupture between their subjective dispositions and the objective conditions they found themselves in. He concluded his study by positing social mobility led to a ‘slew of hidden emotional injuries’ and left a ‘profound *psychological imprint*’ (Friedman, 2016, pp. 144, 145, emphasis in original). To paraphrase Bourdieu, the hysteresis effect is akin to a ‘fish out of water’. The habitus becomes ‘divided against itself’ (Bourdieu, 1999, p. 511) as it experiences a disjuncture between its dispositions and newfound position in social space, which calls the self-evidence of the world into question. In light of Williams’ (2003b, p.

539) contention that the culture of formal volunteering was 'alien' in deprived areas, it follows that those who participate this way may experience negative peer sanctions or unease about doing so. Habitus thus provides a way of analysing how the participants in this study experience volunteering in relation to group norms.

Bourdieu (1986) argued individuals were positioned in social space in accordance with the volume and composition of their 'social', 'economic', 'cultural' and 'symbolic capital'. Social capital exists in the resources that stem from membership of networks which can be used as resources. Economic capital is that which can be directly converted into money. Cultural capital exists in three states: i) its objectified form, a painting for example; ii) its institutionalised state, such as educational qualifications; and, iii) its embodied state, in the form of dispositions and preferences. Finally, symbolic capital is the form the other capitals take when recognised as legitimate (Bourdieu, 1989). The structure and distribution of capitals represent the structure of the social world. Furthermore, they create a 'set of constraints' such that 'everything is not equally possible or impossible' (Bourdieu, 1986, pp. 241-242). The structure and distribution of capitals are, thus, linked to the production and maintenance of social inequalities.

While economic capital can be transferred directly from one person to another, Bourdieu (1986) argued cultural capital, particularly in its embodied form, was hidden and thus had greater weight in the reproduction of inequalities. Like habitus, embodied cultural capital exists in the 'dispositions of the mind and body' and takes time to develop, 'time which must be personally invested by the investor' (Bourdieu, 1986, pp. 243, 244). Its acquisition is a largely unconscious process, accumulated through repeated exposure to cultural practices over a prolonged period of time. In relation to volunteering, cultural capital has implications for understanding how individuals and groups are enabled or hindered from accessing opportunities. Harflett (2015) argued the predominantly white, middle-class profile of National Trust volunteers could be understood by examining their cultural

capital. She contended her participants were engaged in a form of leisure volunteering through which they were able to extend their interest in heritage sites. During interviews, Harflett's participants often recounted long histories of visiting National Trust sites through which their interests were cemented. Harflett (2015, p. 15) concluded possession of this capital was important in enabling participation and therefore, by implication, not possessing the 'right kind of cultural tastes and preferences' could create barriers to participation in this environment.

Habitus, field and cultural capital provide a way of analysing how individuals are shaped by their circumstances and how their actions give rise to broader structures. They therefore facilitate an examination of how attitudes towards volunteering develop in the context of areas of multiple deprivation as well as the impact attitudes have on possibilities for volunteering. Furthermore, by enabling an analysis of the relationship between individual and collective dispositions, the concepts aid the analysis of how young people start volunteering in areas characterised by non-participation, as well as the social costs generated by going against the grain.

### *3.2.2 Issues of determinism and agency*

Although providing an influential account of the relationship between everyday practices and social structures (Webb, Schirato, & Danaher, 2002), Bourdieu's work has been criticised as deterministic. In light of this charge, scholars have argued his concepts do not facilitate understandings of conscious deliberation, the virtuosity of social actors, differences within social groups or social practice within late modern societies. This subsection will examine these criticisms and argue that, although issues exist within Bourdieu's work, his concepts have analytic utility in understanding how action is shaped by structures and how individuals respond to them. Accordingly, Bourdieu's concepts will be shown to have value in understanding attitudes towards and experiences of volunteering in deprived areas.

Charges of determinism levelled at habitus stem from the emphasis Bourdieu gave to constraints imposed by the objective conditions of existence (Reay, 2004b). Jenkins (1982, p. 270) characterised Bourdieu's approach as 'deterministic and circular – objective structures produce culture, which determines practice, which reproduces those objective structures'. He argued Bourdieu's framework produced conformity and posited the internalisation of the social world was less straightforward than Bourdieu contended. Furthermore, Bourdieu's (1977, p. 72) definition of habitus, as 'structured structures predisposed to function as structuring structures', has been criticised for framing an individual's relation to social structures as a process of unconscious internalisation (King, 2000). The epistemological weight Bourdieu granted objectivism is thus framed as a weakness of his approach, restricting individual agency.

Bourdieu argued habitus was 'not the fate that some people read into it', that it was 'durable but not eternal' (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992, p. 133). Farrugia and Woodman (2015, p. 631) contend the determinism critique has largely been 'discredited' and that such readings fail to account for Bourdieu's reconstruction of subjectivity as based on dispositions rather than cognitive rationality. Although Bourdieu may be guilty of 'overplay[ing] the unconscious impulses and aspect of habitus' (Reay, 2004b, p. 437), scholars have drawn attention to the internal conversations individuals have in accordance with their positions in social space (Farrugia & Woodman, 2015; Sayer, 2005). Sayer (2005) argued that although reflexive efforts to realise goals may be overridden by social structures, personal thoughts shape what individuals do within objective constraints. Thus, although structures weigh heavily on habitus, choice exists within it, even if it is 'bounded by the framework of opportunities and constraints' (Reay, 2004b, p. 435). As Bourdieu stressed, habitus is 'an *open system of dispositions*', it constantly encounters new experiences and responds to them 'in a way that either reinforces or modifies its structures' (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992, p. 133, emphasis in original).

The determinism King (2000, p. 426) charged Bourdieu with also led him to contend habitus effaces 'the virtuosity of social actors and the intersubjective nature of social reality'. He argued the unconscious internalisation of objective conditions eradicated the possibility of individuals and groups determining acceptable or prohibited actions based on their relations to one another. Yet, as discussed in the previous subsection, behaviours are accepted or challenged in fields based on their perceived fit with objective structures. Indeed, the 'coordination of habitus depends upon group dynamics' (Bottero, 2010, p. 13). Although habitus is written into individuals by social processes, these can be 'multiple, layered, intersecting and at times conflicting' (Akram & Hogan, 2015, pp. 608-609). For instance, scholars examining the experiences of working-class school pupils have argued tension and unease can develop in the habitus as students navigate the contrasting social spaces of formal education and peer networks (Reay, 2002; Stahl, 2015). Thus, rather than effacing the virtuosity of social actors, Stahl (2015, p. 31) contended habitus was an advantageous concept 'rooted in individuals having agency within ... social contexts, rather than just being passive recipients of social structures'. Accordingly, the 'dispositions composing the habitus are relational' (Sayer, 2005, p. 24), they are based on orientations towards people and objects and present opportunities for decision making and social change.

Another criticism stemming from the charge of determinism is the argument that Bourdieu ignores the 'internal differentiation and stratification' of social classes and that he 'underestimates the importance of the *possibility* of mobility' (Jenkins, 1982, p. 278, emphasis in original). Nash (1999, p. 178) argued there were two models of social reproduction in Bourdieu's work, the 'specific habitus' and the 'general habitus' models. The former suggests there must be more than one identifiable habitus in a class in order to understand the different trajectories individuals follow. The latter offers an explanation of the reproduction of a whole class without reference to individual circumstance. In this model, different trajectories are a matter of chance. Nash (1999, p. 178) argued the general model was 'ill-conceived'

while the specific model was 'most consistent with the overall theory'. Indeed, Bourdieu emphasised the singularity of habitus and the importance of early experiences and education to its development. Accordingly, although dispositions are shared by those 'subjected to similar social conditions', each person, and thus each habitus, has a 'unique trajectory' and thus 'internalizes a matchless combination of such schemata' (Wacquant, 2016, p. 67). Accordingly, by focusing on individual circumstances, it is possible to explore how individuals come to volunteer in areas characterised by non-participation.

Bourdieu's approach has also been criticised for being unable to explain everyday practice in late modern societies (Archer, 2012). As argued in subsection 3.1.3, changes during the final decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century were contended to have eroded the role of social structures in shaping individual trajectories. Following such alterations, individuals are compelled to make choices in the construction of their identities. In light of such debates, the notion of 'new' or 'reflexive' volunteering was proposed to capture increasingly individualised approaches to participation based on personal choice (see Table 3.1). Archer (2012, p. 1) argued that, since the 1980s, the 'imperative to be reflexive is becoming categorical for all'. She distanced herself from reflexive modernisation theorists, such as Beck (1992) and Giddens (1991), through her contention that reflexivity was not particular to late modern societies but had been present in different forms across time according to the conditions of the day. Archer (2012, p. 64) criticised Bourdieu's habitus as being increasingly irrelevant in contemporary Western societies, as the guidelines it provided were unsuitable for navigating the 'uncharted territory' thrown up by social changes.

Archer (2012, p. 13) likened habitus to 'communicative reflexivity', a form of reflexivity through which internal conversations require external validation before leading to action. She argued this form of reflexivity was increasingly costly in the contemporary era due to the 'shrinking pool of "similar and familiar"' (Archer,

2012, p. 86). In other words, social changes and the concurrent novel circumstances individuals encounter, reduce the extent to which they can fall 'back upon correlations between group members and action patterns' (Archer, 2012, p. 67) to guide behaviour. Accordingly, communicative reflexivity was considered best suited to circumstances where similarities were distributed across social classes and the utility of habitus was posited to decline as the conditions for communicative reflexivity eroded. In light of such changes, Archer argued individuals had to rely on personal deliberations to guide actions.

Critics of her approach, however, have questioned why it is that, if individuals rely on internal conversations to guide action at the expense of habitus, activities continue to be structured by factors such as social class (Farrugia & Woodman, 2015). The Literature Review, for instance, argued rates of volunteering were shaped by a variety of demographic factors and that participation was, at least in part, impacted by social context. Moreover, even if objective conditions alter, thus creating new possibilities for the reflexive monitoring of identities, it does not follow that deeply embedded dispositions will automatically cease shaping action (McNay, 1999). Rather than dispensing with the notion of dispositions, Farrugia and Woodman (2015) argued it was these that explained the persistence of inequalities. They contended 'heterogeneous embodied dispositions' were the 'sociological origins' guiding Archer's reflexives (Farrugia & Woodman, 2015, p. 642). Reflexivity does not, therefore, discredit the analytic utility of habitus, rather, the latter provides the backdrop from which the former can operate (Akram & Hogan, 2015). Habitus and reflexivity, therefore, 'coexist' in 'complex ways', mediated by an individual's position in social space (Adams, 2006, p. 524).

Despite being criticised as deterministic and unable to explain social action in the contemporary era, this subsection has argued habitus can be used to explore how individuals respond to the world around them in accordance with their positions in social space. Although critics have argued Bourdieu's concepts make it difficult to

understand the development of dispositions and attitudes that are at odds with objective conditions, those working with his tools contend it is possible to explore conscious deliberation and choice. This is not an unfettered choice, however, but one that is constrained by objective possibilities. Bourdieu's work, therefore, provides a way of exploring how young people relate to volunteering in areas where access to it appears objectively and subjectively restricted. His concepts enable an analysis of how those who volunteer experience doing so, as well as exploring the attitudes of those who do not in the context of area-based non-participation. Bourdieu's work emphasises 'the *primacy of relations*' between individuals and social structures (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992, p. 15, emphasis in original). The following section examines the concept of 'social capital', which is employed to further understand the role of relationships in shaping attitudes towards and experience of volunteering.

### **3.3 Theorising relationships**

In his analysis of the key authors associated with 'social capital', Field (2008, p. 1) argues the concept's central principle is that 'relationships matter'. In different ways, social capital has been configured as giving rise to benefits for individuals and communities. The concept crossed over from academic to policy debates during the 1990s (Farr, 2004; Farrell, 2007; Mohan & Mohan, 2002), becoming something of a 'buzzword' among politicians (Tlili & Obsiye, 2014, p. 522) and leading Woolcock (2010, p. 482) to argue it was 'unambiguously one of social science's most successful exports'. Although popularised at end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the concept has been traced back to the 19<sup>th</sup> century (Farr, 2004) and was (re)invented by unconnected scholars several times since (Woolcock, 2010). Today, social capital is most commonly associated with Bourdieu, Coleman and Putnam. It was the latter, however, whose work catapulted the term into the political limelight. Social capital gained salience among political actors searching for 'costless' (Mohan & Mohan, 2002, p. 191) and 'quick-fix solutions' (Leonard, 2004) and, like volunteering, was framed as a panacea for social issues (Farrell, 2007). However, the concept has been

subject to much criticism for its normative character, tautological reasoning and under theorisation of structures and power. Despite these criticisms, the concept, particularly its 'bonding' and 'bridging' dimensions, provides a way of analysing the nature and significance of social relationships. The first subsection starts by examining Bourdieu, Coleman and Putnam's approaches to social capital, the concept's influence in policy, and its limitations. The second subsection focuses on the distinction between bonding and bridging social capital and argues for their utility in understanding how participants' relationships presented opportunities and obstacles for volunteering, as well as the significance of relationships developed through volunteering.

### *3.3.1 Social capital*

Adkins (2005) identified two approaches to social capital, the social justice approach associated with Bourdieu and the integrationist approach associated with Coleman and Putnam. Bourdieu (1986) placed social capital alongside the other forms of capital and his theoretical tools to understand the making and maintenance of social inequalities. He argued social capital was a resource that could be used as credit by members of a network. Although social capital was available to all the members of a network, Bourdieu framed it as an individual attribute used to maintain positions in social space (Field, 2008). Bourdieu (1986) contended the volume of social capital possessed by an individual was contingent upon the size of the network they could mobilise and the amount of capital possessed by those to whom the individual was connected. Social capital was therefore an exclusive resource with the potential to reap benefits for members of a network while disadvantaging those outside it.

Although noting individual benefits, the integrationist approach generally frames social capital as a social glue that produces collective goods (Adkins, 2005). Coleman (1988) argued social capital existed in relations between actors and that it made possible the achievement of ends that would otherwise remain unfulfilled. He

argued social relations were useful resources and that in trustworthy environments obligations were more likely to be upheld. Furthermore, relationships could act as information channels and give rise to norms that restrict undesirable behaviour. The effective functioning of norms was posited to be contingent upon the extent to which members of a network were known to one another – closed rather than open networks – as closed networks were better placed to impose collective sanctions. Coleman argued social capital in the community and family were significant in the development of human capital. Social capital could, therefore, benefit individuals through the development of human capital and members of a community through the enforcement of norms and sanctions. Unlike Bourdieu, who saw social capital as integral to the production of inequalities, Coleman viewed it as a socially desirable phenomenon.

Putnam (2000), the ‘academic superstar’ of social capital (Woolcock, 2010, p. 474), also emphasised the positive aspects of social capital. Putnam argued that, since the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century, developments in employment, cities, electronic entertainment and generational change reduced the time individuals spent associating with others and decreased levels of social capital. He was pessimistic about this as he believed a well-connected society, one with high levels of social capital, was more productive than a society comprised of isolated individuals. Social capital was conceptualised as a positive force due to the norms of reciprocity and trustworthiness that arose from social relationships. Putnam (2000, pp. 20, 21) contended reciprocity could be both specific, ‘I’ll do this for you if you do that for me’, and generalised, ‘I’ll do this for you without expecting anything specific back from you, in the confident expectation that someone else will do something for me down the road’. He considered generalised reciprocity to be of greater value as it ‘lubricates social life’, meaning persons in a society ‘don’t have to balance every exchange instantly’, thereby enabling the accomplishment of a greater number of tasks (Putnam, 2000, p. 21). In addition to the production of collective goods, social capital could give rise to

individual benefits such as opportunities to meet people who may be able to provide help, companionship or information about employment.

Although Bourdieu has been argued to provide a more complex and contextualised account of social capital (Morrow, 1999), it is the integrationist approach, particularly the work of Putnam, that has received most attention. Following in the footsteps of de Tocqueville, Putnam saw volunteering as a way of reducing atomisation in society. Inspired by Putnam, New Labour adopted the term social capital in the early 2000s, viewing volunteering as a way of increasing it (Holmes, 2009). Furthermore, they believed social capital could regenerate communities and invoked it as a way of enabling ‘residents “to help themselves” overcome social problems’ (Roberts, 2004, p. 484). Putnam’s conception of social capital was also an impetus behind the Big Society project, playing into David Cameron’s desire for greater individual responsibility and a smaller government (Westwood, 2011). It also gained favour in the Scottish context. In the *Volunteering Strategy*, the then Scottish Executive (2004c) contended volunteering could develop social capital. More recently, volunteering has been used as a measure of social capital, argued to give rise to positive economic and wellbeing outcomes (Scottish Government, 2016c).

The relationship between volunteering and social capital, however, is not straightforward. Scholars have argued it is unclear exactly how social capital develops (Mohan & Mohan, 2002) and criticised the concept for its circular and tautological reasoning (Roberts & Devine, 2004; Woolcock, 2010). Farrell (2007) suggested that in order to move beyond this limitation, it was necessary to examine the conditions which developed and hindered social capital production. Doing so, however, reveals further issues with policy efforts to harness it. Both the voluntary sector and social capital are contingent upon financial support to grow (Westwood, 2011). For example, Lim and Laurence (2015) suggested the fall in volunteering following the 2007/8 recession was partly attributable to a lack of organisational

infrastructure, particularly in disadvantaged communities. Furthermore, although measures of social capital tend to be lower in more deprived areas, scholars have argued these are effects of material deprivation rather than lack of volunteering and that volunteering alone is unlikely to tackle social inequalities (McCulloch, Mohan, & Smith, 2012). The notion that social capital can compensate for lack of economic capital is therefore problematic (Leonard, 2004).

The lack of structural analysis in Putnam's account has been subject to criticism. In his conclusion to *Bowling Alone*, Putnam (2000, p. 414) contended 'institutional reform will not work – indeed it will not happen – unless you and I, along with our fellow citizens resolve to become reconnected with our friends and neighbors'. From a feminist perspective, Adkins (2005) argued the individual figured in social capital debates possessed the characteristic of a masculine actor, while Farrell (2007) criticised Putnam for underplaying issues relating to class, gender and ethnicity. Putnam fails to adequately analyse how economic processes inhibit the capacity individuals have for engaging in forms of associational life and developing social capital. For example, he contended the decline in labour unions was a result of 'cultural values among the young', yet did not acknowledge the 'enormous repression by the federal government and employers against unions' (Navarro, 2002, pp. 429-430).

Social capital has also been criticised for its conservative character (Navarro, 2002; Tlili & Obsiye, 2014). Adkins (2005) noted a normative family structure was presumed in social capital debates and that Putnam suggested declines in social capital were related to female entry into the labour market. Moreover, Coleman (1988, p. 111) contended parents must be both physically present and attentive to their children and described single-parent families as a 'structural deficiency'. Yet, he did not examine structural conditions which may limit the amount of time parents can spend with their children. The lack of structural analysis in social capital debates risks blaming individuals and communities for the problems they face,

rather than examining macro socio-economic conditions (Farrell, 2007). Researchers have also warned against a 'deficit model' of social capital through which marginalised young people are viewed as lacking or possessing negative social capital (Holland, Reynolds, & Weller, 2007). Indeed, the concept has been criticised for portraying young people as passive recipients of parental social capital (Morrow, 1999).

A further criticism levelled at social capital is the emphasis it places on beneficial aspects at the expense of analysing downsides (Mohan & Mohan, 2002). Just as scholars have noted voluntary associations can be deviant (Eng et al., 2016), social capital can also be put towards negative and non-democratic ends (van Deth et al., 2016). Moreover, while there might be high levels of social capital within groups, it does not necessarily follow that there will be high levels of trust between them (Mohan & Mohan, 2002). Furthermore, both being inside and outside a network may generate negative outcomes through the forceful imposition of norms upon members or the discrimination of non-members (Farrell, 2007). The following subsection examines how different dimensions of social capital can have varying implications for 'getting ahead' and 'getting by'.

### *3.3.2 Bonding and bridging social capital*

Putnam (2000) differentiated between 'bonding' and 'bridging social capital'. These dimensions provide a way of examining different patterns of social interaction (Jørgensen, 2017) and exploring attachments to communities (Walseth, 2008). The concepts have utility in this study as they provide a way of understanding the significance of relationships developed through volunteering as well as how peer networks shape opportunities for engaging in volunteering.

With a knack for metaphor, Putnam described bonding social capital as 'sociological superglue' and bridging social capital as 'sociological WD-40' (Putnam, 2000, p. 23). He characterised bonding social capital as exclusive, inward looking and reinforcing

shared identities among homogeneous groups. Bridging social capital, by contrast, was framed as inclusive, outward looking and contingent upon the formation of connections across diverse groups. Although he argued both could have positive effects, Putnam contended that, by facilitating in-group loyalty, bonding social capital could be antagonistic towards outsiders. He associated this form of social capital with marginalised groups, positing its effectiveness lay in enabling individuals to 'get by'. Bridging social capital, conversely, enabled individuals to 'get ahead' due to its capacity to link to external assets and information.

From a policy perspective, bridging social capital is argued to have greater utility than its bonding counterpart (Westwood, 2011). Volunteering initiatives, such as Project Scotland, promote bridging social capital through the notion that volunteering enables participants to 'make useful contacts', 'meet new people' and 'get on in life through volunteering'.<sup>22</sup> Such aims resonate with the notion that it is increasingly important for young people to be mobile in order to access educational and employment opportunities (France, 2016). Indeed the '*dark sides* of social capital are most likely to be observed in bonding, inward-looking, and isolated social networks' (van Deth et al., 2016, p. 187, emphasis in original). Researchers have reported tight-knit bonds among marginalised young people can limit future opportunities and social and spatial mobility (Bottrell, 2009; Holland et al., 2007; Reynolds, 2007). Moreover, negative attitudes towards education can be transmitted through bonding social capital (John, 2005) as can an impetus to engage in illicit behaviours (Bottrell, 2009). There is also evidence to suggest strong group connections, developed over time, can lead to the marginalisation of outsiders (Walseth, 2008). Individuals may, therefore, belong to groups whose norms militate against volunteering, while others may be connected to networks that facilitate certain forms of volunteering, yet reduce willingness to pursue opportunities beyond their immediate communities and create obstacles for outsiders to participate.

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<sup>22</sup> See <https://www.projectscotland.co.uk/volunteers/faqs/> (accessed 16 November 2017).

Assessments of bonding social capital as negative and bridging as positive, however, gloss over their complexity. Scholars have found bonding social capital to provide a buffer against exclusion and adverse circumstances (Bottrell, 2009; Jørgensen, 2017). Additionally, strong attachments to localised networks can generate a sense of belonging and identity (Reynolds, 2007), act as a source of self-esteem (Phillips, 2010) and strengthen pre-existing friendships (Walseth, 2008). Indeed the provision of a secure and supportive base has been found to offer opportunities to bridge out to new networks and environments (Holland et al., 2007). In a similar manner to the working-class mutual aid organisations of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, bonding social capital can have powerfully positive outcomes. Marginalised volunteers may coalesce around particular issues in communities to support one another, thereby developing their identities and sense of belonging. Furthermore, the provision of a secure base may provide volunteers with the support required to branch out to other ventures.

Despite Putnam's (2000, p. 24) assertion that bonding and bridging social capital were 'not interchangeable', their deployment in empirical work has revealed them to be 'interwoven and interdependent' (Holland et al., 2007, p. 113). In addition to bonding social capital providing a foundation from which to bridge out (Weller, 2007), one study found bridging out to new networks had the effect of reinforcing bonding social capital among participants who felt alienated in the new environment (Bottrell, 2009). Leonard (2004) argued Putnam's account failed to capture the complexity of bonding and bridging social capital. She challenged his notion that bridging social capital necessarily benefited communities by showing how it could favour individuals rather than collectives. In contrast to Putnam's optimistic view of reciprocity, Leonard reported some of her participants only helped those they felt were in a position to reciprocate. Accordingly, while bonding social capital could give rise to supportive benefits within communities, it could exclude those deemed unable to reciprocate.

As with Putnam's broader thesis, bonding and bridging social capital have been criticised for under analysing the role of social structures (Walseth, 2008). Morrow (2001) contended it was necessary to employ Bourdieu's other theoretical tools when assessing bonding and bridging social capital. Her point is illustrated in Bottrell's (2009) contention that the disadvantaged girls in her study did not lack bridging social capital but that the interplay of their social and cultural capital in a school environment led them to believe it was of little value. Similarly, Walseth (2008) described how two of her participants sought to bridge out to a new group but struggled to fit in due to cultural differences. These findings suggest the impact of bridging social capital is constrained by factors such as cultural capital and habitus. Indeed, Walseth's account of her participants' efforts resonates with Bourdieu's notion of the hysteresis effect. Accordingly, the use of Bourdieu's concepts alongside bonding and bridging social capital will enable a structurally sensitive analysis of opportunities for their development and outcomes.

### **3.4 Chapter conclusion**

This chapter has outlined the theoretical concepts to be employed in subsequent empirical chapters. The first section explored different approaches to volunteering, from mutual aid and philanthropy to the enhancement of democratic participation and development of citizenship qualities. Debates concerning the shift from traditional to new volunteerism were also analysed. It was argued that although there may exist an increased emphasis on volunteering for individualistic reasons in the contemporary era, such impulses were also evident in historical approaches to voluntary action. The second section examined Bourdieu's theoretical tools and their utility in understanding why some young people volunteer in areas characterised by non-participation while others do not. His framework was contended to provide a way of analysing how attitudes develop in relation to social structures and how certain activities, such as volunteering, become thinkable and unthinkable. Criticisms of his work as deterministic were also analysed. However, it

was argued that habitus could be used as a base from which reflexive thoughts could be understood within the confines of objective possibilities. The third section explored the concept of social capital as a way of analysing relationships as resources. Although criticised for underplaying the role of social structures, Putnam's distinction between bonding and bridging social capital was argued to be pertinent in understanding the implications of participants' relationships to their opportunities for and experiences of volunteering.

Taken together, these concepts will aid the analysis of participants' attitudes towards volunteering, the meanings it has for those who volunteer as well as the factors facilitating and inhibiting access to opportunities. Inquiring about participants' awareness of opportunities and discussing how volunteering is valued among peer networks will enable an analysis of how attitudes develop in the context of participants' social circumstances. Furthermore, asking about the processes by which participants started volunteering and how they experienced doing so will make it possible to understand individual trajectories as situated in broader group dispositions. The following chapter outlines the methodological approach adopted to address the research questions.

## 4 Methodological approach

This chapter outlines the methodological decisions that were made in order to empirically address the research questions. It starts with an account of the critical realist approach that provided a framework through which the findings of the thesis could be conceptualised. It also provides a justification for the use of a qualitative methodology as well as a discussion of the pilot study and the rationale behind the use of focus groups and interviews. Following this, an account of the processes by which research sites were identified is offered as is a description of the organisations used to recruit participants and the areas in which they were located. The chapter then discusses my positionality as the researcher and the process of data collection and analysis, paying attention to the ethical considerations made before, during and after the fieldwork, as well as the composition of focus groups and characteristics of participants.

### 4.1 Paradigmatic considerations

This section is divided into two parts. The first provides an overview of the critical realist paradigm that informed the research. The second details the rationale behind the deployment of a qualitative approach.

#### 4.1.1 *Critical realism*

Research paradigms are ‘overarching conceptual construct[s]’ used by scientists to make sense of the world (Crotty, 1998, p. 35). They facilitate analyses of ‘the social experiences of people and the social world within which social life occurs’ (Blaikie, 2007, p. 3). Blaikie (2007) contends differences between paradigmatic approaches are based on variations on their ontological and epistemological assumptions. Ontological matters are those which concern themselves with ‘the nature of reality’, while epistemological ones relate to questions of ‘the theory of knowledge’ (Delanty & Strydom, 2003, pp. 6, 4). Two contrasting perspectives characterise ontological matters: the first is idealism, which contends the world has no existence

beyond our thoughts; the second is realism, which posits natural and social phenomena exist independently of human thought (Blaikie, 2007). Epistemological assumptions are characterised as constructivism, the idea that meanings are constructed through social interaction, and objectivism, the belief that there is a reality that is independent of human consciousness (Gray, 2014). Objectivist approaches, such as positivism, are predicated on the belief that, through research, it is possible to grasp objective meanings, while constructivist approaches view research as part of the social process through which meanings are ascribed and remade (Crotty, 1998).

As discussed in the Literature Review and Theory Chapter, various attitudes are held about volunteering which has historically been framed in different ways, thereby indicating it does not have an objective meaning that can be grasped. Indeed, the different motivations and benefits associated with volunteering suggest its meaning is made and remade through social interaction and in accordance with policy interventions. The relationship between policy interventions and attitudes, however, suggests volunteering is not solely the product of human thought, as in the idealist ontology, but is shaped by organisations, institutions and human action, thus existing beyond individual thought. Accordingly, there is an interplay between individual perceptions and the social structures that influence them. Furthermore, statistical patterns of volunteering (see subsection 2.1.2) suggest there is a reality independent of human consciousness that shapes voluntary action. Volunteering thus appears structured by an objective reality and socially constructed by human agents. In light of these considerations, a paradigmatic approach was required that was sensitive to both objective structures and subjective dispositions. One such approach was critical realism, defined by Maxwell (2012, p. 11) as ‘ontological realism plus epistemological constructivism’.

Critical realism is associated with the work of (Bhaskar, 2008 [1975], p. 24), who argued an ‘adequate philosophy of science’ must be attentive to the social nature of

interpretation and must maintain the independence of these interpretations from the objects of interpretation. Bhaskar referred to these aspects as the transitive and intransitive dimensions of science; the former concerns theories and knowledge produced by humans about the world, the latter objects and structures that exist independently of human activity and have causal powers. This distinction means that, through social research, social scientists construe rather than construct the social world (Sayer, 2000). The results of this thesis, for instance, are an interpretation of the social phenomena under investigation, yet not the only one. The independence of the transient and intransient dimensions is highlighted by the fact that, should a different interpretation be placed on an area of study, the social phenomena itself will not necessarily change.

To comprehend the nature of lived experience, critical realists argue reality is stratified into three layers – the real, the actual and the empirical – which provide ontological depth and facilitate analyses of the conditions which make experience possible (Archer, 1998). The real is that which exists regardless of whether individuals are conscious of it and can be both naturally occurring and socially constructed; the actual refers to that which happens when the powers of the real are activated; and, the empirical constitutes human experience but does not depend on knowledge of the real or actual (Delanty, 2005; Sayer, 2000). In relation to volunteering, the real denotes objects such as institutions which provide funding to youth organisations, as well as organisations themselves. Furthermore, it refers to individuals who, by virtue of their socialisation and physicality, are capable of volunteering, even if this power has not been activated. The actual is what happens when these powers are activated and people start volunteering, while the empirical concerns observable experiences of volunteering.

Unlike positivism, which relies on direct experience of the observable (Crotty, 1998), critical realism, by accepting causality, enables claims to be made about unobservable structures (Sayer, 2000). This is possible through the concept of

generative mechanisms – causal laws that are ‘contingent and emergent’ rather than deterministic (Delanty, 2005, p. 147) – which may be exercised or not independently of human awareness of them (Bhaskar & Lawson, 1998). Generative mechanisms operate in open and heterogeneous systems which produce tendencies rather than hard determinism (Houston, 2001). The task critical realism sets itself is to uncover the generative mechanisms operating in the world (Delanty, 2005). The ontological depth it offers, therefore, provides a framework for exploring how and why some young people volunteer in deprived areas while others do not.

The acceptance of causality and contention that all experiences ‘are conditional upon antecedents’ introduces an element of historicity, however small the time period, into the critical realist framework (Archer, 1998, p. 196). For example, in order for an individual to volunteer, there must be an opportunity in an organisation. Furthermore, the organisation may be dependent on funding which presupposes the existence of available financial support which, itself, necessitates the existence of another organisation or donor etc. The contingency of action upon history and society leads to a rejection of methodological individualism, the belief that social phenomena can be explained ‘solely in terms of facts about individuals’ (Bhaskar, 1979, p. 27). Rather than reducing the social to the individual, Bhaskar (1979, p. 35, emphasis in original) argued society and human practice possessed dual characters:

Society is both the ever-present *condition* (material cause) and the continually reproduced *outcome* of human agency. And praxis is both work, that is, conscious *production*, and (normally unconscious) *reproduction* of the conditions of production, that is society.

In a manner that echoes Bourdieu’s theory of practice (see section 3.2), Bhaskar contends society is both the cause and result of human behaviour and that the latter produces the former while also being reproduced by it. Experiences of

volunteering are, therefore, contingent upon pre-existing social conditions that facilitate them. These social conditions, however, do not exist outside human agency, but are formed through it. There is, thus, a mode of dialectic thinking which seeks to overcome the central dichotomies in social science. A critical realist approach was considered pertinent to this study in light of its ability to provide an overarching conceptual framework sensitive to the socially structured nature of experience and the opportunities this presents for human agency. The following section outlines the relationship between critical realism and the methodological approach adopted.

#### *4.1.2 A qualitative approach*

There are two methodological approaches available to social researchers: qualitative and quantitative (Bryman, 2008; Hennink, Hutter, & Bailey, 2011). The former relies on relatively small samples, aims for detailed understandings of how and why people think or act in the ways they do and seeks to understand how individuals interpret the world rather than attempting to grasp an objective reality. The latter uses larger samples, attempts to generalise findings to broader populations and emphasises the existence of an external and objective social reality. Although qualitative methods are often associated with a constructionist epistemology and quantitative ones with an objectivist one, this division is 'far from justified' (Crotty, 1998, p. 15). For example, a critical realist informed use of qualitative methods can capture various perspectives (constructions) while maintaining that these refer to a real (objective) world (Maxwell, 2012).

A central tenet of critical realism is the notion that 'society is an open system' (Archer, 1998, p. 190). In open systems, the same causal power can generate multiple outcomes in accordance with the multiple structures and mechanisms shaping action (Sayer, 2000). As Houston (2001, p. 851, emphasis in original) noted, researchers and individuals 'can only ever have a *transitive* view of the world'. Resultantly, in open systems, 'it is not just the researchers but the inhabitants who

engage in thought experiments and put them into practice' (Archer, 1998, p. 190). A critical realist approach therefore requires a methodology that can capture the 'openness' of social life (Roberts, 2014, p. 4). The emphases qualitative methods place on understanding the meanings individuals attribute to things (Braun & Clarke, 2013) and their efforts to capture 'how things work in particular contexts' (Mason, 2002, p. 1) make them suitable to a critical realist informed approach to researching young people's attitudes and experiences of volunteering.

As discussed in the Literature Review, volunteering escapes neat classification both in policy and research. Hardill, Baines, and Perri 6 (2007, p. 401) argued that although quantitative methods provide valuable information about patterns of volunteering, they struggle to capture its 'complexity'. Similarly, the tables and figures presented throughout the Literature Review were pertinent to identifying differences between groups, but not for understanding why they exist (O'Reilly, Ronzoni, & Dogra, 2013). The need for a qualitative approach is further highlighted by the fact that there exists a comparatively small amount of qualitative studies about young people and volunteering, particularly for younger youth.<sup>23</sup>

Despite their absence in studies of youth volunteering, qualitative approaches are 'particularly suitable for doing research with children' (Greig, Taylor, & MacKay, 2007, p. 137). Scholars have argued quantitative methods can be inappropriate for younger youth who may need help completing questionnaires (O'Reilly et al., 2013) and that their standardised nature is at odds with the intention of 'understanding how children themselves construe and negotiate their worlds' (Greene & Hill, 2005, p. 13). Qualitative methods also provide a certain level of freedom, unavailable in quantitative approaches, to explore factors children raise during the fieldwork (O'Reilly et al., 2013). This 'flexibility' is an advantage in critical realist studies as it aids the gathering of information about the 'unique causal mechanisms in a particular context' (Roberts, 2014, p. 6).

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<sup>23</sup> Recent notable exceptions include Judge (2015), Nenga (2012) and Shannon (2009).

Hennink et al. (2011, p. 17) summarised qualitative research as seeking to provide an ‘in-depth’ understanding of behaviours and beliefs, as well as identifying ‘processes’ and understanding ‘the context of people’s experiences’. These aims align with the intention of critical realism to uncover the generative mechanisms that provide the conditions for human experience. A qualitative approach also supports the aim of understanding how young people’s attitudes and experiences of volunteering relate to the social contexts in which they are positioned. The following section provides a rationale for the specific qualitative methods used during the fieldwork.

## **4.2 Research methods**

Focus groups and semi-structured interviews were selected to generate data about different cohorts of participants’ attitudes and experiences towards volunteering. Semi-structured interviews were also chosen to gather information from youth workers about the broader factors shaping opportunities for volunteering. This section discusses the pilot study that was conducted to test the suitability of the methods and to develop their design. It then provides rationales for the use of focus groups and interviews as deployed in the main study.

### *4.2.1 Pilot study*

Prior to undertaking the main fieldwork, a pilot study was conducted between April and August 2015. The aim was to trial the methods, reflect on their positives and negatives and refine the instruments of data collection. Focus groups and interviews with young people were conducted at four research sites, each of which was located in an area of multiple deprivation. The characteristics of participants are shown in Table 4.1. In addition to this, two interviews were conducted with youth workers.

Table 4.1 Pilot study participants

<b>Organisation</b>	<b>No. participants</b>	<b>Age</b>	<b>Age</b>	<b>Status</b>
Pilot Group 1	9	13-18	Mixed	Volunteers
Pilot Group 2	3	13-18	Mixed	Volunteers
Pilot Group 3	4	12-15	Mixed	Volunteers
Pilot Group 4	4	16-17	Male	Non-volunteers

During focus groups, participants were asked about their understandings and attitudes of volunteering, how and why they started volunteering, what they enjoyed about it and whether there were things that made it difficult to engage with. To aid the process of understanding opportunities and possibilities for volunteering in their areas, a mapping exercise was conducted. Maps were generated depicting the areas where organisations were located and participants were asked to discuss volunteering opportunities they were aware of, as well as their accessibility. Although some participants pinpointed volunteer-involving organisations, others struggled to orientate themselves. Moreover, discussions tended to focus on distances between various organisations, meaning the exercise did not facilitate much conversation about the social or cultural factors facilitating or inhibiting access to opportunities. In light of this, the mapping aspect was not utilised during the main study.

Discussions during focus groups generated good data in relation to the research questions. However, the decision to conduct mixed groups appeared to constrain the input of certain participants. For example, Pilot Group 3 was comprised of three males and one female, the latter of whom did not contribute despite my efforts to include her. When interviewed individually, however, the participant had much to discuss. On reflection, it appeared the gender dynamics within the focus group may have restricted her comfort or willingness to take part in the discussion. Similarly, the wide age range of participants in Pilot Group 1 appeared to constrain the willingness of younger participants to contribute. Accordingly, during the main study, age and gender specific focus groups were sought.

Following the focus groups, participants were invited to take part in individual photo-elicitation interviews, designed to gain deeper insight into their individual experiences of volunteering. Those who offered to take part were asked to take photographs of things relating to their volunteering experiences – such as places, buildings, methods of transport, things they considered significant – which would be used as discussion prompts.<sup>24</sup> During the pilot, I conducted four follow-up interviews with participants at Pilot Group 3. Unfortunately, none of the participants had undertaken the photo task. This was partly due to timing – only a week had passed between the fieldwork encounters – but also to participants forgetting about it. As the photographic aspect had not been trialled during the pilot, it was not included in the main study. Moreover, because participants had forgotten about it, it was felt that it may have been too big of an ask to request they take part in a focus group, photographic activity and individual interview. Despite this, the individual interviews generated further and more personal insights than the focus group had, and were thus considered valuable additions to the research approach.

Participatory methods, such as participant generated photo-elicitation interviews, are often praised for their capacity to empower young people by giving them a greater role in shaping the research process and giving them the space to reflect on issues that are close to them (Guillemin & Drew, 2010). Indeed, it was for such reasons that they were included in the pilot study. My experience, however, suggests they may not be suited to all research projects and that their deployment is contingent upon the interactions between researchers and participants. As discussed below, my positionality as the researcher presented various opportunities and obstacles during fieldwork encounters. Perhaps more time spent developing rapport with participants prior to conducting fieldwork would have presented greater opportunities for the use of participatory methods. Yet, in the context of

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<sup>24</sup> Ethical approval for the photographic activity was sought and granted from the University of Strathclyde.

this study, focus groups and interviews were satisfactory approaches for generating data to address the research questions.<sup>25</sup>

Interviews with youth workers generated strong insights into issues relating to supporting young people to volunteer, as well as the role they felt volunteering played in helping young people come to terms of challenging personal circumstances. One of the youth workers described how she felt a young person had come to terms with their sexuality through support they received while volunteering. Additionally, she described how volunteering had helped a 'very ... vulnerable' female stay on 'the straight and narrow', despite 'negative influence[s]' in her life. Such comments indicated volunteering had the potential to generate sensitive and emotional feelings that could be inappropriate for group discussions. Accordingly, they reinforced the importance of supplementing focus groups with one-to-one interviews.

Based on the pilot study, both focus groups and individual interviews were considered valuable methods for researching young people's attitudes and experiences of volunteering. While the mapping exercise was dropped, due to the emphasis it gave to physical rather than social or cultural dimensions of volunteering, and the photographic activity not included, due to the inability to test its suitability, verbal discussions provided valuable insights into how volunteering was experienced. In light of demographic factors shaping engagement during the pilot, participants in the main study were recruited to age and gender specific focus groups. Interview guides were also refined with a greater emphasis placed on the social and cultural aspects of participation. The following sections provide rationales for the use of focus groups and interviews as deployed in the main study.

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<sup>25</sup> This is not to say that they were conducted unproblematically. See section 4.4 for a discussion of my positionality as the researcher and issues encountered during the fieldwork.

#### *4.2.2 Focus groups*

Focus groups were selected on the basis that they offer insight into how individuals collectively make sense of, and attribute meaning to, a particular phenomenon (Bryman, 2008). A hallmark of focus group research is the 'explicit use of the group interaction to produce data and insights that would be less accessible without the interaction found in a group' (Morgan, 1988, p. 12). The experiences of the group are thus foregrounded, enabling an exploration of the development of ideas in a social setting and an examination of shared experience (Breen, 2006). As shown in the Literature Review, not only were rates of volunteering shaped by demographic factors, such as age and gender, but so too were motivations and benefits. This indicates attitudes and experiences are influenced by the different experiences of various groups. The ability of focus groups to facilitate a 'synergy that individuals alone don't possess' (Krueger & Casey, 2000, p. 24) makes them a highly pertinent method for understanding how different groups of young people relate to and experience volunteering.

As the 'group is the fundamental unit of analysis' (Morgan, 1988, p. 64), focus groups have the added benefit of enabling an analysis of attitudes towards volunteering in relation to the collective habitus of a particular group. Recruiting young people to focus groups comprised of those with shared social characteristics has been found to provide a useful way of exploring how experiences, practices and understandings were informed by the habitus (Merryweather, 2010). Callaghan (2005, 1.2) argued focus groups could provide insight into the habitus because they can 'act as a milieu for habitus to be drawn upon as a resource'. The expectations and experiences participants bring to focus groups can have the effect of socially moderating discussions revealing normative views among the cohort in question (Hennink & Leavy, 2014). Recruiting participants with shared characteristics to specific focus groups enabled an examination of the relationship between volunteering and habitus in accordance with varying demographic factors.

Participant homogeneity is not only important for analytic purposes, but also the comfort of those taking part and, relatedly, the extent to which they feel willing to share their opinions and experiences (Krueger & Casey, 2000). Peek and Fothergill (2009) described how focus groups can have a socially supportive function through which participants develop a sense of solidarity with those who share similar experiences. Moreover, positive group dynamics can embolden participants to share things that might not otherwise have been disclosed in the context of individual interviews and the social aspect of focus groups mirrors the way in which 'attitudes and perceptions are developed in part by interaction with others' (Peek & Fothergill, 2009, p. 47). The method can therefore be said to be closer to 'everyday social interactions' than one-to-one interviews as participants are 'essentially discussing the issues among themselves rather than directly with an interviewer' (Hennink & Leavy, 2014, p. 5).

The group aspect of this method can provide the 'perception of safety in numbers' (Merryweather, 2010, 2.11). This aspect has been reported to make focus groups 'more natural' and 'less intrusive' than individual interviews, thus providing opportunities to gain 'deeper' insights into the experiences of participants (Överlien, Aronsson, & Hydén, 2005, p. 342). Such depth is particularly important in critical realist informed research as it provides opportunities for understanding the conditions which provide the basis for experiences. In addition to providing opportunities to gain deeper insights, the collective element of focus groups can reduce the pressure on each participant to respond (Hennessy & Heary, 2005), thereby reducing the power imbalance.

In light of these issues, focus groups have been noted for their suitability in research with young people. Unequal power relations, resulting from the different social positions adults and young people occupy, are a notable issue in research with young people (Raby, 2007). In light of their capacity to provide a secure space and sense of comfort (Peek & Fothergill, 2009), particularly if conducted with existing

friendship groups (Gallagher, 2009a), focus groups are one way of being sensitive to such issues. Focus groups were therefore considered an appropriate method to use based on their suitability for research with young people and their ability to elicit group attitudes and generate deep data.

In light of the demographic differences discussed in the Literature Review and the importance of homogeneously composed focus groups, focus groups were sought based on age, gender and experience of volunteering. A purposive sampling strategy was employed to ensure the participants recruited to the study were best placed to help address the research questions (Creswell, 2009). In keeping with guidelines (Gibson, 2007), groups comprised of four to six participants were sought. Table 4.2 outlines the eight separate cohorts of young people that were sought at the design stage of the research.

Table 4.2 Focus groups sought during fieldwork

<b>Gender</b>	<b>Age</b>	<b>Volunteer</b>	<b>Non-volunteer</b>
Male	12-15	✓	✓
	16-18	✓	✓
Female	12-15	✓	✓
	16-18	✓	✓

Age brackets were employed on the basis of evidence indicating the increasing salience of employability motives (see Table 2.2) and benefits (see Table 2.3) as young people reach 16 years of age. Furthermore, 16 is the age at which young people in Scotland can legally leave school and enter full-time employment. Accordingly, it was anticipated that dividing groups on these grounds would enable analyses of attitudinal changes at different stages of young people’s lives. Regarding gender, females have been found to volunteer in greater proportions than males (see Figure 2.2) and in different types of organisations (see Figure 2.3) as well as to cite motivations (see Table 2.2) and benefits (see Tables 2.3 and 2.4) in different ways. In addition to this, data from the 2016 wave of the *Young People in Scotland*

survey indicated male non-volunteers were more likely to report they would not be interested in volunteering in the future compared to their female counterparts. In light of these considerations, there were good reasons to assume male and female participants would express different attitudes and have different experiences of volunteering. It was on these grounds that it was considered important to have gender specific focus groups.

Participants were also categorised into different groups based on their experiences of volunteering. Volunteers were defined as those who were currently engaged in formal volunteering activities as defined in subsection 2.1.1. For example, young people who, at the time of the fieldwork, were volunteering at youth organisations, schools or undertaking initiatives with volunteering components such as the Duke of Edinburgh were considered volunteers. Non-volunteers were defined as those who were not engaged in any of the aforementioned activities at the time of the fieldwork. A shortcoming of this approach was that those categorised as non-volunteers might have prior experience of volunteering. However, it was anticipated ex-volunteers would still be able to contribute to group discussions relating to attitudes and barriers with participants who shared similar age and gender characteristics.

Separate interview guides were prepared for volunteers and non-volunteers to elicit information to address the research questions (see Appendix 3). Volunteers were asked about their attitudes and understandings of volunteering, what they did when they volunteered, with whom they volunteered, what it meant to them, how and why they started and whether there was anything that made it difficult for them to volunteer. Non-volunteers were also asked about their attitudes towards volunteering as well as their awareness of opportunities and the factors that reduced their capacity to volunteer. To encourage discussion of attitudes towards volunteering five cue cards, containing phrases used in the 2014 wave of the *Young People in Scotland* survey to describe volunteering, were prepared – ‘helping people

out', 'a way to develop skills and experience', 'a way to make friends', 'boring', and 'a bit goody-goody'. These were selected on the grounds that they represented different ways of framing volunteering and could be used to explore approaches that were important to participants, or not. Although these items were used to guide the focus groups, they did not rigidly dictate the order of the discussions (David & Sutton, 2004) nor inhibit participants from raising issues they felt were salient to the topic at hand.

#### 4.2.3 *Individual interviews*

As discussed, the group dynamic inherent in focus group discussions is beneficial when seeking to understand how a particular cohort approaches an issue. Yet, their 'quasi-public' nature can lead some to feel embarrassed about sharing personal beliefs (Merton, Lowenthal, & Kendall, 1956, p. 147) and pre-existing group dynamics can negatively impact the contributions participants make (Gallagher, 2009a). The differing dynamics of focus groups and interviews can make the latter more appropriate for exploring sensitive aspects of a topic (Michell, 1999). In light of such concerns, it was also considered necessary to supplement focus groups with one-to-one interviews. Braun and Clarke (2013, p. 77, emphasis in original) defined qualitative interviewing as:

[A] "professional conversation" ... with the goal of getting a participant to talk about *their* experiences and perspectives, and to capture *their* language and concepts, in relation to a topic that *you* have determined.

Kvale (1996) also likened qualitative interviews to conversations and argued they could be conceived as a technique through which the interaction between researcher and participant constructs knowledge. Warren (2001, p. 83) similarly viewed interviews as a 'guided conversation' and emphasised that participants ought to be viewed as 'meaning makers' rather than 'passive conduits' through which information could be extracted. Although Braun and Clarke's definition

highlights the invitation participants are given to discuss *'their experiences'* in *'their language'*, this is not the same as positivistic efforts to grasp objective meaning (Crotty, 1998). Rather, qualitative interviewing resonates with the critical realist contention that the process of research is always social and that it is only possible to generate transitive knowledge about the phenomena under investigation.

An advantage of individual interviews is that considerable depth can be achieved when exploring a participant's views on a particular topic (Legard, Keegan, & Ward, 2003). This is particularly valuable in relation to the notion that focus group discussions do not necessarily represent the perspectives of all participants (Hennink & Leavy, 2014). For instance, while focus groups with male non-volunteers offer a way of understanding how this group relates to volunteering, the finding that males are less likely to volunteer and more likely to say they would not be interested in volunteering (Linning & Jackson, 2017) raises the issue that group dispositions may restrict the expression of favourable attitudes towards volunteering – particularly as boys can be reluctant to admit vulnerabilities in front of their peers (Carey & Asbury, 2012). Individual expression may also be hindered in focus groups due to the social statuses of participants. Michell (1999) found the 'lower status' girls in her fieldwork were withdrawn during focus groups but talkative when interviewed individually. Combining focus groups with interviews can therefore reveal information that would remain hidden if only one method were deployed (Eder & Fingerson, 2001).

Indeed, while certain topics may appear 'fairly innocuous' on the surface, they have the potential to become 'highly sensitive' if the discussion triggers a 'strong emotional response' (Legard et al., 2003, p. 162). For instance, as discussed by a youth worker during the pilot study, volunteering can have a role in helping individuals come to terms with challenging personal circumstances that may not be suitable to group discussion. In order to gain a detailed understanding of why participants volunteered and what it meant to them, it was therefore considered

necessary to use interviews in order to provide greater space for the discussion of personal matters.

In addition to facilitating detailed discussions with volunteers, interviews were also essential for understanding the perspectives of non-volunteers. Eder and Fingerson (2001) argue interviews are particularly useful for researching topics that do not occur regularly in participants' lives and are thus not readily amenable to observation. They can therefore be used to study non-motivations, i.e. why non-volunteers do not volunteer, as well as motivations (Fielding & Thomas, 2008). Interviews were considered valuable in this respect as they provided a forum in which personal, and potentially more sensitive, reasons for not volunteering could be expressed.

Supplementing focus groups with interviews was also considered important in relation to the theoretical framework. As noted in the section 3.2, the habitus is shaped in relation to group norms stemming from shared positions in social space. Yet, each habitus internalises a matchless set of experiences and follows a unique trajectory. Focus groups provide a way of examining the collective attitudes of different cohorts of young people, while interviews offer a way of exploring individual histories of volunteering. Used in conjunction, these methods were deemed suitable for analysing the conditions which led to the inclusion of volunteering in a participants' habitus and those that did not.

Informed by the notion that conducting follow-up interviews with focus group participants can yield additional insights into how a phenomenon is experienced (Michell, 1999), the decision was made to ask focus group participants if they were willing to take part in an additional one-to-one interview. Scholars have contended there are no hard-and-fast rules concerning what constitutes a sufficient sample size in qualitative interviewing, instead stressing the importance of research design and the suitability of participants to addressing the research questions (Bryman,

2008; Hennink et al., 2011). In addition to the focus groups, it was considered that conducting individual interviews with two participants in each of the eight categories in Table 4.2 would generate enough data to adequately address the research questions. Interview guides were prepared covering similar ground to the focus group guides, however greater emphasis was placed upon individual experiences such as the benefits volunteers received and issues surrounding non-volunteers' non-participation.

Youth workers and teachers were also invited to take part in interviews. The purpose of these interviews was to provide a wider perspective on the challenges and opportunities shaping young people's possibilities for volunteering. It was considered that their perspectives would add 'ontological depth' to the data by providing information about the 'real' and 'actual' – such as the organisational factors shaping opportunities for volunteering – and their impact on young people's experiences at the level of the 'empirical' (Sayer, 2000, p. 15). The inclusion criteria for youth workers were that they worked as volunteer coordinators or in similar roles in youth organisations, local government or educational institutions. As these interviews were intended to supplement the accounts provided by young participants, it was considered that a total of five to six interviews would be sufficient. Interview guides were prepared with questions focusing on the nature of the activities provided, the perceived merits and shortcomings of their approaches, whether and why they thought it was important for young people to volunteer and the wider issues they felt impacted opportunities for volunteering. Having provided a rationale for the methods used to generate data, the following section outlines the process by which organisations were identified.

### **4.3 Research sites and organisations**

This section provides an account of the process through which the research sites were identified. It also provides a description of the organisations that took part in

the study, as well as information on the socio-economic characteristics of the areas in which they were based.

#### *4.3.1 Identifying research sites*

As shown in subsection 2.1.2, rates of volunteering are reported to be lower in deprived areas. Glasgow was shown to have notably high levels of deprivation and lower than average levels of volunteering and making it a suitable locality from which to identify research sites. Indeed, at the time of the fieldwork, 48 percent of the city was classified as falling within the 20 percent ‘most deprived’ areas as assessed by the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) – a higher proportion than any other local authority area in Scotland (Scottish Government, 2016a). This subsection critically examines the SIMD’s approach to measuring deprivation as well as the process by which research sites were identified.

The SIMD’s methodology was developed by the Social Disadvantage Research Centre (2003) at Oxford University and is based on Townsend’s (1987) definition of deprivation as a ‘multi-dimensional and relative’ phenomenon (Scottish Executive, 2004b, p. 5). The index divides Scotland into 6,976 ‘data zones’, small geographic areas each comprised of 760 persons, which can be used to identify areas where inhabitants experience multiple deprivations (Scottish Government, 2016a).<sup>26</sup> The following indicators are used to position data zones on a scale from most to least deprived: income; employment; health; education, skills and training; geographic access to services; crime; and housing. A total of 28 domains are used to generate a score for each of the indicators. These scores are weighted based on theoretical considerations and the robustness of available data.<sup>27</sup> This information is then used to rank each data zone from 1 (most deprived) to 6,976 (least deprived) (Scottish Government, 2016d).

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<sup>26</sup> This differs from the English approach which uses larger ‘lower-layer super output areas’ comprised of roughly 1,500 residents (Department for Communities and Local Government, 2015).

<sup>27</sup> Theoretically, the income and employment domains were considered most important. Although some data sources were more robust than others, only those considered ‘sufficiently robust’ were included (Social Disadvantage Research Centre, 2003, p. 36).

In their analysis of shortcomings of the English Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD), Deas, Robson, Wong, and Bradford (2003) raised a number of issues which read across to the Scottish context. They argued that, due to the weighting used, the significance of benefit claimants is overemphasised at the expense of wider forms of deprivation. Similarly, in the SIMD, the income and employment domains, which are compiled using data about benefits recipients, constitute 56 percent of each data zone's overall score. Furthermore, Deas et al. (2003) also note that measures of the physical environment are excluded. Levels of air pollution, for example, are not included in the SIMD, yet carry negative implications for health and wellbeing.<sup>28</sup> There are also issues with the ways in which access to goods and services are assessed. As with the SIMD, Deas et al. (2003) argue the IMD focuses on physical distance thus ignoring questions about socio-cultural constraints on access as well as the quality of available services. For example, living near a good GP surgery is not the same as using it and attending a high performing school located some distance away clearly has merits that attending a low performing school nearby does not. In addition to these limitations, the focus on objective measures obscures subjective experiences such as the nature of residents' relationships or health concerns that are not officially recorded. Despite these limitations, the SIMD provided a way of identifying areas that experienced multiple deprivations and in which volunteering rates were low.

The SIMD has an online interactive mapping tool which was used to locate organisations.<sup>29</sup> Youth organisations as well as educational institutions were searched for using an online search engine. The types of the organisations I searched for were youth clubs, community centres, youth charities, sports organisations, schools and colleges. Youth and sports based organisations were

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<sup>28</sup> Data from the World Health Organisation indicates air pollution in Glasgow exceeds safety levels (see <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-scotland-glasgow-west-36274801> accessed 08 December 2017).

<sup>29</sup> See <http://simd.scot/2016/#/simd2016/> (accessed 08 December 2017).

chosen on the grounds that these types of organisations reflected, respectively, female and male volunteer interests (see Figure 2.3). At this stage of the research, I kept note of organisations that appeared to involve young people as volunteers based on information available on their websites and social media profiles. The postcodes of potentially suitable organisations were entered into the online mapping tool and those which fell with the 'most deprived' areas were recorded. Potential research sites were only contacted once ethical approval had been granted. Initially, contact was made by email and telephone and visits arranged to discuss the research further. During these visits it became apparent that some of the organisations I identified were not appropriate due to the age range of the young people who frequented them or, conversely, the lack of young attendees. In other instances, these visits provided an opportunity to interact with youth workers and young people, offering opportunities to develop rapport.

Making contact with educational institutions proved notably more challenging than youth organisations. Schools were initially approached via email then telephone calls. Some schools were quick to inform me they were unable to assist, either because they were too busy or because they had received other requests for research. This may have been related to what Clark (2008) refers to as 'research fatigue', the feeling of being over-researched. Where schools did offer to take part in the research, I requested to visit potential participants prior to conducting the fieldwork to introduce myself and the project. Due to time restrictions, however, the members of staff contacted said this would not be feasible, meaning the fieldwork encounters were the first time the participants and I met. A more detailed discussion of the process of conducting the fieldwork is presented in section 4.4. The following section provides quantitative and qualitative information on the organisations recruited to the study.

### 4.3.2 Organisations

Table 4.3 provides information on the overall SIMD position of each of the 16 research sites as well as their scores in relation to the seven indicators. As can be seen, the majority had low scores across the indicators, with the exception of geographic access to services. The table also shows that two organisations, Sports Charity 2 and Local Government Organisation, were not located in the 'most deprived' areas. The office of Sports Charity 2 was based in a college which was located in a data zone in the 50-60 percent 'most deprived' areas. This data zone was sparsely populated and covered a large geographical area. The area where the college was located, however, was surrounded by data zones classified as being in the 0-10 percent 'most deprived' areas and it was these communities whom Sports Charity 2 worked with. It was therefore considered worthy of inclusion because, aside from its office activities, it operated in areas of multiple deprivation. Local Government Organisation was similarly located in a data zones in the 50-60 percent 'most deprived' areas. The organisation was based in the city centre and was used to interview local government employees about the coordination and delivery of youth volunteering initiatives across the city. Accordingly, it did not need to meet the inclusion criteria in the same way as other organisations. The rest of this subsection offers brief profiles of the organisations and the wider areas in which they were located.<sup>30</sup>

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<sup>30</sup> Information for these profiles was obtained from field notes, Maver (2000) and data from 2011 to 2012 available on the Understanding Glasgow website (see [http://www.understandingglasgow.com/profiles/neighbourhood\\_profiles](http://www.understandingglasgow.com/profiles/neighbourhood_profiles) (accessed 09 December 2017)).

Table 4.3 SIMD scores of research sites. Ranked on a scale from 1 (most deprived decile) to 10 (least deprived) (source: SIMD online interactive mapping tool)

Organisation	Overall SIMD position	SIMD indicators						
		Income	Employment	Health	Education, skills and training	Housing	Geographic access to services	Crime
Community Organisation	1	1	1	1	1	1	8	1
Youth Charity 1	1	1	1	1	1	1	10	1
Youth Charity 2	2	2	3	2	2	1	10	3
Youth Charity 3	1	1	1	1	1	1	10	2
Youth Charity 4	1	1	1	1	1	1	5	1
Youth Charity 5	1	1	1	1	2	2	10	1
Sports Charity 1	1	1	2	1	1	1	8	2
Sports Charity 2	6	6	8	7	5	4	3	1
Sports Charity 3	2	1	2	2	2	1	3	3
Scout Group	1	1	1	1	1	1	8	1
Police Youth Volunteers	2	3	2	2	3	5	8	2
School 1	1	1	1	1	1	2	9	3
School 2	1	1	1	1	1	1	7	1
School 3	1	1	1	1	1	1	9	1
College	1	1	1	1	1	1	7	1
Local Government Organisation	6	8	8	8	7	1	6	1

### *Community Organisation*

Although situated roughly two miles from the city centre and one mile from one of Glasgow's most affluent areas, the area in which Community Organisation was located felt isolated. A very high proportion of the population lived within 500 metres of derelict or vacant land and, other than a few community groups and a small shopping precinct, the area lacked amenities. Levels of child poverty were higher than the Glasgow average and a high proportion of young people were not in education, employment or training (NEETs). The organisation worked with volunteers towards alleviating social problems in the area. At the time of the fieldwork, the organisation did not provide volunteering opportunities for young people. I interviewed two male non-volunteers who were conducting school-organised work experience placements at the organisation.

### *Youth Charity 1*

Situated roughly one mile from the city centre, Youth Charity 1 was based in an area that played an important role in the historic development of Glasgow's urban economy and which had experienced an influx of Irish immigrants during the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century. The area has since suffered a range of social problems; it has been marked with sectarian issues, life expectancy levels were lower than the Glasgow average and rates of child poverty were higher than average. The organisation delivered street-play activities for children and young people and was assisted in doing so by young volunteers aged 13 and above. I conducted one interview with the volunteer coordinator and two focus groups with male and female volunteers.

### *Youth Charity 2*

Youth Charity 2 was located roughly three miles from the city centre. Historically the area was associated with mining and steel-works, the latter of which ended during the de-industrialisation processes of the 1970s and 1980s. A very high proportion of residents lived near vacant or derelict land, levels of child poverty were higher than the Glasgow average while life expectancy rates were lower. The

organisation was established to provide safe play opportunities for children and young people. It delivered youth activities, a volunteer programme and a variety of social activities. I conducted one interview with a volunteer coordinator and two separate interviews with female volunteers.

### *Youth Charity 3*

Youth Charity 3 was located in the same area as Youth Charity 2. The organisation supported young people, aged 8-24, to manage and overcome the issues associated with living in poverty and social exclusion. They engaged in street and outreach work, as well as providing residential and youth development activities. At the time of the interview, the organisation did not have a specific volunteer coordinator and did not have a strong base of youth volunteers. I interviewed the project coordinator as well as a male non-volunteer who had previously volunteered with the organisation.

### *Youth Charity 4*

Located roughly five miles from the city centre, the area Youth Charity 4 was based in had comparatively poor geographic access to services compared to the other research sites. The area had a higher proportion of NEET young people compared to the Glasgow average and 43 percent of children in the area were classified as living in poverty. Life expectancy levels, however, were comparable with the Glasgow average. The organisation provided informal social and 'chill-out' areas, a homework club and offered educational and employment support services. It involved young volunteers in the design and delivery of its events and activities. I conducted one focus group with female volunteers.

### *Youth Charity 5*

Youth Charity 5 was located approximately four miles from the city centre. Life expectancy rates were higher than the Glasgow average, as were the proportion of residents aged 65 and above. As a youth cafe, the organisation provided a range of

formal and informal learning activities and a safe place for young people to socialise. Young volunteers, aged 12-25, were used to support staff in delivering activities and events. I conducted a focus group with female volunteers as well as a group interview with a male and female volunteer.

### *Sports Charity 1*

Although the office of Sports Charity 1 was located nearly three miles from the city centre, it delivered its activities in different areas across the city many of which were located in areas of multiple deprivation. The organisation offered a sport based volunteering programme for young people aged 14-18 through which volunteers coached other young people and developed leadership skills. I conducted an interview with the volunteer coordinator.

### *Sports Charity 2*

Sports Charity 2 was located almost six miles from the city centre in an area comprised of housing constructed in response to the slum-clearances following the second world war. It is often noted the area lacked basic amenities when developed and has since been associated with a range of social problems. The area has higher than average levels of child poverty, NEET young people and residents under the age of 15. The organisation ran a volunteering programme for young people, aged 14-25, in which they engaged in coaching activities with other young people at partner organisations. I conducted one focus group with one male and four female volunteers.

### *Sports Charity 3*

Like Sports Charity 1, the offices of Sports Charity 3 were in a different location from where it delivered its activities. The organisation coordinated a range of sport-related diversionary activities for young people, aged 6-25, in deprived areas across the city. In addition to this, Sports Charity 3 ran a volunteer programme for those aged 16 and above through which participants coached sport to other young people

and had the opportunity to complete youth employability courses. I conducted three focus groups at the organisation, two with male non-volunteers and one with female non-volunteers as well as an interview with a non-volunteer.

#### *Scout Group*

The Scout Group that took part in the research was based approximately three miles from the city centre. The area was intricately linked to Glasgow's shipbuilding past and subsequently suffered the effects of deindustrialisation. The area had a notably higher proportion of NEET young people than the Glasgow average as well as higher rates of child poverty. I conducted two separate interviews with a male and female who were undertaking the Young Leaders' Scheme which involved undertaking a series of modules as well as aiding the facilitation of the activities their group undertook.

#### *Police Youth Volunteers*

The Police Youth Volunteers had different groups across the country. The group I met were based in a town roughly 8 miles outside of Glasgow, in an area surrounded by data zones classified as being in the 'most deprived' decile of the SIMD. They met fortnightly to receive training for the activities they engaged in, such as marshalling and peer education. I conducted two interviews with male volunteers.

#### *School 1*

School 1 was a co-educational comprehensive secondary school located in an area almost six miles from the centre of Glasgow in one of the post-war housing estates built in the city. The area had levels of child poverty higher than the Glasgow average as well as a greater proportion of young people classified as NEET. I conducted two focus groups at the school. The first was with a group of female volunteers who were undertaking the Duke of Edinburgh initiative, the second a

group of male volunteers who helped out at a coffee morning the school organised with a pensioners group.

### *School 2*

School 2 was a co-educational comprehensive secondary located in the same area as School 1. I conducted a focus group with male non-volunteers.

### *School 3*

School 3 was based just over two miles from the centre of Glasgow. The area had levels of child poverty higher than the Glasgow average as well as a greater proportion of young people classified as NEET. A high proportion of residents lived near vacant or derelict land. I conducted two focus groups, one with female volunteers, two of whom I was able to follow-up with individual interviews, and one with male non-volunteers.

### *College*

The College was located just over two miles from the city centre. It was a further education institution that offered a variety of academic and vocational courses from introductory to degree levels. The area had a higher than average proportion of NEET young people, high levels of child poverty and a higher than average amount of its residents living near vacant or derelict land. I conducted two focus groups, one with female non-volunteers and another with male non-volunteers.

### *Local Government Organisation*

The Local Government Organisation was one of the organisations working in partnership with two others as part of the city's Third Sector Interface (TSI). TSIs are funded by the Scottish Government to support the development of volunteering and social enterprises as well as the third sector more generally. I conducted one interview with a youth volunteer advisor and another with a youth volunteer development coordinator.

Before moving on to discuss the process of data collection, it is worth highlighting commonalities across the research sites. All except three of the organisations were located in areas with ethnic minority populations that were significantly lower than the Glasgow average. Rates of child poverty were higher than the average in all but one area, while rates of NEET young people were higher than average in all but two areas. Levels of unemployment were higher than the average in all but one of the areas as was the likelihood of residents living within 500 metres of vacant or derelict land. Although there were differences between areas in terms of access to services and proximity to the city, research sites were all based in localities that experienced multiple deprivations. Regarding the nature of the organisations, aside from the Police Youth Volunteers, all were involved in providing activities and supporting children and young people. The volunteers interviewed were involved in supporting these services.

#### **4.4 Positionality, data collection and analysis**

This section outlines the process of data collection and analysis. It starts by providing an account of how my positionality as the researcher shaped my relationships with the research topic and the young people I spoke to. Additionally, it outlines the ethical considerations taken into account before, during and after the fieldwork as well as providing an account of the fieldwork itself. The final section describes the thematic analytic approach employed to analyse my interview transcripts.

##### *4.4.1 Researcher positionality*

The critical realist distinction between the transitive and intransitive dimensions of knowledge highlights the social aspect of knowledge production. This social dimension is further revealed through Bourdieu's (1989) contention that points of view always stem from specific positions and under structural constraints. As Skeggs (1997, p. 18) notes, researchers are 'located and positioned in many different ways',

according to their age, gender, sexuality, class, ethnicity etc., and are 'located in the economic, social and cultural relations' in which they conduct their research. Accordingly, before providing an account of the process of data collection and analysis, it is important to offer a sketch of my positionality as the researcher and my relationships with the research topic and the young people I spoke to. In doing so, it is not my intention to encourage narcissism or solipsism but to strengthen the 'epistemological moorings' of the study (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992, p. 46) by providing insight into the social interactions that characterised the data collection process.

The genesis of the topic of this PhD did not come from my personal musings on the nature of youth volunteering but from a meeting between one of my academic supervisors and the research coordinator at Volunteer Scotland. Although I had volunteered as a young person, by and large I had not reflected on these experiences with the critical eye required for academic study. Instead, my attraction to the studentship came from a desire to continue studying. Prior to undertaking the PhD, I had completed a BA degree in sociology and a MA degree in research methodologies at the University of Liverpool. Unlike my time at school, where I experienced lessons and homework as inconveniences, I was taken by the manner in which sociology encouraged me to reflect on familiar issues in different ways and took to my lectures, seminars and readings with great fervour. Moreover, sociology provided me with the tools to understand my experiences as rooted in wider structures. For instance, I came to recognise how the social, cultural and economic capital of my parents, both of whom had been the first in their families to attend university and both of whom subsequently experienced gainful employment in professional roles, had eased my access to university.

When conducting the literature review for this study I began to reflect on my volunteering experiences in new ways. As an undergraduate, I volunteered in a range of roles and with a variety of groups, including: students, adults with learning

difficulties, deaf and blind children, asylum seekers and in a charity shop. Looking back, I could see aspects of what I now referred to as 'traditional' and 'new' forms of volunteerism. While I had genuinely cared about the groups and causes I was volunteering with and for, I was aware that these experiences could be used as a 'portfolio of evidence' (Storr & Spaaij, 2016, p. 498) to help me stand out from the crowd when seeking employment (Holdsworth, 2015). I could also see how the institutional setting of the university had provided opportunities for accessing volunteering roles. Although I expressed a variety of motives for volunteering, my initial involvement was often based on a whim (Holdsworth, 2010) and in response to my social networks. On other occasions, volunteering was a course requirement – characteristic of its shift from an extra- to a co-curricular activity (Holdsworth & Brewis, 2014). Furthermore, I recognised that my capacity to engage in unpaid acts while studying was likely eased by my middle-class upbringing and the 'buffer of privilege' this provides (Allen, 2016, p. 814) – or, in Bourdieu's (2010 [1984], p. 46) terms, my 'distance from necessity'. In light of the fact that I was conducting my fieldwork in some of Scotland's most deprived areas where volunteering was not widely practiced, I anticipated my participants would have different opportunities for engaging with and ways of relating to volunteering.

A commonly noted issue in the literature on researcher positionality is the insider/outsider dichotomy – the former occurring when researchers and participants share characteristics, the latter when they do not (Braun & Clarke, 2013). Yet, the distinction is not straightforward. As noted above, researchers are positioned in heterogeneous ways meaning they may simultaneously be insiders and outsiders with research participants. A notable way in which my experiences differed from my participants' related to our socio-economic backgrounds. Section 4.3 detailed the socio-economic environments in which the research sites were located and revealed high levels of deprivation, child poverty, young people classified as NEET and unemployment. In contrast, the area where I grew up, in the south east of England, was and continues to be characterised by low levels of

deprivation. One way in which these varying experiences manifested was in my accent and non-Glaswegianness – as Robyn (15, non-volunteer) queried: ‘whereabouts are you from? Like I can tell you’re no’ from here with the accent’. In one instance, I sought to downplay this distinction by mentioning the fact that my grandmother was born and raised in one of the areas where I conducted fieldwork. This disclosure, however, prompted laughter from the young people I was talking to due to the manner in which I pronounced the name of the district. Yet, rather than this creating an obstacle to the data collection process, I felt it endeared me to the group as it demonstrated I was willing to share personal information and laugh at myself. On reflection, the interviews conducted at this research site felt relaxed and closer to normal conversations than formal interviews.

In contrast, when conducting fieldwork with male participants, there were instances where my ostensible insider status – as a male interviewing other males – appeared to create obstacles to the development of rapport. During a focus group with male non-volunteers at a sports organisation that delivered football activities, I saw one participant glance under the table, whisper to his friend ‘look at his shoes’, before bursting into laughter. Wilkinson (2016) argues that, although clothing is central to the presentation of self and performance of gender, this important aspect of researcher positionality is rarely acknowledged. In my case, what I had presumed to be a relatively neutral item of clothing – a pair of black Fred Perry ankle boots – marked me as ripe for ridicule among the young males I was interviewing. In contrast to their trainers, my ankle boots perhaps appeared feminine and at odds with norms concerning appropriate male attire. In addition to this, since my teenage years, I have encountered probing questions about my sexuality as a result of the way I speak, my body language and lack of interest in hegemonic masculine interests such as football. Butler (1990, p. 191) argues gender is performative and that its effect is produced through ‘the stylization of the body’, through ‘mundane ... bodily gestures, movements, and styles’. The manner in which I performed my gender – through my clothing choices, bodily movements and speech acts – may,

therefore, have limited the extent to which I was seen as an insider in terms of gender when speaking to male participants, particularly at sports-orientated research sites.

Simplistic assignments of insider and outsider statuses thus gloss over the complex ways in which researchers and participants are positioned and fail to account for the manner in which similarities and differences are negotiated during fieldwork encounters. As Merriam et al. (2001, p. 416) argue, over the course of a study, researchers will 'experience moments of being both insider and outsider' and that these 'positions are relative to the cultural values and norms' of the researcher and participants. Although an outsider in terms of my class background and non-Glaswegianness, I was able to develop positive relationships with some participants through my openness and willingness not to take myself too seriously. Yet, my potential insider status with male participants was challenged by the varying ways in which we performed masculinity. Attentiveness to these interactions, to histories and biographies, counter positivistic myths of a value-free social science. Instead, they emphasise the inherently social dimensions of knowledge production and provide an epistemic anchor to research findings.

#### *4.4.2 Ethical considerations*

Prior to conducting the fieldwork, ethical approval was sought from the University of Strathclyde's ethics committee. Following this, ethical approval was also sought from Glasgow City Council to conduct focus groups and interviews in schools. This subsection explores three broad ethical issues – informed consent, avoiding harm and confidentiality and anonymity – as well as steps taken to ensure these standards were met.

Informed consent is widely held to be a guiding ethical principle in social research (Heath, Brooks, Cleaver, & Ireland, 2009). It stipulates that participants must be 'given as much information as might be needed to make an informed decision

about whether or not they wish to participate in the study' (Bryman, 2008, p. 694). Although historically children have not been considered capable of giving consent (Alderson, 2004), recent guidelines state researchers should obtain the consent of younger participants (Social Policy Association, 2009). The University of Strathclyde's (2013) code of ethical practice states consent from participants under the age of 16 should be sought from parents, or those with parental responsibilities, as well as young people themselves. However, the code notes there may be circumstances where this is 'deemed unnecessary due to the nature of the study and the context of the child'. Informed by the position in the childhood studies literature that young people should be treated as agential beings (Leonard, 2016), I requested permission to seek consent directly from participants aged 12-15 while providing their parents with an information sheet and argued participants were of an age at which they would likely be able to understand the aims and implications of the study. The ethics committee approved my application.

Participant information sheets were produced for young volunteers and non-volunteers as well as youth workers. They described the nature of the research, why participants had been asked to take part, what participation involved and what would happen to the data generated during the fieldwork. Information sheets were emailed to adult participants before interviews. Where possible I met young participants prior to conducting the fieldwork to discuss the research. In instances where this was not possible, extra care was taken to verbally go through the participant information sheet and offer participants opportunities to ask questions or seek clarification. Participants were then asked to sign consent forms.<sup>31</sup>

A notable issue when seeking informed consent in research in deprived areas is the stigmatising effect of referring to the locality as such (Sime, 2008). As area-based deprivation was a central feature of this study, omitting it to avoid upsetting participants would have been unethical (Hill, 2005). When discussing this aspect, I

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<sup>31</sup> See Appendix 1 and 2 for participant information sheets and consent forms.

stressed it was not my evaluation of the area and offered participants the opportunity to comment or challenge it. In practice, many participants reflected in humorous tones about the issues faced in their areas and noted that, despite such problems, they were often places where they felt secure.

A further issue relates to ensuring participants are informed participation is voluntary and that they should not feel coerced into taking part (Alderson & Morrow, 2011). Formal settings, such as schools, can pose risks to young people's free choice (Alderson, 2004) and consent from gatekeepers can make refusal from young people difficult (Gallagher, 2009b; Hill, 2005). As stated, where possible I sought to meet participants prior to the fieldwork to discuss the research. In some circumstances, notably educational institutions, this was not possible. Accordingly, care was taken to go over the project and the nature of participation.

Avoiding harm is another important ethical dimension. In addition to ensuring participants freely consent to take part in research, it is imperative that researchers minimise risks to respondents. In contrast to medical research, harm caused during social research can be less visible (Alderson & Morrow, 2011), yet is no less significant and can cause stress (Alderson, 2004) and emotional anxiety (Hill, 2005). As noted in subsection 4.2.3, while volunteering may be an ostensibly 'innocuous' topic, particularly when contrasted with highly sensitive subjects such as abuse, it is not without its emotional dimensions. In keeping with the principles of informed consent, participants were told that if they disclosed they were at harm or at risk of harm I would report this to a member of staff with their awareness. This follows guidance stating that in some circumstances it may be necessary to breach participant confidentiality (O'Reilly et al., 2013). Although no such situations arose, some participants discussed how volunteering had helped them manage their anxiety and, in a small number of instances, this appeared an intense experience. In these situations I sought to check participants were ok and confirm they were happy to proceed. In all cases they stated they were.

Researchers have noted physical harm can arise in situations when adults are alone with children, leading some schools to refuse to leave adults unaccompanied with pupils (Hill, 2005). Prior to conducting the fieldwork, I applied for and was granted PVG (Protection of Vulnerable Groups) clearance to work with children. The Scouts and the Police Youth Volunteers groups had policies dictating that young people could not be alone with adults, including those with PVG clearance. In these situations, individual interviews were conducted in the presence of a staff member, despite requests otherwise on the grounds of confidentiality. This happened during four out of 12 interviews. While a degree of anonymity may have been lost, interviews conducted in the presence of members of staff added a layer of safety for both the participants and myself.

The notion of avoiding harm is not solely contained to the process of conducting the research. Alderson and Morrow (2011, p. 28) argue participants can feel 'wronged by research' if they think they have been deceived or had their views misrepresented. This point relates to ensuring participants are informed about the nature and aims of research. It was therefore important for participants to be aware they had been approached on the grounds that the organisations they attended were in deprived areas. Participants were also informed they were able to withdraw from the research after the fieldwork by using the contact details on consent forms or by informing relevant gatekeepers who were asked to forward messages to me.

The third issue related to confidentiality and anonymity. Unlike quantitative research in which participants are lost in statistics, qualitative research relies on descriptive narratives and thus increases the difficulty of maintaining participant confidentiality and anonymity (Hill, 2005, p. 75). To meet this standard, it is common practice to replace participant names with pseudonyms (Gallagher, 2009b). Neither the participants' names nor the names of the research sites were

used.<sup>32</sup> To give pseudonyms an air of authenticity, names were selected from a database on the National Records of Scotland website containing the foremost names given to children born the same year as participants.

Confidentiality can be a particularly problematic principle to uphold in group settings. Hill (2005, p. 76) argued it may be 'unrealistic to expect that nothing will be said about what went on' during fieldwork conducted in settings such as schools. In such circumstances, it is therefore important to establish ground rules prior to focus groups. When going through the participant information sheets, I stressed the aforementioned confidentiality issues and added that I would be grateful if the participants could treat one another's contributions with privacy and respect. Although participants indicated they would uphold this principle, it is difficult to ascertain what happened after the focus groups were conducted.

#### *4.4.3 Conducting the fieldwork*

The fieldwork took place between March and May 2016. Focus groups and individual interviews were conducted with a total of 68 young people, alongside interviews with six youth workers. As shown in Table 4.2, focus groups were sought with eight cohorts of young people in accordance with their gender, age and status as a volunteer or non-volunteer. Focus groups lasted between 20-50 minutes, averaging roughly 40 minutes each. With participants' permission, they were audio recorded and transcribed at a later date. During the process of transcription, effort was made to capture participants' dialect in order to reflect the manner in which they expressed themselves (Braun & Clarke, 2013). Following advice that focus groups should be held in locations convenient for participants (Breen, 2006), they

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<sup>32</sup> Two exceptions to this rule were the naming of the Scout Group and Police Youth Volunteers. It was considered necessary to name these groups due to their specific natures. However, as there were multiple groups across Glasgow and Scotland, it was considered that naming them would not necessarily make the specific research sites used identifiable.

were conducted at the research sites. A total of 16 focus groups with 58 participants were conducted as shown in Table 4.4.<sup>33</sup>

Table 4.4 Focus groups conducted

<b>Organisation</b>	<b>Number of participants</b>	<b>Age</b>	<b>Gender</b>	<b>Status</b>
Youth Charity 1	2	14-15	Male	Volunteers
Youth Charity 1	2	13-14	Female	Volunteers
Youth Charity 4	3	13-18	Female	Volunteers
Youth Charity 5	4	16-17	Female	Volunteers
Youth Charity 5	2	15-18	Mixed	Volunteers
Sports Charity 2	5	14-16	Mixed	Volunteers
Sports Charity 3	5	12-16	Female	Volunteers and non-volunteers
Sports Charity 3	3	12-16	Male	Non-volunteers
Sports Charity 3	5	15-16	Male	Non-volunteers
School 1	6	15	Female	Volunteers
School 1	2	12	Male	Volunteers
School 2	5	16-17	Male	Non-volunteers
School 3	3	17	Male	Volunteer and ex-volunteers
School 3	4	17-18	Female	Volunteers
College	5	15-16	Female	Non-volunteers
College	4	17-18	Male	Non-volunteers

As evident, a number of the groups did not meet inclusion criteria originally sought. Scholars have noted that despite the planning that goes into designing and conducting focus groups, they are often products of circumstance (Kitzinger & Barbour, 1999) and rarely entirely homogenous (Kitzinger, 1994; Merryweather, 2010). Table 4.4 shows that two of the focus groups did not meet the gender inclusion criteria, two did not meet the volunteer status category and a number

<sup>33</sup> Two of the male participants who took part in the first non-volunteer focus group at Sports Charity 3 also took part in the second focus group at the charity after the first one had been cut short. It is for this reason that the total number of participants was 58 rather than 60, which is the figure one would get if calculating the number of participants shown in Table 4.4.

contained participants that crossed the age boundary. The deviation of these groups from the discrete cohorts sought was often an outcome of the young people available at the time of the fieldwork. Due to the largely voluntary nature of attendance at research sites, youth workers often did not know in advance who would attend their events. For example, the focus group at Sports Charity 2, conducted during a drop-in session at the organisation, started as a female only group but ended with a mix of genders due to the late arrival of a male volunteer. Similarly the 'volunteer and non-volunteers' focus group at School 3 started as a non-volunteer group but became mixed following a late arrival. As anticipated in subsection 4.2.2, some of the participants in non-volunteer focus groups had prior experience of volunteering. In order to accurately reflect this, whenever participants are quoted in the empirical chapters, their statuses as volunteers, ex-volunteers or non-volunteers are denoted in brackets.

Although I had intended to conduct follow-up interviews with focus group participants, this was only achieved at School 3 where I was able to conduct follow-up interviews with two female volunteers. This shortcoming was partly related to scheduling constraints at research sites. Accordingly, individual interviews were largely conducted with participants who had not taken part in focus groups. A total of 12 interviews, lasting between 35-55 minutes, were conducted. Information about each interviewee is provided in Table 4.5.

Table 4.5: Interviews conducted with young people

<b>Name</b>	<b>Age</b>	<b>Gender</b>	<b>Status</b>	<b>Research site</b>
Scott	15	Male	Volunteer	Police Youth Volunteers
Sean	15	Male	Volunteer	Police Youth Volunteers
Amy	15	Female	Volunteer	Youth Charity 2
Abbie	15	Female	Volunteer	Youth Charity 2
Ryan	16	Male	Volunteer	Scout Group
Orla	16	Female	Volunteer	Scout Group
Olivia	17	Female	Volunteer	School 3
Paige	18	Female	Volunteer	School 3
Callum	15	Male	Ex-volunteer	Community Organisation
Dylan	15	Male	Non-volunteer	Community Organisation
Liam	18	Male	Ex-volunteer	Sports Charity 3
Thomas	17	Male	Ex-volunteer	Youth Charity 3

As three of the four male non-volunteers had prior experience of volunteering and often drew on it during their interviews, they were classified as ex-volunteers. Interviews were conducted at research sites and audio recorded with participants' permission.

Where possible, I sought to meet the young people prior to conducting focus groups and interviews to provide opportunities for potential participants to ask questions about the research and to develop rapport. In certain instances, I felt this approach worked well. For example, before conducting interviews at Youth Charity 2, I sat in on a workshop with three young volunteers, including Amy and Abbie who I went on to interview, and the organisation's volunteer coordinator, Tracey. Before the workshop started, I was invited to take part in a warmup activity which involved jumping up and down and running around in circles. I felt the activity helped reduce some of our social differences and enabled us to relax in one another's presence, thus providing a positive foundation from which to conduct the interviews. Indeed, towards the end of our interview, Amy told Tracey, who had entered the room to

inform us the organisation would soon be closing, that she had enjoyed it and contrasted it with a previous one she had taken part in:

Amy            See that wee guy who took about fifteen minutes? This wans  
                     been better, I like talking.

Tracey        We know Abbie, we know [laughter].

Amy            See the other guy, the other guy, he came in and asked me  
                     questions and like, "Right, go", but I'm coming in here and I  
                     actual want, I actual don't shut up.

Tracey        It's 'cos it's something that you're passionate about ... I think  
                     it comes across.

Amy            I think he knows that!

In this instance, the rapport we developed contributed to an environment in which Amy felt enthusiastic about sharing her experiences of volunteering. Yet, meeting participants before conducting focus groups did not always lead to positive fieldwork encounters. At Youth Charity 5, I sat in on two workshops prior to conducting two focus groups. Unlike my experience at Youth Charity 2, there were a larger number of young people present and no warmup activities. Accordingly, although I introduced myself at the beginning, I did not have the same opportunities to develop rapport. The first focus group, conducted with four older female volunteers, was characterised by short responses and awkward laughter. Yet, the second, with a male and female volunteer, proceeded more smoothly and generated detailed insights. Despite having comparable prior encounters, our interactions differed markedly. It may be the case that the girls in the first group felt more coerced into taking part than the participants in the second. Indeed, Kieran, in the second group, enthusiastically offered to speak to me despite our general lack of rapport. It may also be the case that the physical settings in which the focus groups took part shaped our interactions. The large empty hall in which the first focus group occurred provided a less intimate setting than the office room where

the second took place. The 'success' or 'failure' of focus groups was, therefore, not solely contingent upon prior interactions with participants but also shaped by the wider social and material settings in which they took place.

Additionally, my positionality and the research topic itself appeared to impact on the manner in which some focus groups unfolded. During the focus groups with male non-volunteers at Sports Charity 3 and School 2, I struggled to develop rapport and the encounters were characterised by silences and awkward laughter. Partly, I believe this was due to the varying ways in which we performed masculinity (as discussed in subsection 4.4.1). Additionally, it may have been related to the topic itself which, as noted in the Literature Review, has been reported to suffer an image problem particularly among males. Combined, these factors appeared to produce the conditions in which silences and laughter were considered appropriate responses to my inquiries. Spyrou (2016) argues for the importance of attending to silences in interviews and for understanding them as a form of performance within broader social and cultural parameters. Non-responses during these focus groups may, therefore, have been acts of resistance towards me as the researcher and the topic of volunteering, as well as ways for participants to perform their subjectivities in front of their peers. Thus, rather than viewing these as 'failed' interviews, silences and laughter offer opportunities to learn about participant subjectivities, interview settings and researcher positionality (Nairn, Munro, & Smith, 2005). Indeed, as discussed in subsection 8.2.2, volunteering was seen as incompatible with masculine norms and thus may have been a factor that led to non-responses.

To provide an overall sense of the distribution of the characteristics of those who took part in focus groups and interviews, Table 4.6 outlines the number of individual participants in relation to each of the eight cohorts sought.

Table 4.6 Overall distribution of participants' characteristics

<b>Gender</b>	<b>Age</b>	<b>Volunteer</b>	<b>Non-volunteer</b>
Male	12-15	8	6
	16-18	2	15
Female	12-15	17	6
	16-18	13	1
<i>Total</i>	-	40	28

The table reveals 59 percent of the participants were volunteers (40 out of 68) and 41 percent were non-volunteers (28 out of 68). Furthermore, although participants were almost evenly split between males (46 percent) and females (54 percent), 68 percent of males were non-volunteers (21 out of 31) in contrast to 81 percent of females who were volunteers (30 out of 37). While this is a limitation, in the sense that participants were not evenly represented, the over-representation of female volunteers resonates with evidence indicating they are more likely to volunteer (see Figure 2.2). Furthermore, it relates to the issue, discussed in Chapter 8, that male respondents were particularly likely to experience informal penalties for volunteering. In addition to this, to gain a stronger understanding of the young people's characteristics, Appendix 5 provides brief portraits of all of the participants who took part in the study.

In addition to this, a total of six interviews were conducted with youth workers at youth organisations and a local government organisation. Interviews took place at research sites and lasted between 50-90 minutes. With permission, they were recorded and transcribed. Table 4.7 provides information on interviewees' roles and the organisations they worked for.

Table 4.7 Interviews conducted with youth workers

<b>Name</b>	<b>Gender</b>	<b>Role</b>	<b>Organisation</b>
Lauren	Female	Volunteer coordinator	Youth Charity 1
Tracey	Female	Volunteer coordinator	Youth Charity 2
Nicky	Female	Project manager	Youth Charity 3
Kelly	Female	Volunteer coordinator	Sports Charity 1
Beth	Female	Youth volunteer advisor	Local Government Organisation
Clare	Female	Youth volunteer development coordinator	Local Government Organisation

There are a few caveats that must be taken into consideration when considering the nature of the participants recruited to the study. It is possible that there may exist a selection bias in the sample. Organisations who believed themselves to have good volunteer management practices or positive records of working with young volunteers may have been more likely to offer to take part in the study. Accordingly, the young volunteers may have held more favourable attitudes towards volunteering than those in organisations with less positive volunteering practices. Furthermore, given that some of the non-volunteering participants were recruited from voluntary sector organisations, the thesis may not have reached the ‘most disengaged’ young people, such as those lacking connections to formal organisations, which may also have had implications for the attitudes expressed towards volunteering. Having provided information on the number and nature of focus groups and interviews conducted during the fieldwork, the following subsection provides an account of how the data was analysed.

#### *4.4.4 Data analysis*

Unlike quantitative data analysis, which offers researchers unambiguous rules about how to handle their data, qualitative approaches lack rigid guidelines (Bryman, 2008). Accordingly, qualitative data analysis can be seen as highly subjective (Gallagher, 2009a). Rather than viewing this as a weakness, the subjective aspect of analysis highlights the critical realist contention that science is

an inherently social process and that knowledge is transient – research findings are not an objective window into a particular phenomenon but are one of many possible interpretations. In light of this, transparency concerning the process of analysis is essential. One of the most widely used approaches in qualitative data analysis, and the one employed in this study, is thematic analysis. Tuckett (2005) noted there often exists a lack of clarity concerning the deployment of thematic analysis. The remainder of this section will provide a rationale for the use of thematic analysis, as well as an account of its implementation.

Thematic analysis is defined by Braun and Clarke (2013, p. 175) as a ‘method for identifying themes and patterns of meaning across a dataset in relation to a research question’. Two key aspects are highlighted, themes and patterns. Themes are elements of the data which are important to understanding the phenomenon in question, while patterns denote similarities and differences within the dataset (Fereday & Muir-Cochrane, 2006). The process of identifying themes and patterns can be done inductively, from the ‘bottom up’ where themes emerge from the data and are not linked to a pre-existing coding frame, or deductively, from the ‘top down’ where themes are guided by an existing theoretical framework (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Although these principles are often separated, I applied the ‘hybrid’ approach to thematic analysis advocated by Fereday and Muir-Cochrane (2006). Their approach recognises the importance of letting themes develop from repeat readings of the data, as well as the use of a template to guide the analysis. The thesis’ four research questions were used as broad frameworks into which themes derived from repeat readings of the transcripts were placed.

To aid this process, I adapted Attiride-Stirling’s (2001) distinction between basic, organising and global themes. Basic themes are derived from textual data and cannot be understood in isolation, organising themes take basic themes and organise them into more abstract clusters, while global themes provide information on what the basic themes are about in the context of the study as a whole. Using

NVivo, a qualitative data analysis software package, I read through my transcripts to identify basic themes, which were grouped into broader organising themes and then global themes (see Appendix 4). This process was repeated several times as the transcripts were read and re-read. The themes were then used to structure the empirical chapters. Each chapter was then written, reflected on and further developed.

During the process of analysis, patterns were identified through an examination of the salience of themes between the various cohorts of participants. Care was taken to look at the characteristics of participants expressing (or not) sentiments associated with the basic themes. In doing so, I was able to generate a picture of how certain attitudes and experiences were related to different social characteristics. This analytic approach enabled me to examine how different ways of seeing and acting – i.e. the habitus – were related to different cohorts of participants.

## **4.5 Chapter conclusion**

This chapter has outlined the methodological approach used to empirically address the research questions. It started with a broad consideration of the nature of knowledge and ended with a specific account of the process of data analysis. In recognition of the extent to which volunteering was shaped by objective conditions and interpreted in a constructionist manner, a critical realist paradigm was adopted. The stratification of reality into the levels of the real, actual and empirical provided a way of analysing how volunteering experiences were shaped by underlying forces. Furthermore, the distinction between the transitive and intransitive dimensions of knowledge highlighted the social processes inherent in research, whereby findings are viewed as an interpretation rather than the objective truth of the phenomena in question. Informed by the critical realist contention that society is an ‘open system’ and the notion that volunteering can be experienced in multiple ways, a qualitative methodology was employed to address the research questions.

To generate data, focus groups and interviews were used for different yet complementary reasons. By treating the group interaction as part of the analysis, focus groups facilitate an exploration of a particular group's experiences of a given phenomenon. Accordingly, focus groups were selected to enable an analysis of similarities and differences in how various cohorts of young people related to volunteering. Yet, while the group interaction is a strength, it can also be a weakness as individual voices may be silenced and individual stories left unexplored. To address this issue, individual interviews were also employed to explore in greater detail individual pathways to volunteering as well as barriers. By examining group interactions and individual experiences, the methods aided the analysis of how the collective and individual dispositions of the habitus develop in relation to volunteering.

Research sites were selected on the basis that they fell within the 'most deprived' areas of Glasgow as designated by the SIMD. Although the SIMD was shown to have its limitations, it was argued that it provided a useful way of identifying areas that experienced multiple deprivations and exhibited low levels of volunteering. The areas in which research sites were based were often characterised by higher than average levels of child poverty and rates of young people classified as NEET, thus indicating they were areas where young people experienced stark disadvantages. Research sites were predominantly youth and sporting organisations as well as educational institutions. Volunteers were typically involved in helping the design and delivery of activities provided by the organisations.

In addition to this, the processes of data collection and analysis were described alongside the ethical issues considered before, during and after the fieldwork. An account of my positionality as the researcher was provided as was a discussion of the necessity of understanding the ways in which potential insider and outsider characteristics are negotiated in the field. Ethical considerations were divided into

three broad areas: informed consent, avoiding harm and maintaining confidentiality and anonymity. In relation to the composition of focus groups, difficulties in achieving the desired group homogeneity were noted. Accordingly, information on the make-up of each focus group was provided. A total of 68 young participants took part in the study. While participants were almost evenly split between males and females, females were significantly more likely to be volunteers than males, who were more likely to be non-volunteers. In addition to this, six interviews were conducted with youth workers. Finally, the chapter discussed the process of data analysis. A thematic approach was considered pertinent to exploring themes and patterns across the transcripts.

Having provided contextual information, a rationale for the study and an account of the theoretical and methodological tool employed to address the research questions, the thesis now turns to an analysis of the data generated during the fieldwork.

## **5 Understandings of and attitudes towards volunteering**

This chapter examines participants' understandings of, and attitudes towards, volunteering. Defining volunteering is a challenging task. Scholars and organisations often adopt different approaches and there is not a single accepted definition (Ellis Paine et al., 2010; Rochester et al., 2010). The nature of volunteering similarly escapes neat demarcation and has been conceptualised in different manners, from individualistic and instrumental approaches that view volunteering as a CV enhancing mechanism (Dean, 2014; Holdsworth, 2015), to community-orientated positions that contend volunteering ties groups together and strengthens democratic processes (Putnam, 2000).

In her review of the literature on young people and volunteering, Gaskin (2004) contended there was evidence to suggest negative views held by young people in the 1990s were beginning to subside. More recently, data from Scotland suggests young people hold largely positive views of volunteering (Harper & Jackson, 2015), suggesting this trend has continued. However, studies have found disadvantaged young people are more likely to express negative opinions of volunteering (Hill et al., 2009) and lack knowledge about it (Ellis, 2004). Furthermore, non-volunteers, who are statistically more likely to come from areas of multiple deprivation (Linning & Jackson, 2017; Scottish Government, 2016b), have been found to be less likely to consider volunteering as a way of developing transferable skills or having a positive effect on their careers (v Inspired, 2008).

In light of Scottish policies and initiatives promoting youth volunteering, such as the Volunteering Strategy, the Saltire Awards and Project Scotland, and UK-wide campaigns, such as #iwill, it is important to examine the understandings and attitudes young people in areas of multiple deprivation express towards

volunteering. How do their understandings correspond with the manner in which volunteering is defined by scholars and in policy? Do disadvantaged young people continue to express negative attitudes towards volunteering? How do these factors vary according to the extent of young people's exposure to and experiences of volunteering? The following sections address these issues. The first focuses on participants' understandings of volunteering, the second examines their attitudes towards it, while the third explores changes in attitudes.

## **5.1 Understandings of volunteering**

The Literature Review critically examined definitions put forward by academics, third sector organisations and the Scottish Government, noting three commonly cited criteria; volunteering as, i) unpaid, ii) freely undertaken, and iii) of benefit to others. Each criterion was argued to exist along a spectrum with certain aspects occupying more or less ambiguous statuses than others. Broadly in keeping with accepted definitions, participants most commonly cited the following characteristics when discussing what constituted an act as volunteering; that it helps others, that it is unpaid and that it occurs during individual's free time and/or under their free will. Participants also discussed the organisational context of volunteering. The following subsections examine each of these principles.

### *5.1.1 Helping others*

The notion of helping people appeared frequently in participants' accounts of what they thought constituted volunteering. In all but a minority of cases, this aspect was orientated towards helping 'other people' or 'the community':

Volunteering is just helping out the community. (Callum 15, ex-volunteer)

Volunteerin's like givin' ... like help other people. (Brooke 13, volunteer)

Helping people, like in your community, giving them opportunities that they wouldnae really get. (Faye 16, volunteer)

When asked to name activities they thought constituted volunteering, those with experience of it tended to list activities they had been involved in. The female volunteers at Youth Charity 4 stated 'helpin' the young ones' (Brooke, 13) and 'football' (Caitlin, 13). While Callum (15, ex-volunteer), who had volunteered at a community garden, stated 'building stuff' and 'helping the garden'. When asked what they felt constituted these activities as volunteering, the provision of aid was central:

You're no' just like doin' it for the fun o' it, you're doing' it 'ae like help somebody. (Brooke 13, volunteer)

Just helping them, like if they need any help wi' doan it. (Callum 15, ex-volunteer)

Drawing on their exposure to volunteering environments, these participants emphasised the notion that volunteering is an act that involves helping others. Yet, it was not just those with such experiences who highlighted this, non-volunteers also discussed the provision of aid as a key element. Owen (15, non-volunteer) stated volunteering entailed 'help[ing] something', while Sahib (15, non-volunteer) defined volunteering as 'when you're helping out'. At times, however, non-volunteers expressed uncertainty over who counted as a valid recipient of voluntary action. Vic (15, non-volunteer), for instance, stated 'helping out round the house ... that's volunteering'. When asked whether he thought volunteering included helping family members, he replied, 'ahh, I dunnno' before shaking his head. Taylor (16, non-volunteer) also implied family could be the beneficiaries of volunteering when she said, 'my ma' asked me to take the dog out, I'd be like, "I'll take your dog out" ... so that's volunteerin' init'. Vic and Taylor's comments highlight multiple meanings

entailed by the term 'volunteer'. While they may have voluntarily chosen to help out around the house and walk the dog, these acts, due to their beneficiaries, do not reflect the definitions discussed in subsection 2.1.1.

Ellis Paine et al. (2010) posited a spectrum of beneficiaries. At one end, they argued acts that only benefit the actor do not constitute volunteering. However, it is generally accepted that individuals can benefit from voluntary work as long as the costs exceed the reward and the motive is not based solely on personal gain (Musick & Wilson, 2008). This aspect of volunteering was discussed in only a minority of participants' definitions, most clearly evident in the following comment from Paige (18, volunteer):

It helps people so they benefit from it, it helps you develop yourself as a person and also you get to say, "Oh I've been volunteering", you know, "I'm, I'm good for this job or this uni or whatever".

Although volunteers emphasised a range of personal benefits received through volunteering (see Chapter 7), this aspect was not given much prominence in their definitions. Paige was a captain at school and was planning to attend university later that year. The importance she gave this aspect, in contrast to other participants, may therefore have been related to the fact that she saw volunteering as a way of enhancing her university application. The general emphasis on helping others rather than themselves suggests perceptions were more in keeping with the net-cost approach, in which volunteering is seen to create a larger cost than reward to the volunteer (Musick & Wilson, 2008).

### *5.1.2 Payment*

Another aspect repeatedly highlighted was the notion that an act must be without payment in order for it to constitute volunteering. Again, both volunteers and non-volunteers discussed this factor, although the latter did so in a less certain fashion.

During the fieldwork, non-volunteers frequently stated they had minimal exposure to, or knowledge of, volunteering – a finding consistent with other studies (Ellis, 2004; Pye et al., 2009). For example, at the start of a focus group with male non-volunteers I asked if the participants could tell me what they thought volunteering was, to which they replied:

Brad            Never really thought about it to be honest.

...

Alex            Is it no' work you don't get paid for?

(Brad and Alex 18, non-volunteers)

Although professing to have little knowledge of volunteering, throughout the focus group the participants repeatedly emphasised volunteering was an act without financial payment. They discussed potential incidents of volunteering, including: overseas medical work, the Red Cross, street security, street fundraisers and running a football team. In each instance, they debated whether or not the act in question constituted volunteering and repeatedly came back to the issue of whether or not it was remunerated. They concluded by asserting the 'point' of volunteering was that it was unpaid:

JD<sup>34</sup>            What would make it [an act] volunteering do you think?

Will            'Cos you're...

Brad            'Cos you're doing it for nothing, you're not getting paid and it's out your own time.

Stu            You don't get paid for volunteering.

...

Brad            Aye that's the point, I'd say, volunteering you're no' getting paid.

Will            Aye that's the same with me I think.

---

<sup>34</sup> The initials JD refer to James Davies, who conducted the fieldwork.

(Will and Brad 18, Stu 17, non-volunteers)

While the participants came to this conclusion, uncertainty was expressed in their journey towards it. Hesitation over the unpaid aspect of volunteering was evident among other non-volunteers. Taylor (16, non-volunteer) stated 'you wouldn't get paid for volunteering', yet later asked, 'so is volunteering when you don't get paid?'. Taylor's oscillation between ostensible certainty and hesitation was likely a reflection of the limited information she had received about volunteering.

In some circumstances, lack of exposure to volunteering generated contradictory statements concerning its remunerated status. In reference to door-to-door fundraising, Harry (17, ex-volunteer) stated, 'I know with some volunteer work you get paid'. Yet, when asked whether he thought volunteers could be paid, replied:

Naw, no' really 'cos, if you're getting paid then, it's kinda the money you're making, by daeing the volunteering is going back to you so it's no' really going to the people who need it.

During the focus group with male non-volunteers, from which this extract is taken, much of the discussion about volunteering occurred in the context of charitable work and participants appeared to mix volunteering with the voluntary sector, an issue noted in other studies (Ellis, 2004; Hardill & Baines, 2011). The contradiction put forward by Harry – that some volunteers are paid, but that volunteering is an unpaid activity – seemed to stem from a conflation of volunteering with charity work.

Volunteers were generally more confident in their assertions of volunteering as an unpaid act. Paige (18, volunteer), for example, stated the 'basic definition' of volunteering was that it entailed doing 'something for nothing', while Scott (15, volunteer) asserted, 'I know like volunteering isn't paid for'. Despite this general

consensus, there were a minority of incidents where positions were asserted without confidence or against common opinion. One volunteer, Matt (15), felt volunteers could receive financial payment. Matt thought one of his friends volunteered to help deliver children's parties and was 'paid like thirty-five pound' for doing so. When asked whether he thought an act was volunteering if paid, he responded, 'aye because ... its them using their ain time to do something to help other people to have a good birthday or good time'. Matt's admission was surprising in the context of other volunteers' responses and the fact that he was completing a volunteering programme at a youth charity with seemingly clearly defined volunteering roles. As the charity delivered street-play sessions to children and young people, Matt's approach may have been related to an association made between volunteering and aiding the facilitation of children's leisure activities, leading him to emphasise the aim of doing good over volunteering's unpaid element.

### *5.1.3 Free time and free will*

The third aspect participants discussed, albeit to a lesser extent than the previous characteristics, was the notion that an act could be called volunteering if it occurred during an individual's free time and/or was performed out of their free will. Although these characteristics refer to different things, they have been grouped together in this subsection because participants often discussed them simultaneously:

Paul                      Volunteering's in yer own time.

...

Sahib                     You don't just do it out of like, it's your choice.

(Paul 16, Sahib 15, non-volunteers)

Among those who mentioned these aspects, volunteering in one's free time was given greater prominence than free will. Alongside helping others, Brooke (13,

volunteer) believed 'givin' your time to anything' constituted an act as volunteering. The notion of volunteering 'out of your ... own time' (Scott 15, volunteer) raises issues concerning what constitutes a person's 'own time' and how an individual reflects on their practices. Orla (16, volunteer) was one of those who included 'giving up your time' in her definition. Later on, Orla mentioned she had not done 'proper volunteering' in the past year, despite having regularly volunteered during this period. When asked what counted as 'proper volunteering', she replied, volunteering 'in my own time'. Although Orla made the choice to volunteer, she did not feel it was a sacrifice of her own time, instead considering it simply 'what I do'. Her comment raises a point discussed in the following section concerning the distinction between what participants thought volunteering was, or what they thought about it, and how they reflected on their voluntary actions.

The notion of free will was discussed to a lesser extent than any of the other characteristics. This differs from Clement and Lafferty's (2015, p. 13) study of young volunteers in an affluent Scottish local authority area, where participants stressed the 'necessity of volunteering being a free will activity'. Only two participants, Isla (16, volunteer) and Sahib (15, non-volunteer), discussed volunteering as an individual's 'choice'. They contrasted the personal choice of volunteering with employment which, as Isla put it, 'you kinda have to' do. The other occasion free will was mentioned was during a focus group with female non-volunteers:

Robyn            You volunteer out of your ain free will.

Taylor           Aye.

JD                Ok, so what do you mean by that?

Robyn            Where you just do it without being asked, and like, volunteering.

Taylor            'Cos you want tae.

(Robyn 15, Taylor 16, non-volunteers)

Robyn's framing of 'free will', however, does not wholly reflect its usage in scholarly or policy contexts, in which it is generally taken to mean the absence of force or coercion. While doing something 'without being asked' may mean acting in a non-coerced fashion, being asked to do something does not necessarily indicate an individual is being coerced into acting. Indeed, being asked is one of the central ways young people start volunteering (Shannon, 2009), yet this is not the same as stating the majority of volunteers are forced into doing so.

During the focus group, Robyn, who was undertaking a hairdressing course at college, also stated: 'we volunteer to get our hair done next door ... even if we don't want to, it's still volunteering'. In saying 'we don't want to', she appeared to contradict her previous statement, that volunteering is performed 'out of your ain free will'. This inconsistency may be related to the fact this was Robyn's 'first talk' about volunteering, meaning she had previously experienced few opportunities to reflect on its nature. It may also be symptomatic of the general lack of information participants received in relation to volunteering. As noted in subsection 5.1.1, volunteering can have multiple meanings. For example, an individual may take voluntary redundancy, yet this is not the same as volunteering for a cause or to help a group of people. The differences in Robyn's statements may therefore be related to the fact that she was referring to different things; in the first instance, the notion that volunteers act freely to benefit others, in the second, that she, albeit under some pressure, volunteered to have her hair cut in the context of her college course. As noted in the Literature Review, defining volunteering is a problematic task. Such issues were evident in participants' understandings of volunteering. Those with more experience, however, appeared to provide definitions more in keeping with established understandings.

#### *5.1.4 Organisational context*

When discussing their understandings of volunteering, participants generally did not mention organisational context unless prompted, instead focusing on the

dimensions discussed above. This reflects the contention that it is unlikely that acts of informal volunteering would be considered by the public as volunteering (Rochester et al., 2010). Indeed, when asked about the organisational context of volunteering, there was a sense that formal volunteering was a more worthwhile pursuit due to its perceived capacity to bring people in the community together:

Demi            You can do it by yourself if you want.

Brooke        I know.

...

Demi            I think most of it's about a group.

Brooke        Aye.

Demi            'Cos obviously it brings the community together and  
volunteerin' as a community is more better than doing it  
yourself.

(Demi 18, Brooke 13, volunteers)

This extract resonates with the notion that formal volunteering provides collective goods and services which support communities (Lim & Laurence, 2015). Demi and Brooke had attended and volunteered at the organisation where I met them for a number of years and had personally benefitted from the actions of volunteers as well as seen the impact of their own actions. They valued the organisation where they volunteered and saw the organisational component of volunteering as a significant factor.

When asked about participation in helping activities beyond an organisational setting, only a minority of participants, such as Megan (13, volunteer), reported engaging in acts such as helping neighbours with their shopping. The majority often 'ummed', 'ahhed' and struggled to recall instances. Indeed, some felt informal acts of neighbourliness were not widely practiced within their communities. Harry (17, ex-volunteer), for instance, disparagingly described other young people in his local

area as 'wee NEDs' whom he believed thought they were too 'cool' to performing helping activities.<sup>35</sup> In a separate focus group, Niamh (14, volunteer) outlined why she thought people in her local area did not volunteer informally:

[It's] difficult to volunteer outwith an organisation because there's no' much you can dae because, everybody's all, like they only speak to a certain amount of people.

Niamh suggests limited social interactions constrained the capacity for people to provide informal help to one another beyond an organisational setting. Additionally, she believed individuals in her community were 'shy and nervous' and lacked the 'skills to go and socialise with people'. Scholars have argued the decline in rates of informal volunteering in the most disadvantaged neighbourhoods in England and Wales following the 2007/8 recession can be explained by the weaker norms of trust and reciprocity in such communities (Lim & Laurence, 2015).<sup>36</sup> They suggest that in situations where people feel they cannot rely on others for help, they may be less likely to ask for it. Evidence from Scotland indicates persons in the 'most deprived' areas are less likely than those in the 'least deprived' locations to think most people can be trusted and to feel there are people they could turn to for support in their areas (Ormston & Reid, 2012). Research also reveals young people in deprived neighbourhoods can experience fraught relationships with other young people and adults due to stereotyping and poor social connectivity (Neary et al., 2013). Participants' feeling that informal volunteering was not widely practiced thus resonates with the notion that such action is difficult to sustain in settings characterised by lower levels of social capital.

These findings pose something of a challenge to the notion that the culture of informal volunteering is more reflective of the nature of participation in deprived

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<sup>35</sup> NED is a derogatory term commonly taken to mean 'non-educated delinquent'. The Oxford English Dictionary defines the term as 'a hooligan or petty criminal' and 'a stupid or loutish boy or man'.

<sup>36</sup> Rates of informal volunteering are not currently collected in Scotland (Volunteer Scotland, 2017b).

areas (Williams, 2003a). Due to the benefits associated with organisational volunteering and issues of trust and social connectivity among local residents, there was a feeling that acts of informal volunteering were constrained and of less importance than formal modes of participation. This finding may, however, be related to the nature of the participants in this study, many of whom were formal volunteers or had connections to volunteer-involving organisation. Accordingly, it may be the case that informal volunteering is of greater significance to those who lack attachments to such organisations.

## **5.2 Attitudes towards volunteering**

Recent evidence suggests young people across Scotland hold generally positive views of volunteering (Harper & Jackson, 2015). Given the lower levels of volunteering in areas of multiple deprivation, it was considered necessary to explore the attitudes of this cohort. If, for example, the participants held negative views, could this partly account for the lower levels of volunteering characteristic of disadvantaged areas? To prompt participants to discuss their attitudes, and explore how they reflected or differed from evidence on young people's opinions, five cue cards containing phrases about volunteering were used. The phrases were taken from a question in the 2014 wave of the *Young People in Scotland* survey which asked secondary school pupils what they thought about volunteering. The phrases and percentage of respondents who agreed with them are shown in Figure 5.1.

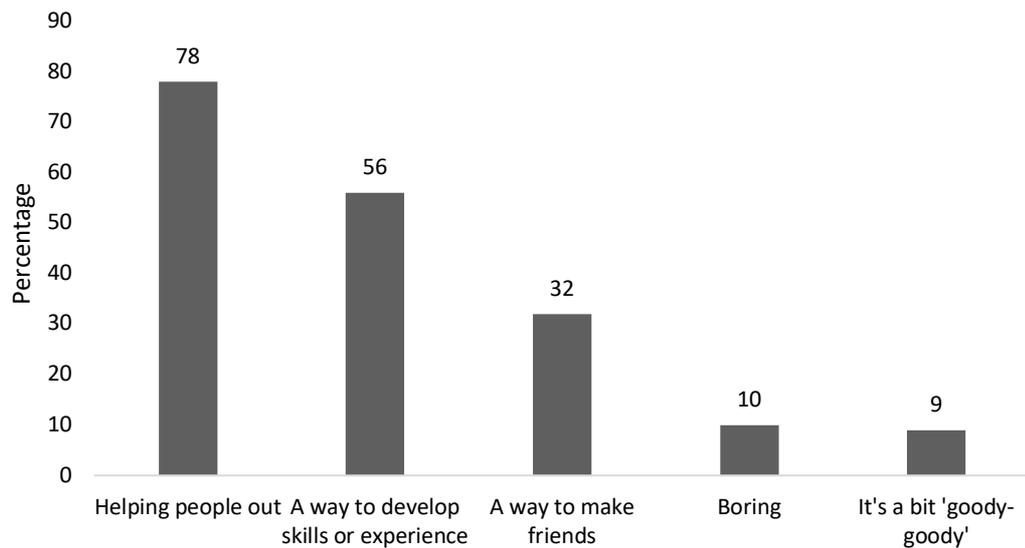


Figure 5.1 Scottish secondary school pupils' attitudes towards volunteering (%) ( $n = 2,016$ ) (Harper & Jackson, 2015)

The phrases were selected to represent different attitudes towards volunteering. 'Helping people out' was taken to represent altruism, 'a way to develop skills or experience' was used to capture individualistic or instrumental attitudes, 'a way to make friends' was used to signify social views of volunteering, while 'boring' and 'it's a bit goody-goody' were taken as indicative of negative attitudes. There was some overlap between phrases and the themes they were taken to represent. For example, an individual may think about volunteering as a way to make friends, but do so for individualistic reasons such as wanting to meet people after having moved to a new area. Similarly, a person may think of volunteering as a way of helping others but link this to their goal of entering a caring profession, thus overlapping with an instrumental perspective. Despite these tensions, the cards were considered effective ways of prompting participants to discuss their attitudes towards volunteering.

As shown in Figure 5.1, secondary school pupils in Scotland had largely positive views of volunteering. The vast majority of participants in this study also articulated

such attitudes. For example, upon seeing the cue card 'boring', participants were often quick to point out they felt it did not describe volunteering:

I wouldn't have ever have thought it was boring, 'cos it's no' really 'cos it's like, you're getting away to places. (Matt 15, volunteer)

It's not boring ... that probably comes from people who haven't volunteered. (Emma 14, volunteer)

Matt and Emma drew on their positive experiences of volunteering to assert it was not boring. It became apparent during the fieldwork that those with experience of volunteering often used this when articulating their attitudes towards it. Positive perceptions were not, however, solely expressed by volunteers:

It's not boring, it's like fun to help others do stuff that you wouldn't usually do, you'd just be sitting home being bored basically [laughs] and then if you can come out and help people, teach them and do different things and stuff. (Lucy 13, non-volunteer)

Lucy was not currently volunteering and did not recall any prior experience of doing so. She did, however, attend dance classes organised by a sports charity with an established volunteer programme through which young people delivered physical activities. As such, Lucy had exposure to volunteering as a concrete practice, interaction with young volunteers and, therefore, a way of developing a positive outlook towards it.

Positive attitudes were also expressed during a focus group with non-volunteering males at the sports charity Lucy attended. Although the participants stated they had no experience of volunteering, they described it as 'good' (Owen 15, non-volunteer) as 'people can give up their free time to ... benefit other people' (Paul 16, non-

volunteer). When asked what they thought about volunteering at the start of the focus group, Paul immediately made reference to the volunteers at the charity, 'see the people here, they're volunteering to take the football and that, they're just doing it, out their own free time'. In doing so, he indicated his reference point for volunteering rested with the charity. As beneficiaries of the organisation and their volunteers, Lucy, Owen and Paul were recipients of voluntary action. Their connection to the organisation gave them a reference point to draw upon. This echoes findings from Haski-Leventhal et al.'s (2008) research in which at-risk youth, who were supported by young volunteers, learnt from their peers about volunteering and developed an interest in volunteering themselves.

Although subsection 5.2.2 discusses the low status participants perceived volunteering to have among their peers and section 5.3 explores volunteers' accounts of attitudinal changes prior to and post-volunteering, at the time of the fieldwork, none of the participants personally expressed negative views. This may be related to the fact that volunteers and ex-volunteers recounted positive experiences of volunteering while non-volunteers were often connected to volunteer-involving organisations. Accordingly, participants had either experienced or witnessed the positive impact of volunteering thus potentially reducing the likelihood that they would consider it in negative terms.

### *5.2.1 The provision of aid*

Figure 5.1 reveals 78 percent of respondents in the *Young People in Scotland* survey associated 'helping people out' with volunteering. This high proportion was echoed during the fieldwork, with numerous participants discussing volunteering as a way of helping the community and providing support to others. In terms of helping the community, some of the participants thought of volunteering as a way of overcoming problems in their local areas. When asked why they had selected the 'helping people' cue card, a group of female non-volunteers responded:

Robyn            Because you could help people plant, like...  
Taylor            Flowers and that.  
Robyn            Aye.  
Taylor            Like and the, get the community, make the community look nicer, you volunteer to make it look nicer, so you plant flowers, you clean up all the litter, you get all rid of the graffiti.

(Robyn 15, Taylor 16, non-volunteers)

Such an approach resonates with broader ideas about volunteers coming together for the greater good. Images of volunteers, such as those who took their brooms to the streets of London following the 2011 riots, as well as campaigns, such as Clean for the Queen, which encouraged individuals to clean their local areas in preparation of the monarch's 90<sup>th</sup> birthday, draw on the notion of volunteers as a solution to social problems (Eliasoph, 2013). During a focus group with male non-volunteers at the same college, Will (18) also discussed the role of volunteering in ameliorating social issues. When asked why he had selected the 'helping people', cue card Will stated:

It's 'cos I seen about, what was it again, the volunteering with the something, I was looking at joinery apprenticeships and then the volunteer one came up and it was helping other people, I don't know what it was, it was like in like, bad areas, you could volunteer to help people ... it was going out to like rough areas and help them do like redevelopment of houses and stuff like that.

The participants in Will's focus group indicated they had never really spoken about volunteering and had minimal exposure to it. Indeed, Will's reason for discussing 'helping people' appeared to come from having seen an advert when looking for

apprenticeships. During the same focus group, Alex (18) also indicated he had selected 'helping people' based on his recent experiences:

I was at a thing on Friday with ma work and somebody fae Cancer Research was there and it was telling you about the amount of people that help volunteer ... that's what made me think about helping people.

Will and Alex's explanations for thinking of volunteering as an activity that helps others stemmed from chance encounters. Moreover, by discussing volunteering as helping those in 'rough areas' and as supporting Cancer Research, their conception of helping people was orientated towards supporting those in need. As such, they reflected the dominant paradigmatic approach to volunteering as an altruistic act towards less fortunate groups or persons (Rochester et al., 2010). Their limited exposure to volunteer-involving environments meant they had few sources of information to draw on to when formulating their opinions.

Those with greater experience of volunteering also discussed it in terms of helping the community. Faye (16, volunteer), for instance, described volunteering as 'helping people, like in your community, giving them opportunities that they wouldnae really get'. Similarly, Demi (18, volunteer) felt volunteering:

Brings the community together ... people from the community come in here, so it's as if we're helpin' the wider community in here by doin', helping them do their homework an' stuff like that.

In some instances, the volunteers' discussions of helping the community resonated with the notion of mutual aid. Demi had attended Youth Charity 4 as a participant for a number of years before volunteering and felt she had benefited from the organisation as well as seen it benefit others. Based on these experiences, volunteering was viewed as a way of providing help in the same way that it had

been received. This approach was also evident among those who indicated they rarely left the areas in which they lived. This was particularly so of Callum (15, ex-volunteer) who felt volunteering was 'a community thing so if you're doing a community then anything you dae is helping people then that's helping the community'. I met Callum through an organisation located on the outskirts of Glasgow, in an area with limited amenities or leisure opportunities. Callum believed more people should volunteer locally because:

It's their community and if they want anything else to change, they need to do it their selves basically, like help other people that's trying to help them.

Callum's belief that volunteers should help their communities appeared to be borne out of frustration at a lack of things to do. Indeed, Callum noted the garden he previously volunteered at had been set on fire in an act of arson. Like Demi, Callum had seen the impact of volunteers and viewed it as a way of creating positive change locally.

In addition to helping the community, participants discussed the role of volunteering in helping others. This was sometimes in the form of particular skills, such as football or dance routines, but also in the form of a pastoral or role model figure. Isla (16, volunteer) thought volunteering was about helping people because:

Without the ... people who go out every single week and ... like people might be coming to see that one coach to speak to them and if they're not there, who are they going to have? So I think that's quite important.

Many of the coaches Isla referred to were volunteers themselves. Isla believed, 'volunteering's pretty much about helping ... that's what [Sports Charity 3] does'. For her, 'helping' entailed providing an ear to listen to young people's concerns, as well as aiding the delivery of activities. In other instances, volunteers drew on their

experiences of helping other, often younger, people. Cheryl (16, volunteer), for example, stated she 'just help[s] the kids and make[s] sure they're ok' at the youth club she frequented.

Accounts of volunteers as helping younger children allude to the idea of the volunteer as role model. In some cases, this was made explicit. Emma (14, volunteer), for example, thought 'being a role model' was core to the notion of volunteering, while Olivia (17, volunteer) believed that, through volunteering, she acted as a 'mentor' for younger persons. The notion of the volunteer as role model was also evident during an interview with one of the volunteer coordinators, Tracey, who stated youth volunteering was about 'them kinda taking responsibility and, and kinda showing other young people that this is what you can do and being a positive role model'. Such attitudes are also evident in promotional material for the Saltire Awards, in which one award holder is referred to as a 'role model for other students'.<sup>37</sup>

### *5.2.2 Volunteering as stigma*

Although participants generally expressed positive attitudes towards volunteering, a number felt that, among their peers, it was a source of stigma. Bourdieu argued the subjective dispositions of habitus develop in a symbiotic relationship with the social conditions in which they are positioned. Individuals who occupy similar positions in social space develop ways of seeing and acting in accordance with the possibilities available to them. Accordingly, while the social conditions of universities have been found to generate expectations that students should volunteer (Holdsworth & Brewis, 2014), the lower levels of volunteering in disadvantaged areas present a different set of opportunities. In circumstances where activities appear at odds with group dispositions, they can be viewed as 'not for the likes of us' (Bourdieu, 1990, p. 56). The stigma participants associated with volunteering stemmed from its perceived incompatibility with peer group dispositions.

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<sup>37</sup> See <https://saltireawards.org.uk/stories/> (accessed 02 March 2017).

Part of the stigma came from the terminology and image of volunteering. During a focus group with female volunteers, participants outlined their belief that others did not value volunteering, just as they had not prior to volunteering themselves. When asked whether they thought there was a problem with the term, Faye (16, volunteer) stated:

Not changing the name of volunteering but like changing the image ... I don't know, like have a better, so like people have a better view of it ... because people don't actually know the definition of a volunteer.

Orla (16, volunteer) suggested there was a need for sensitivity when framing volunteering. She felt the same act, described in different ways, could generate positive or negative responses:

If you were to put it in such a way ... "I'm going to the Scouts, I'm going to Girls' Brigade", it would be like, "Oh alright, cool [said in an affirmative tone]", but if you're like, "Volunteering", it would be like, erm, "Alright cool [said in a dismissive tone]".

The extract highlights a tension between hearing something in the abstract, 'volunteering', and the concrete, 'Scouts' or 'Girls' Brigade'. As a term, volunteering covers a wide and varied range of activities. For those socialised in environments where it is rarely performed, its meaning may appear opaque and its performance at odds with group norms. The dismissive tone may therefore have been related to both a lack of understanding of what volunteering entails as well as its negative image. By contrast, reference to specific activities that sit within the scope of accepted group behaviour was less likely to be stigmatised. Due to the negative ways volunteering was described, one participant stated he rarely considered his actions as such:

- Ryan I've never really thought about it as volunteering, it doesn't feel like volunteering like how it's commonly described.
- JD How is it commonly described?
- Ryan Like as being like boring or like, yeah, unenjoyable.
- (Ryan 16, volunteer)

Unlike university settings (Anderson & Green, 2012; Holdsworth & Brewis, 2014) and middle-class areas (Dean, 2016a) where research indicates volunteering is visibly promoted, young people encounter it on their courses and are encouraged to use it in their job applications, Ryan did not feel the term resonated with his actions. This finding reinforces the notion that volunteering is perceived as an exclusive construct by young people who, as a result, dissociate from the term (Lukka & Ellis, 2001).

During some focus groups with non-volunteers, participants likened potential volunteering activities, such as litter picking, to community service (see also Mason et al., 2011) and thought other 'people might mistake them' (Robyn 15, non-volunteer) in this way. Litter picking was also offered as an example of the type of activity a volunteer would be 'slagged' for doing during a focus group with non-volunteering males:

- Harry If you were out about [local area] and they saw you pick up litter or something, you'd get slagged, like they'd say something to you like, "What are ye doing?" and stuff like that.
- JD Right.
- Fraser It'd be embarrassing, no' embarrassing but you wouldnae like to be see, you wouldnae want people to see you doing stuff, dunno, just like, in the area where you, people know you.

(Harry 17 ex-volunteer, Fraser 16, non-volunteer)

Harry and Fraser's discussion highlights a tension in attitudes towards volunteering as a desirable, yet stigmatised activity. On the one hand, Harry stated 'it would be good to see people doing it', yet, as Fraser noted, 'you wouldnae want people to see you'. Part of this stigma appeared to be related to the activity in question, with participants drawing on the notion of volunteers performing activities which could be confused with community service. The significance of the activity to whether or not volunteering was considered 'boring', was iterated during another focus group:

Taylor            Depends what it is you're volunteerin' for.  
Zoe                It could be boring, but it just depends what you're doing.  
Robyn            If you don't like it.

(Taylor 16, Zoe 15, Robyn 15, non-volunteers)

As noted above, a distinction between volunteering in the abstract and concrete was made. In other words, the notion of volunteering risked being stigmatised or characterised as boring, while volunteering to perform a particular activity, assuming it conformed to peer group norms, was less likely to suffer the same fate. Participants did not, therefore, dismiss the notion of volunteering outright. Rather, due to limited knowledge of what it entailed, participants felt it was not held in high regard among their peers, thereby diminishing opportunities for participation.<sup>38</sup>

Beth, a youth volunteer advisor who worked with young people in areas of multiple deprivation, believed volunteering was often thought of 'as something other people do', due to the negative attitudes associated with it. She felt young people drew on the notion of a volunteer as 'the little middle-class granny working in a charity shop' or as 'somebody that's really kind and really selfless' – a persistent stereotype (Ellis, 2004). Pye et al. (2009) found the image of volunteering led both volunteers and

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<sup>38</sup> See section 8.2 for a discussion of how peer networks created informal penalties for volunteering.

non-volunteers to dissociate from the term. Similar sentiments were expressed during the fieldwork. Faye (16, volunteer) believed the 'image hasn't been portrayed', leading those who had not volunteered to think 'it's just fae like wee goody-two-shoes, who like go and help everybody', while Harry (17, ex-volunteer) thought volunteers were 'posh'. In environments exhibiting low levels of volunteering, doing so had the potential to mark an individual as different:

It's no' something that people do ma age, like, it's just stereotypically, "You're good, you want to be seen as a really good person and that's no' cool, that's no' what cool people do". (Orla 16, volunteer)

Volunteering was thus framed as 'unthinkable' (Bourdieu, 1990, p. 54), it was something other people did and did not conform to collective expectations. Not only did participants believe volunteering was held in low regard among their peers, but some volunteers, such as Ryan, did not feel the term resonated with their experiences. Volunteering had not been internalised as an integral aspect of participants' identities. In contrast to the notion that volunteering enables young people to stand out from their peers and reap benefits (Holdsworth, 2015), participants felt volunteers stood out for undesirable reasons.

Another way in which volunteering was viewed as stigmatising was due to non-remuneration. Beth stated this aspect was usually one of the first things the young people she worked with said when asked what words or phrases they associated with volunteering. She believed 'the fact that it's not paid' was a 'massive thing for them' and that, even after a few weeks of the volunteering programme, they kept coming back to this point because their 'number one priority' was to gain employment. This may, in part, be related to the fact the young people Beth worked with were on an employability course for those not in work, education or training. As such, their desire for paid work may have reflected their financially precarious positions. In other instances, non-remuneration was considered problematic where

volunteers were performing similar activities to those who were being paid. Thomas (17, ex-volunteer), who was undertaking a paid apprenticeship at a youth club, highlighted this point when discussing how he thought his friends would feel if they were volunteering at the same club:

Say they're at the club like volunteering and I'm at the club, like I get paid for what I do here at the club, but they're just, like, it's all good for them still but, like they would look at it as, "Why's he getting paid and I'm no' getting paid?"

Kieran (15, volunteer) spoke to a similar theme when recounting the different reactions his friends had to his admission that he had started volunteering:

When I first said to one of, err, my mates Ah says to him, "Look Ah've got a job", and he went, "What are ye doan?", I went, "I'm workin in [Youth Charity 5]" ... he went, "What are ye doan, are you getting paid?", I went, "No it's volunteer work" and at first he thought I was kidding on, Ah said to him, "No, I'm being genuinely serious, it's volunteer work" and he went, "Oh that's no' that bad", and then I said to somebody else who's ma mate and, err, these two people are very very opposites, and then he went "What's the point in that? You're no' getting paid, you shouldnae be workin'", and I went, "Yeah but it does give you other aspects, so it's no' just about getting paid, yeah I would like to get paid but if I cannae get paid there's nothing I can do about it".

Additional volunteers in this study similarly thought the unpaid aspect of volunteering could make others view it as 'pointless' (Faye 16, volunteer) or akin to 'basically doing a job for nothing' (Paige 18, volunteer). Lack of awareness of volunteering and its benefits, in addition to the notions that it sat outside collective dispositions and was an unpaid activity, compounded participants' perceptions that

volunteering was stigmatised among their peer groups. The notion of volunteering as stigmatised by young people's peers has been noted in other studies (Gaskin, 2004; NatCen, 2011; Smith, 1999). However, while Ellis (2004) found non-volunteers expressed negative views, non-volunteers in this study generally saw volunteering as a positive activity.<sup>39</sup> The stigma of volunteering related to the perception that, because it was not widely practiced, performing it went against group norms. While non-volunteers were not wholly dismissive of volunteering, those who had volunteered spoke about it in more favourable terms.

### **5.3 The blurring of attitudes and benefits**

Bourdieu (2010 [1984], p. 243) argued the 'dispositions of the mind and body' were developed unconsciously following prolonged periods of exposure to cultural objects and practices. When asked about their attitudes towards volunteering, many of the participants in this study drew on their experiences as volunteers or persons who had been exposed to volunteering environments and often described changes in their opinions before and after such experiences. Changes ranged from viewing it as 'boring' and a 'waste of time' to considering it enjoyable and skills enhancing. At times, there appeared to be a conflation of attitudes with benefits received. The interconnection of these factors highlights Bourdieu's contention concerning perceptions as outcomes of an individual's position in social space and exposure to certain environments.

Liam (18, ex-volunteer), who had volunteered for a sports charity, stated that although he had been told about volunteering opportunities at school, he 'didnae really pay attention' leading him to dismiss it:

Whenever Ah thought about volunteering ... when I was younger I thought,  
"Oh right, does that mean working in a charity shop? I wouldnae want to do

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<sup>39</sup> As noted in subsection 4.4.3, however, this may be related to the fact that a number of the non-volunteers were recruited from voluntary sector organisations.

that, I've worked in a shop before, I hated it, so no I wouldnae do it for free" [laughs] but erm, no, I wouldnae say I know lots about volunteerin' but, from what I've done so far, I think it's been a'right, volunteering, aye, brilliant.

Although presented with information at school, Liam dismissed it, leaving him with only stereotypical notions to draw on. A similar view was espoused by Beth, a youth volunteer advisor, who believed 'a lot' of young people thought volunteering only entailed helping out in 'soup kitchens, homeless shelters, charity shops, youth clubs, churches'. Beth stated, 'with a lot of confidence', that the perceptions of the young people she worked with were 'completely transformed' following participation on the programmes she delivered. Although early experiences carry disproportionate weight in the development of a habitus, as an open system of dispositions (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992), it can be modified to accommodate new dispositions enabling 'people to react in new ways' (Sayer, 2005, p. 25). During the fieldwork, participants' accounts of volunteering attested to the mutable nature of habitus.

Analysis of the transcripts revealed stereotypical notions about volunteering subsided as exposure to it increased. Daniela (16, volunteer) stated, 'you forget about the stereotypes, say wi' volunteering and that, wance you start wi' volunteering'. Having positive volunteering experiences and gaining personal benefits shifted attitudes towards viewing it as an enjoyable and skills enhancing pursuit:

I think like before volunteering, I was like one of them goody-goody people who thought it was all like, "Yeah, you're a goody-two-shoes, you do volunteering and like don't get paid and stuff", but then when I did like volunteer it was like, "Wow, this is why people do it" ... the buzz and like the euphoria you get from it is like amazing. (Orla 16, volunteer)

Scott I used to just think it was like basically a bit goody-goody and it's a bit cheesy ... but not anymore.

...

JD How would it have been cheesy do you think?

Scott Like now 'cos I know how you like, you can, it helps build skills and all that, but before that I just thought it was like, go out and help people and then that's it.

(Scott 15, volunteer)

Prior to volunteering, Orla and Scott drew on notions of volunteers as do-gooders. Their experiences, however, led to the development of an intense positive emotional reaction in Orla's case and a somewhat instrumental one in Scott's, both of which enabled them to challenge their preconceptions.

In addition to thinking of volunteering in stereotypical terms, other participants indicated they previously considered it 'boring', a 'waste of time' or lacking in purpose. Thomas (17, ex-volunteer), for example, stated he used to believe volunteering was 'just boring' but that his mother and the manager of the youth charity he attended 'opened up ma mind' to it. Prior to this, Thomas said, 'I shut myself aff for like volunteering I just didnae think about it at all'. Not having access to volunteer-involving networks or environments limited the space participants had for considering it. Social capital, in the form of information channels (Coleman, 1988), was therefore vital in offering participants ways of learning about and developing positive attitudes towards volunteering.

Prior perceptions of volunteering also included the notion that it was not a worthwhile pursuit. Ryan (16, volunteer) stated he previously 'wouldn't see the point' in volunteering, but at the time of the interview felt it was a 'useful' way 'to learn new skills', 'help' others and 'meet new people'. Kieran (15, volunteer) moved from thinking, 'what's the point in that? 'Cos you work this amount and you don't

even get paid', to, 'it gives you a great amount of experience that you probably wouldn't get anywhere else' and 'shows you that this is sort of what it takes to get on in the real world'. These extracts demonstrate experience of volunteering provided greater awareness of the benefits of participation, such as gaining skills and participating in enjoyable activities, enabling participants to see a 'point' to engaging with it.

The temporal nature of this process resonates with Bourdieu's argument concerning the acquisition of cultural capital. Bourdieu (2010 [1984], p. 59) argued cultural competence was derived through a process of 'slow familiarization' and 'repeated contact with cultural works and cultured people'. Regarding volunteering, 'cultural works' can be substituted with volunteering environments and 'cultured persons' with persons with knowledge of volunteering. By volunteering, participants entered different positions in social space. Unlike their peer networks, volunteering had a visible presence in the youth clubs and charities participants attended. This exposure, in addition to their experiences of volunteering, enabled participants to react in new ways to the notion of volunteering. For example, Liam indicated that, despite being told about volunteering at school, he paid little attention to it. Yet, having volunteered and enjoyed doing so, he came to think of it as 'brilliant'. Vikki (18, volunteer), alluded to the open nature of the habitus when suggesting that, if persons with negative attitudes 'tried it', they would 'change their views on volunteering'. The following subsections examine the ways in which attitudes towards volunteering developed based on participants' experiences.

### *5.3.1 Developing skills, gaining experience*

The Literature Review presented evidence indicating young adults were more likely to associate volunteering with building skills and enhancing careers than older persons. It was argued that such findings could be explained in light of the instrumental manner in which youth volunteering is conceptualised, as a way for young people to stand out from the crowd when applying for jobs or further

education, as well as the differing life-stages of young people and adults. This approach to volunteering was evident in some participants' attitudes towards it, although the manner in which it was discussed varied in accordance with experiences of volunteering. Those with limited experience suggested volunteering could provide skills and experiences that could enhance job prospects, while volunteers discussed these in terms of general life skills and experiences.

Those who had not volunteered, or described having limited experience, discussed the notion of developing skills or gaining experience largely in terms of CV enhancement. Darren (17, ex-volunteer), for instance believed volunteering 'could help you in the future' by virtue of its perceived capacity to enable an individual to stand out from non-volunteers:

'Cos if you've got it on, like, your CV people will be interested and it could maybe, you get a job in front of everyone else.

Darren's point was echoed by Ewan (17, ex-volunteer) who added that teachers at their school encouraged pupils to put activities such as volunteering on their CVs 'because it gives ... employers like more idea of who you are'. The idea that volunteering enables an individual to demonstrate who they are plays into the notion of the 'subject of value' who invests in the self for an anticipated future (Skeggs, 2011) and Holdsworth's (2015) notion of the 'cult of experience'. From these perspectives, volunteering signifies a set of socially desirable values, enabling volunteers to market themselves as desirable citizens.

As well as providing a generalised way of standing out, volunteering was also considered by ex- and non-volunteering males as a way of gaining skills and experience in particular fields. Harry (17, ex-volunteer) believed that, in addition to volunteering to help others, 'you could be doing it to help yersel'' by learning the skills required for particular jobs. In a separate focus group, Paul (16, non-volunteer)

and Ross (12, non-volunteer) discussed volunteering as a way of providing employment enhancing experiences. As Ross stated:

If you wanted to be like a coach of a football team and you were, you've already done volunteering and football then you know how to like, like you know how to run it.

In this extract, Ross draws on the idea that volunteering assists transitions into employment. The manner in which he conceptualised it, however, was not in terms of general transferable skills, but direct practical skills that could be transported from a volunteering role to a paid position. The sports charity Ross attended used volunteers in the delivery of football-related activities, some of whom went on to work for the charity. Ross' exposure to volunteers and paid coaches at the charity disposed him towards viewing volunteering as a way of attaining employment while staying in the same field, rather than providing a broader set of transferable skills – a sentiment found in Bradford et al.'s (2016) study of working-class volunteers.

With the exception of Ross, it is notable that the extracts in this subsection are from older non-volunteering males. It may be the case that their proximity to the labour market heightened their awareness of volunteering as an employability enhancing activity. Although those with experience of volunteering also discussed it in terms of CV benefits, they considered it to provide opportunities to develop a broader range of skills and experiences from gaining qualifications and skills on specific courses, to pleasurable experiences such as residential trips:

Well, like I said, through [Sports Charity 3] we earn like lots of qualifications... (Isla 16, volunteer)

Because wi' volunteering as well you can go on, like, residential, like we went on the other week... (Niamh 14, volunteer)

Every time you come in you're always learnin'... (Kieran 15, volunteer)

Like ma confidence skills have gone way up... (Orla 16, volunteer)

For volunteers, attitudes about volunteering as a way to develop skills or gain experiences were based on incidents of these having happened. Although these were sometimes articulated in the context of gaining experiences that could be put towards particular ends, such as employment, they were also discussed in terms of broader life-experiences, such as weekends away. Enjoyable experiences not only led participants to view volunteering as a way of developing skills and gaining experiences but also making friends.

### *5.3.2 Making friends*

As with the development of skills or gaining of experiences, the manner in which participants expressed attitudes towards volunteering as a way of making friends varied according to their experiences. While some of the non-volunteers speculated that volunteering would offer opportunities for friendship formation, volunteers were more certain of this notion and recounted instances of such processes happening. For example, when presented with the cue cards, a group of female non-volunteers all mentioned 'a way to make friends'. There was not, however, much discussion of this aspect and the manner in which Taylor (16) referred to it appeared uncertain – 'you could make friends by volunteerin', couldn't you?'. A similarly speculative attitude was evident during a focus group with male non-volunteers. Ross (12) referred to volunteering as 'a way to make friends', which prompted Paul (16) to state:

'Cos there's a lot of us, there's probably going to be other people volunteering as well ... and obviously there's going 'ae be a lot more of them, so I'm sure, like, you make pals.

While non-volunteers mentioned this aspect of volunteering, they attributed less weight to it than other cue cards, such as 'helping people' or 'developing skills and experience'. In contrast, those who had volunteered were more likely to discuss it as a way of making friends by virtue of this having been their experience:

That's exactly what I done, and you're getting the opportunities to meet new people and develop friendships with them and you help them. (Connor 17, volunteer)

You could make friends, I've made pals through volunteering, so I have. (Thomas 17, ex-volunteer)

I'd say a way to make new friends, yeah, when I volunteered at the Girls Brigade there was, err, an older section ... and they were my age so like when I would volunteer there, I could just mingle with them and not feel left out or an outcast or anything so, like, made friends with them, so, yeah. (Orla 16, volunteer)

However, not all volunteers who discussed making friends did so based on their experiences. Sophie (17, volunteer) thought volunteering could be a way to make friends, but did not feel this reflected her experience. Sophie felt this was because she was volunteering at a primary school and thus interacting with younger pupils and older teachers, she stated, 'it's not as if I'm with my pure best friends'. Despite this, she felt, 'I guess you would [make friends], like, if you went and volunteered at certain places, you'd meet new people'. In saying so, Sophie highlighted how different types of volunteer experiences lead to different attitudes. For example, the volunteers quoted in this section were volunteering with other young people and children, often in play and sports-orientated capacities. Sophie, by contrast, was volunteering in a professional environment. Although she recognised

volunteering as a potential way of making friends, Sophie's attitude was more orientated towards developing the skills and experiences required to be a teacher.

In contrast to the majority of participants, a focus group of female non-volunteers felt volunteering could act as a barrier to friendship formation. Zoe (15) described 'a lassie in our school' who used to 'volunteer to go and help the librarian at the library lunchtime club'. Taylor (16) stated the student 'had nae pals' and that 'naebody would bother with her while she was away, out of sight, out of mind'. The participants suggested the girl volunteered because she did not have any friends and saw volunteering as a potential threat to their 'reputation[s]' (Robyn 15, non-volunteer). As an activity at odds with peer group dispositions, volunteering threatened to mark an individual as atypical with potentially negative implications for friendship formation.

## **5.4 Chapter conclusion**

This chapter has addressed the first research question by examining participants' understandings of and attitudes towards volunteering. Participants expressed understandings of volunteering broadly in keeping with academic and policy definitions. Two key features, helping others and acting without remuneration, were widely cited. The issue of acting without coercion was discussed to a lesser extent and, in some discussions, merged with the notion that volunteering is that which occurs during an individual's free time. The manner in which these features were discussed varied according to levels of exposure to volunteering and the nature of volunteering experiences. As in other studies (Ellis, 2004; Pye et al., 2009), non-volunteers possessed a weaker understanding of volunteering and were less certain in their efforts to define it. In relation to the question of organisational context, contrary to the contention that the culture of informal volunteering is more reflective of the participatory culture of deprived areas, participants felt organisational settings were important and that people in their communities rarely engaged in helping activities beyond such environments.

In keeping with findings from existing studies, participants expressed broadly positive views of volunteering. Volunteering was widely seen as a beneficial activity that provided help to others. However, although none of the participants held negative attitudes towards volunteering, there was a sense that within their peer groups volunteering was held in less favourable terms. Participants felt their non-volunteering peers lacked information about volunteering and were dismissive of it. Indeed, non-volunteering participants associated volunteering with community service and litter picking which they considered to be the types of activity an individual would get 'slagged' for doing. Moreover, some indicated volunteering was seen as something that 'other people do'. Using Bourdieu's notion of habitus, it was argued that such responses stemmed from the perception that volunteering was at odds with collective dispositions.

For volunteers, attitudes were influenced by personal experiences of volunteering. This contrasts with findings from a study in an affluent area of Glasgow where researchers reported participants' 'volunteering experiences' were 'directly influenced by their perceptions of what volunteering *is* and what it *means* to be a volunteer' (Clement & Lafferty, 2015, p. 7, emphasis in original). Volunteers in my study described how their preconceptions of volunteering as 'boring' or a 'waste of time' were challenged by their experiences. Rather than perceptions influencing experiences, experiences influenced perceptions. Participants' accounts reflected the open nature of habitus and suggested attitudes towards volunteering as a stigmatised activity were mutable and that positive experiences could provide new ways of thinking about it.

The finding that volunteers' attitudes were informed by their experiences of volunteering suggests there exists a lack of knowledge and cultural capital about volunteering among young people in deprived areas. This poses a challenge to those seeking to enhance levels of youth volunteering in such locations as negative

attitudes will likely reduce willingness to engage with it. However, evidence of attitudinal change following volunteering experiences suggests exposure to volunteering-involving environments can be an effective way of countering the stigma associated with it. As many of the volunteers had been involved in their organisations for lengthy periods of time (see Chapter 6), early exposure to such environments may provide a way of developing volunteer-related cultural capital and limiting the extent to which it is seen as a stigmatised activity.

In terms of the role of volunteering, participants emphasised the importance of helping the community and the significance of organisations to this process. This suggests they considered formal volunteering an effective way of creating change in their communities, thus indicating the supposed predilection for informal volunteering in deprived areas did not reflect participants' experiences. While there was some evidence that the altruistic aspects of volunteering were associated with an image of volunteers as 'goody-two-shoes', there was also a sense that volunteering was a way of providing important help to others. Furthermore, participants thought of volunteering as a way of enabling an individual to develop skills and experiences. Those with less experience of volunteering tended to discuss this in more instrumental terms while those with more experience framed it in terms of life skills. In these ways, there was evidence of attitudes in keeping with traditional volunteerism's emphasis on altruism and community engagement and new volunteerism's focus on individualised benefits.

To conclude, in terms of the nature of youth volunteering in deprived areas, the chapter suggests the generally positive attitudes participants expressed indicate there is a base which can be used to encourage volunteering. It also suggests that they see the organisational setting as an important component of volunteering. However, participants' accounts of their peers' attitudes and their own negative attitudes prior to volunteering suggest encouraging participation may be more challenging for those who are not connected to volunteer-involving organisations.

In light of this, it is important to understand how participants started volunteering in areas largely characterised by non-participation. It is this topic that the following chapter addresses.

## 6 Engaging with volunteering

This chapter explores participants' routes into volunteering and their reasons for engaging, or wanting to engage, with it. Existing evidence suggests word-of-mouth is a key mechanism through which young people and adults enter opportunities (Low et al., 2007; Shannon, 2009). Young people in Scotland have been found to cite parents, teachers and friends as the people most likely to encourage them to volunteer, followed by someone at a club or group they already attend (Harper & Jackson, 2015). Yet, from young to old, volunteering rates are lower in areas of multiple deprivation raising the issue of how those who are less likely to have access to volunteering networks forge paths into opportunities.

Although young people have been found to cite the prospect of volunteering with friends as a greater motivator than improving their career prospects (see Table 2.2), when contrasted with adults, they have been reported to place greater emphasis on employability motives (Low et al., 2007). Some scholars suggest this is related to their different life circumstances (Nicholas & Ralston, 2016), while others argue youth volunteering policies encourage instrumental motives (Dean, 2014; Holmes, 2009). Evidence indicates such motives are shaped by social class, with middle-class young people being more likely to cite them (Brooks, 2007; Dean, 2016a; Storr & Spaaij, 2016) than those from working-class backgrounds (Bradford et al., 2016). This chapter contributes to these debates by examining what motivated volunteers as well as what would interest non-volunteers about volunteering.

The first section focuses on the factors that facilitated participants' access to volunteering opportunities. The notion of the participant-to-volunteer transition is proposed to capture the manner in which many participants started volunteering. Participants often reported attending youth clubs and charities for extended periods of time prior to volunteering. The concept of habitus is employed to argue early exposure to such organisations provided an important foundation from which

participants were able to respond to positively offers to volunteer from youth workers. The second section examines motivations for volunteering as well as the reasons volunteers expressed for their continued participation. In keeping with the individualism of new volunteerism, there was widespread recognition of employability-related motivations. However, participants, particularly those who had followed the participant-to-volunteer trajectory, also expressed emotional reasons for wanting to volunteer, relating to the relationships and attachments they had developed to particular organisations and persons within them. It is argued that pre-existing relationships with organisations were significant in translating motivations into actual volunteering.

## **6.1 Factors facilitating access to volunteering opportunities**

This section examines the significance participants' social circumstances played in shaping their routes into volunteering opportunities. It argues friends and family were important actors facilitating participants' initial involvement as attendees in volunteer-involving organisations. Early and prolonged exposure to such environments provided a foundation from which calls to volunteer could be responded to positively. In other words, participation in these settings was incorporated into participants' habitus.

### *6.1.1 Discovering youth organisations*

Two of the youth workers believed the organisations they worked for were firmly embedded in their local communities. Lauren felt 'everyone in the north and east [of the city] knows of [Youth Charity 1]' and that 'local ties are a huge factor' in facilitating volunteering with the organisation. Tracey stated, 'a lot of the children knew us because obviously they live locally and we would deliver [activities and events] in their streets'. In both instances, Lauren and Tracey's organisations offered a variety of play based activities for children and young people, meaning they had a presence in their neighbourhoods. There was a sense from the interviews that the visibility of organisations had an important role in enabling

participants to find out about them. In some cases, this stemmed from participants seeing locally placed adverts or the physical buildings where organisations were based. In others, it was down to the networks they were part of and the efforts of youth workers to make contact with young people.

Callum (15, ex-volunteer) described finding out about the community garden where he had volunteered through 'leaflets, posters and stuff' on lampposts and railings 'round the community'. The female volunteers at Youth Charity 4 stated they became aware of the charity due to its proximity to a small shopping precinct:

Caitlin            Seen it when I was going to the shops.

Demi                Aye same.

...

Brooke            Ma ma' took me to the shops an' it was on and I was wondering what was happenin'.

(Caitlin 13, Demi 18, Brooke 13, volunteers)

In addition to seeing the building, Caitlin also recalled 'there was loads ah wee leaflets ... so you know when clubs are on'. Although these extracts indicate a role for adverts and physical presence in the dispersal of information about volunteer-involving organisations, some participants felt that, on their own, these were not effective promotional strategies. Rather, making direct contact was considered more fruitful and word-of-mouth, through family and friends, was a common route into youth clubs and charities. Participants indicated that adverts and posters were largely ineffective at communicating information. For example, Ben (14, volunteer) suggested posters were at risk of being defaced and that social networks were a better way of finding out about opportunities:

It's knowing the one person to know everyone else because I think the thing is, people see a poster, they grab a Sharpie and they make their own poster on top of it.<sup>40</sup>

This sentiment was echoed by other participants. Megan (13, volunteer) felt having a representative from Youth Charity 1 come to her school to inform pupils about the organisation was a more effective way of enabling her to gather information than posters. Tracey (volunteer coordinator) expressed uncertainty at the extent to which young people gained information from posters and stated, 'I'm a believer that word-of-mouth's the best, the best way to get out there'. She described taking an active role in promoting the organisation by speaking to young people on the streets. Regardless of whether this contact led to participation in the organisation's activities, Tracey felt it was beneficial as:

They know that you're there and they know that there's another option, that they can get involved, so I just always think street work is beneficial whether they've shouted at you and told you to go away or whether they've actually spoke to you, but at least they know you're there.

Making contact in this way offered young people the opportunity to exercise agency in deciding whether or not to 'get involved'. Tracey believed the young people she encountered had to 'learn to trust you' and that it was essential to 'build that relationship' with them before offering services provided by the organisation. She felt young people in the area were distrustful of adults, such as police officers, whom they saw as getting them 'into trouble'. The space Tracey gave young people to act autonomously differed from their experiences of public space, where they were surveyed by police, and schools, which they were compelled to attend:

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<sup>40</sup> Sharpie is a brand of writing instrument.

They kind of find it hard to believe that we actually want to go out and offer them something that they can get involved in, that they can learn from, that they can choose.

In contrast to the volunteering habitus of middle-class young people, enabling them to enter volunteering opportunities with ease (Dean, 2016a), Tracey's account emphasises the effort that had to be put in to encourage even initial participation at her organisation. The notion that the young people she spoke to found it hard to believe they were being offered anything suggests they had not been socialised in environments where such offers were common. Indeed, as discussed in section 7.1, encounters with adults in public space were often experienced negatively. Accordingly, having the resources to be able to develop relationships over time was a significant factor in laying the foundations for young people to be able to start volunteering.

Participants also indicated their friends were important in facilitating access to youth clubs and charities. When asked how they initially found out about the organisations where they now volunteered, Vikki (18, volunteer) and Kieran (15, volunteer) responded:

When I was younger I used to go to the club, it's like my friends were like, "Ooh come, like, obviously see this club", I went and I enjoyed it, so I kept going back.

One of ma mates said to me, "By the way, erm, there's a new, there's a youth cafe, do you want to go into it and try it out?", I says, "Aye".

In these instances, the participants' social capital, in the form of networks and information channels, can be seen to facilitate access to organisations. There were also instances where participants, such as Megan (13, volunteer), reported telling

their friends about organisations and the suggestion from Niamh (14, volunteer) and Donna (14, volunteer) that talking to young people about the activities offered by organisations was an effective way of encouraging participation. These findings support evidence attesting to the importance of peer networks in facilitating access to youth organisations (Ritchie & Ord, 2017). As will be seen, this initial involvement was an important step towards subsequent volunteering.

Family members also offered important exposure to volunteering environments. It was notable that participants who discussed volunteering family members mentioned sisters and mothers to a greater extent than brothers and fathers. For example, Isla (16, volunteer) and Jade (12, volunteer) reporting having sisters who volunteered, while Katie (14, volunteer), Anne (17, volunteer), Abbie (15, volunteer) and Thomas (17, ex-volunteer) stated their mothers volunteered. This finding may be related to the nature of the organisations recruited to take part in the research, many of which offered activities for children and young people, areas in which females are overrepresented (see Figure 2.3). Not only were some participants' siblings volunteers, but a few indicated their parents were actively involved in the organisations they attended. When asked how they had found out about Youth Charity 1, Nathan (14, volunteer) and Matt (15, volunteer) responded:

Nathan        Ma sister and ma brother done it and my mum's quite involved in it, that's really how I found out about it.

...

Matt            See my mum and dad were involved in this, it's 'cos my mum used to be part of the board, so that's how I found out about it.

...

Nathan        [My mum is] the chair of the board.

As shown in Figure 2.7, only 17 percent of adults in the 'most deprived' areas of Glasgow volunteered during 2016. Accordingly, these participants can be considered atypical of young people in such areas. In terms of understanding volunteering in areas characterised by non-participation, this finding highlights Bourdieu's (1977) contention that early life and family experiences carry significant weight in the formation of the habitus. Familial experience of volunteering offered these participants exposure to volunteering in a way that was inaccessible to those whose families lacked such experience. Moreover, it provided the foundations for later volunteering. Demi (18, volunteer), for example, stated her mother did not want her to socialise on the streets and encouraged participation at youth clubs from an early age:

I was never allowed out, ma mum says, "You're no' goin' out on the streets to play or anything", so she always had me in the club an' then I always grew up in clubs ... ma mum just doesn't see what's the need 'ae the streets when you can go down to a youth club and they've got mare facilities than this street has.

Demi's statement, 'I always grew up in clubs', is a very Bourdieusian point. As the internalisation of the objective conditions of existence, the habitus 'adjusts itself to a probable future which it anticipates' (Bourdieu, 1990, p. 64). The temporal nature of the habitus 'transcends the immediate present via practical mobilization of the past and practical anticipation of the future' (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992, p. 138). Growing up in clubs, therefore, offered Demi a process of familiarisation through which she could become acquainted with the norms governing action in these settings. Bourdieu (1990, p. 64) contended aspirations were shaped by the 'concrete indices of the accessible and the inaccessible'. Accordingly, Demi's past experiences provided the framework through which her present (and future) volunteering could be made 'thinkable'.

While the majority of participants found out about opportunities to volunteer through youth clubs and charities, a minority did so through connections between their schools and such organisations. Both Ewan (17, ex-volunteer) and Olivia (17, volunteer) reported they found out about their respective Boys' and Girls' Brigade groups in this way:

JD                    How did you find out about the Boys' Brigade initially?

Ewan                When I was, I think I was eight or seven, one of ma officers came into ma primary school and just told us all about what, what they done and that ... and I've just stuck with it since then.

JD                    How did you find out about the Girls' Brigade?

Olivia              Well, it was kind of in my primary, they did like, they put up things for it saying it was starting nearby and I was like, "Oh my friends are going, I may as well go".

The young age at which participants found out about clubs was evident elsewhere during the fieldwork. Megan (13, volunteer) reported seeing a poster for the charity she later volunteered with at her primary school. Similarly, when discussing whether they thought information about volunteering was readily available, Vikki (18, volunteer) and Kieran (15, volunteer) described how the organisations they attended promoted themselves at primary schools:

They go into primary and ... they wear [Youth Charity 5] t-shirts ... and they're like, "Oh we're [Youth Charity 5]", and they're like "What's [Youth Charity 5] like?", and it's like "Oh a youth cafe like just doon the road like come down and try it", but, like that way they can advertise it.

I don't think, and this is what I know, I could be a hundred percent wrong, I don't think [Youth Charity 5] go, I think they go to primaries and all that to try and attract kids but they don't really go to secondaries.

It is notable that in these extracts primary, rather than secondary, schools were mentioned as conduits through which information about youth organisations was obtained and initial participation facilitated. As noted, early experiences provide a bedrock through which dispositions can be internalised. However, as Bourdieu argued, individual experiences need to be weighed against collective dispositions. Tracey, a volunteer coordinator, stated that although her organisation offered activities for children as young as five years old and took on volunteers aged 11 and above, maintaining their interest, either as participants or volunteers, became increasingly challenging as they transitioned into secondary school due to peer disapproval. Her remark highlights Bourdieu's (2010 [1984], p. 106) contention that while an individual's habitus may have a unique trajectory, its development is 'marked by the collective destiny'. In other words, while early experiences may provide a foundation for later volunteering, this cannot be assumed and must be examined in the context of the non-normative status of volunteering among peer groups. The following subsection outlines the participant-to-volunteer transition, and the subsequent one examines the processes through which it occurred.

### *6.1.2 The participant-to-volunteer transition*

Musick and Wilson (2008) contend, belonging to a voluntary sector organisation increases the likelihood of an individual volunteering. This rang true of the participants in my study. Indeed, the dominant way in which participants entered volunteering roles was through attending youth organisations as participants prior to volunteering with them – a process referred to in this thesis as the participant-to-volunteer transition. In many instances, participants had frequented organisations for significant periods of their lives. Describing her initial engagement with the charity where she volunteered, Demi (18) stated, 'I was five, and I've always come,

and then I started volunteerin', so I've always been here'. The length of these associations enabled participants to develop relationships with staff and young people at organisations, in addition to familiarity with the practices and activities facilitated by them. Accordingly, they could internalise the norms governing these spaces such that participation in them was perceived as 'natural' and 'accept[ed]' (Bourdieu, 1989, p. 18).

The participant-to-volunteer transition was commonly discussed by those working with young people. Beth, a youth volunteer advisor at a local government organisation, felt that, in some instances, this transition was so subtle young people were not always aware they were volunteering:

A lot of young people that do volunteer, they don't even really, they don't even really see it as volunteering, they just, maybe it's just something they've kind of fallen into being involved with like, erm, if they used to attend a youth club when they were younger and then they've kind of started to help out.

The notion that young people do not always realise they are volunteering resonates with findings from other studies (NatCen, 2011). It also resonates with some participants' accounts of how the stigma associated with volunteering led them to perceive it as something others did and dissociate from the term (see subsection 5.2.2). However, interviews with youth workers suggested this was not how all young people in disadvantaged areas reflected on their activities. The following extract indicates those who had attended Tracey's (volunteer coordinator) organisation for extended periods of time came forward asking to 'volunteer' once they reached the necessary age:

Most of the young people we have have come through as, they've been a participant in a [Youth Charity 2] activity and then as soon as they hit eleven

they come knockin' on the door, it could be, we've had ones on the day of their birthday, their eleventh birthday like, "That's me, eleven, can I please sign up as a volunteer".

The contrast between Beth and Tracey's accounts may be related to the ways in which the latter's organisations used volunteers and framed volunteering. The charity Tracey worked for had defined volunteering roles for adults and young people. Accordingly, young people who had attended her organisation for a number of years had been socialised in an environment where explicit reference was made to volunteering. Based on these accounts, the specific context of the organisation in question is important for understanding the extent to which young volunteers identify their actions as such. The following subsection explores the processes by which the participant-to-volunteer transition happened.

### *6.1.3 Transitioning into volunteering roles*

Being asked or encouraged to volunteer, alongside support from youth workers, were key techniques in the process of starting volunteering. In order for these methods to be effective, however, it was necessary for participants to be familiar with their respective organisations and have developed attachments to persons at them. Without these foundations, simply being asked was not enough to facilitate participation, as evidenced in Tracey's comment, above, that the young people she approached on the streets might 'shout' at her or tell her to 'go away'. Yet, attending an organisation did not guarantee positive relationships with staff. Amy (15, volunteer) described a former youth worker at the charity she attended as 'boring' and stated she 'wasn't very good'. Amy implied the youth worker had been less proactive than her replacement, thus limiting her opportunities to volunteer. Where relationships were more positive, and opportunities to volunteer available, however, word-of-mouth was an effective way of encouraging transitions into volunteering roles:

I kept going back and then they were asking me, like, “Because, like, you come regularly would you like to start volunteering?”, I was like, “Well aye” [laughs] so I, that’s really how I got into volunteering. (Vikki 18, volunteer)

It came from, like, sports, you, like most people, the majority of [Sports Charity 2] came from a sports [background] ... and then like, someone says to you, and then you end up meeting [youth worker] and end up roped in for the rest of your life [laughs]. (Faye 16, volunteer)

The regularity of Vikki’s attendance at the youth charity and Faye’s assertion that many of the volunteers at the sports organisation had a background in sport emphasise the point that exposure to volunteer-involving environments provided an important foundation from which the call to volunteer could be responded to positively. It has been suggested that working-class young people develop a non-volunteering habitus as a result of resource constraints hampering the support available to them (Dean, 2016a). By focusing on individual trajectories, however, it was possible to explore how, for some participants, volunteering was built into the habitus through lengthy associations with volunteer-involving organisations. Although youth workers at each of the research sites encountered resource issues which restricted the support they could offer young people (see subsection 8.1.1) – lending weight to the notion of a non-volunteering habitus – for young people who developed attachments to specific organisations, support to volunteer could be provided over time.

These underpinnings also enabled some participants to use the organisations they attended as bases from which to branch out to other groups. Thomas (17, ex-volunteer) recounted how a volunteer coordinator informed him of a sports charity and phoned them on his behalf, an act he considered significant in his initial involvement with the sports group. Demi (18, volunteer) volunteered at a youth charity for two years after hearing about it through the organisation at which I met

her. Similarly, the relationship between two local youth groups enabled Amy (15, volunteer) and Abbie (15, volunteer) to move between them, thanks to information provided by staff. In addition to this, Amy indicated the two organisations had provided contacts and access to a variety of local organisations:

I don't like starting groups through the school because I don't like people in ma school and I, well, never really found out about any other group and, like, I'm just like, "Naw", 'cos like everything else I've been involved wi' is because I've heard of them through [Youth Charity 2] and [Youth Charity 3] so, like, I really don't know about anything else.

In contrast to evidence indicating teachers are important facilitators of youth volunteering (Harper & Jackson, 2015; Pye & Michelmore, 2016), only a minority of participants stated their teachers helped them start volunteering. During her interview, Amy described her preference for the organisations she attended over school due, in part, to the positive relationships she had at the former compared to the latter. This issue also arose during discussions of the benefits (see subsection 7.2.1) and barriers (see subsection 8.1.2) to volunteering. It suggests the difficult relationships working-class young people have with schools (Reay, 2001) limit the extent to which teachers can act as facilitators of volunteering. Although schools can be important sources of information about volunteering (Musick & Wilson, 2008), for those who felt alienated from them, having a more informal connection to a youth organisation offered an alternative route into volunteering.

The notion of the participant-to-volunteer trajectory suggests volunteering was not the result of a strategic outcome or predetermined plan (Bradford et al., 2016; Roberts & Devine, 2004). Yet, this does not mean participants acted without agency when starting volunteering. Researchers conducting an evaluation of the v Initiative developed a typology of 'passive' to 'active' routes into volunteering (NatCen, 2011). Those at the passive end of the spectrum predominantly entered

opportunities without clear motivations and often within organisations familiar to them. For persons in the middle of the spectrum, volunteering took place within a familiar organisation but was the outcome of an active decision. At the active end of the spectrum, volunteering opportunities were sought out, motivated for clear reasons and could involve contact with new organisations.

The vast majority of participants in this study fell somewhere in the middle of the passive/active spectrum. None of the participants approached organisations they were not already connected to. Instead, opportunities were often placed in front of them through word-of-mouth and they were able to choose or decline the offer. In some instances, participants indicated that, when asked to volunteer, they were encouraged to do so for specific reasons:

One of the leaders came to me and was like, "Would you be up for doing this? It's, it's great for your CV and stuff", and I was like, "Yeah that sounds amazing, yeah" ... He was just telling me ... if you just put on your CV, "I was a Scout", "Alright", "I was a Young Leader in Scouts", "Great", that makes you stand out from other people and that's an advantage. (Orla 16, volunteer)

In this instance, Orla was being encouraged to take part in the Young Leaders Scheme facilitated by her Scouts group. The offer was presented on instrumental grounds, in keeping with Holdsworth's (2015) notion of the cult of experience. As the extract shows, Orla considered this a potentially valuable aspect of the scheme. Yet, it was not the only aspect that interested her about the offer. Orla stated she would 'definitely' have started the scheme without the potential CV benefit because she 'love[d] working wi' kids'. Her comment highlights the varying factors involved in an individual's transition into a volunteering role. Participation in the Scouts provided a foundation from which Orla could be asked to volunteer. Once

asked, she articulated different reasons for wanting to undertake the role, thereby exerting agency from a particular position in social space.

Bradford et al. (2016) posited the notion of the 'unintended volunteer' to explain the participation of working-class young people in sports based volunteering opportunities. They argued volunteering was often unplanned, instigated by coaches, with whom volunteers had positive relationships, and an outcome of personal identification with the organisations where volunteering occurred. Their participants contrasted their experiences of school with the informality of sporting organisations, where they experienced a greater sense of belonging. In these ways, the experiences of Bradford et al.'s participants resonate with the accounts presented in this section. However, in contrast to Bradford et al.'s finding that parents had a limited role in facilitating volunteering, parents, particularly mothers, were shown to perform an important function in their children's pathways to volunteering. Furthermore, the notion of an 'unintended volunteer' suggests volunteering as unplanned. Yet, as Orla's comment above suggests, an element of intent existed in her decision to pursue the role offered to her, despite the fact that her route to it was embedded in the organisation. Thus, while volunteering may be a result of social circumstance and contingent upon everyday experiences (Holdsworth, 2010; Roberts & Devine, 2004), this does not rule out deliberate motivations. It is to an examination of these that the chapter now turns.

## **6.2 Motivations for volunteering**

This section examines volunteers and non-volunteers' motivations for volunteering. In keeping with the individualism of new volunteerism, there was widespread discussion of employability motives. However, in keeping with traditional approaches, there was also evidence of altruistic reasons and motives based on emotional attachments to organisations and persons within them, as well as a desire to pursue leisure-orientated activities. The section argues it is important to understand motivations as rooted in participants' lived experiences and that, in

keeping with the discussion in the previous section, pre-existing connections to organisations were significant in translating motivations into actual volunteering.

### *6.2.1 CV and future-orientated motives*

Subsection 3.1.3 explored how policy, institutional and organisational practices increasingly encourage young people to view volunteering in instrumental terms. The *Oxford English Dictionary* defines 'instrumental' as 'serving a means of pursuing an aim'. In the context of youth volunteering, this aim is often orientated towards enhancing employability (Dean, 2014; Holdsworth & Brewis, 2014; Holmes, 2009). Clare and Beth, both of whom worked for a local government organisation, spoke of the role volunteering played in enhancing CVs. Clare said employers 'acknowledge volunteering', that they see it as 'worthwhile' and that, given the choice of two candidates, they would select the one with experience of volunteering. Although evidence on the causal relationship between volunteering and employment is thin (Ellis Paine et al., 2013) and research on employers' views of volunteering mixed (Reilly, 2013), Beth emphasised the benefits of having volunteering on a CV when promoting it to disadvantaged young people. Beth believed the young people she worked with, on an employability-related volunteering programme, did not see volunteering as relevant to their lives, instead considering it 'shite'. Accordingly, she would 'sell' volunteering in the following terms:

This'll give you practical experience, you'll be able to learn new skills, you can get a reference out of it, you can add it to your CV, it's something to talk about at job interviews, it sets you apart from other candidates that haven't volunteered, erm, ultimately it shows that you're, you're motivated and ... instead of sitting staring at four walls all day you've actually got up off your backside to go and do something to make yourself more employable.

This approach resonates with the notion of the 'cult of experience', where young people are encouraged to use practices, such as volunteering, to stand out from

others when seeking employment (Holdsworth, 2015). Framing volunteering in this manner also plays into the notion that unemployment is an individual failing, overlooking how depressed regional labour markets limit opportunities for paid work (Ruddy, 2017). Although not all of the volunteer coordinators promoted volunteering in such terms – Tracey even avoided such discussions for fear of putting young people off – others believed it was a significant dimension. Lauren felt it was important for young people to volunteer ‘especially in this political climate’, as ‘you absolutely have to have something else that gives you a wee bit of an edge in the labour market and the uni market’. Reflecting on her own experience, Lauren felt volunteering had helped her gain employment. Furthermore, prior to being a volunteer coordinator, Lauren worked as an employment support officer, where she believed her clients ‘had to volunteer to get a job’. She therefore considered volunteering a potentially beneficial act for the young people she worked with, whom she thought were ‘up against’ a ‘whole multitude of barriers’ by virtue of the areas they lived in.

This approach to volunteering was also evident in some participants’ accounts of how their teachers and schools promoted it. Kieran (15, volunteer) described attending an employability event at his school to ‘get a wee bit o’ work experience’, where it was suggested he could do some ‘volunteer work’. Elsewhere, participants stated their teachers encouraged volunteering for employment reasons:

We always get taught, “If you volunteer you’ve got a better chance ah getting into stuff”. (Harry 17, ex-volunteer)

A couple of teachers would go round and ask people to, “You should do it and it’s good for your CV”. (Ryan 16, volunteer)

They say like, volunteering, you put it on your CV and that and it makes you stand out fae other people. (Ewan 17, ex-volunteer)

There was a sense that the capacity for volunteering to enhance future prospects was obvious, indeed one participant referred to it as 'common knowledge' (Paige 18, volunteer). The pervasiveness of this idea was likely a reflection of the broader environment in which volunteering is framed and promoted. The fieldwork indicated the promotion of volunteering as a CV enhancing activity was present at the levels of local government, youth organisations and schools. Such motives were evident in non-volunteers' accounts of what would drive them to volunteer, as well as volunteers' descriptions of what attracted them to volunteering. Taylor (16, non-volunteer), for instance, stated she would volunteer to enhance her CV after having attended a talk at school about volunteering overseas:

That's why I'd do volunteering, for my CV 'cos the woman, see that woman that came in school? She said she couldnae get a job over here, but once she had been 'ae that place, Mexico, she came back, when she went in an interview she had something to talk about.

In this extract, volunteering is framed as a badge of distinction, something that can be discussed during an interview to enable the individual stand out (Holdsworth, 2015). Volunteering is conceptualised as form of cultural capital which can be used for individual advantage at a later date (Storr & Spaaij, 2016). Although evidence suggests the significance of career-related motives increase as young people reach the age at which they can leave school, enter employment and start applying to university (see Table 2.2), this motive was articulated by participants across the age range. One of the youngest participants, Ross (12, non-volunteer) stated he would be interested in volunteering in order to have 'something on the CV'. Harry (17, ex-volunteer) said 'it's better to have something like that ... than nothing', while a group of 15 year old school girls, undertaking the Duke of Edinburgh programme, discussed:

- Grace            It's good to have on your CV and ... they'll [employers] look at that and that might make...
- Hannah        Yeah.
- Grace            A difference from someone else, if you've got that and they haven't got that experience.
- JD                And was that an important thing for you guys in doing that?  
[Several participants say 'Yeah' simultaneously]

In some of the organisations recruited to the study, there existed an unofficial path from volunteer to employee. Nathan (14, volunteer) described this transition and considered it a desirable one to make. He was motivated by the prospect of gaining employment at the charity and felt it would strengthen his future employment prospects:

'Cos like we've volunteered and we end up getting a job with [Youth Charity 1], it can give us, it'll be up on our CV as experience, work experience and make companies want to hire us more than other people that ... don't have the experience.

Ryan (16, volunteer) had also been motivated to volunteer because he thought it would be 'good experience for the future'. When asked how, he replied: 'helping me get into university, or helping me with jobs and the future or whatever 'cos it could be good on your CV'. In these extracts, CV-orientated motivations are discussed in broad terms. In the majority of instances, volunteering was not tied to a specific goal, but spoken about in a general sense. For example, Ryan added 'if I ever need it' to his statement that volunteering would be helpful in his future, suggesting he was not putting it towards a particular aim.

These extracts suggest that, like the socially privileged young volunteers in Storr and Spaaij's (2016) research, both volunteers and non-volunteers in this study saw

volunteering as a way of accumulating capital. Furthermore, participants' accounts contrasted with the notion that working-class young volunteers do not view volunteering as possessing 'a kind of "transferable virtue" that has exchange value across the labour market' (Bradford et al., 2016, p. 241). Indeed, for some participants, employability motivations were central factors in their decisions to volunteer. Scott (15, volunteer), for instance, volunteered with Police Youth Volunteers and as a football coach, both of which were areas he wanted to work in. Scott indicated that without the 'end goal' of employment, he did not think he would be motivated to volunteer:

If it wasn't for like helping ma CV then I'd've thought it was like no' really any point in it, but 'cos it, it helps your CV and then and helps you build skills and stuff then it's better.

Participants thus drew on some of the ideas associated with new volunteerism. Individualistic motives were expressed, there was evidence of cost/benefit approaches and a sense that participation was, at least partially, contingent upon the accrual of personal benefits. Thus, while employability motives may be more prevalent among young people in the 'least deprived' areas compared to the 'most deprived' (40 and 30 percent respectively) (Harper & Jackson, 2015), the qualitative data presented here suggests they were an important component of participants' attitudes. However, in order to understand participants' engagement with volunteering, motives must be connected to the circumstances in which they were expressed. Family and peer networks as well as attendance at youth clubs were important precursors to volunteering. As the following subsection explores, a perceived lack of local leisure activities was also important in shaping motivations for volunteering.

### 6.2.2 Pursuing leisure

Alongside CV-orientated motivations, participants indicated they were, or would be, driven to volunteer for reasons of leisure. As explored in section 7.1, participants described restrictions on their opportunities for socialising in public space and their lack of engagement with commercial leisure options. In this context, volunteering was seen as a way of engaging in pleasurable activities. The notion of 'leisure volunteering' is associated with Stebbins (2004, p. 8), who used the term to refer to voluntary action which was primarily driven by 'self-interest' and to situations where 'volunteers remain largely unaware of how their actions ramify socially'. While the motives of participants can be described as self-interested, in the sense that they sought activities they would enjoy, it would be inaccurate to say they were unaware of how their actions impacted others. Despite this divergence from Stebbins' approach, many of their activities can be classified as leisure volunteering as they were experienced as a pastime and a continuation of personal interests (Harflett, 2015).

Discussing her perception of young people's motives for volunteering, Tracey noted that while some volunteered with ideas about their futures in mind, for 'a lot of young people' volunteering was 'a hobby'. In a similar vein, Lauren felt the young people she worked with were motivated 'because they know they're going to have a fun day'. Evidence indicates growing up in disadvantaged areas can lead to spatial marginalization (Neary et al., 2013) and limited leisure opportunities (Batchelor, Whittaker, Fraser, & Ling, 2017). In such circumstances, motivations to volunteer often stemmed from a desire to participate in enjoyable activities in the context of having nothing else to do:

It was in ma community and there's nothing else to do in the community, so it [volunteering] sounded good. (Callum 15, ex-volunteer)

Callum's motivation for volunteering in a community garden in his local area came from a desire to have something to do. The desire to engage in what he anticipated would be an enjoyable activity preceded his engagement with it. In contrast, Megan and Niamh's motivations emerged from their exposure to the organisation they went on to volunteer for. Shortly after our interview, Megan and Niamh had to select volunteering roles at the charity. They both stated they wanted to do 'street-play', which involved delivering play based activities for children and young people. When asked why they wanted to do this, they replied:

Megan            Just getting to go outside and that and just...

Niamh            Like you just go outside and have a carry-on, like you go all different places instead 'ae just going to wan place ... you don't get bored ah being in the one place, it is, all the time, like ye go to wherever ye are sent to, and it's gonna be good tae dae that.

(Megan 13, Niamh 14, volunteers)

Both participants had used the charity's services for a number of years before embarking on the volunteering programme. They had participated in street-play sessions as participants prior to helping deliver them during the programme. Their motivation was, in part, about sustaining their involvement in the charity. Furthermore, Niamh's desire to 'go outside and have a carry-on' is imbued with added significance when viewed in the context of restrictions on young people's spatial mobilities in disadvantaged areas (Pickering, Kintrea, & Bannister, 2012) and their 'retreat to the private sphere' (Batchelor et al., 2017, p. 128).<sup>41</sup> Volunteering was, therefore, an expression of self-interest, as it allowed them to 'go outside' and have a 'carry-on', as well as a continuation of personal interest, offering a way of pursuing their interest in the charity's activities.

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<sup>41</sup> See section 7.1 for a discussion of the policing of participants' presence in public space, leading some to spend time indoors.

The importance of personal interest was reiterated across the fieldwork in participants' accounts of their desires for voluntary activities they were interested in. The following extract, from a focus group with non-volunteering males, draws attention to the significance participants felt the activity would have in their decisions of whether to volunteer or not:

Fraser            Things that you're interested in, like you would like to do something that you're interested in, or else it would be boring, if yah no' doing something you don't like then...

[Brief pause]

Harry            There's nae point doaeen it then.

Fraser            Aye.

(Fraser 16, non-volunteer, Harry 17, ex-volunteer)

Harflett (2015) argued that, in order to understand participation in volunteering as leisure, it was important to understand the cultural capital of volunteers. Doing so, she posited, aids an analysis of volunteering as a continuation of personal interests. Thomas (17, ex-volunteer), who stopped volunteering due to football training, said that if he were to start volunteering again, he would 'definitely' want to engage in sports-based volunteering.<sup>42</sup> When asked why, he said "cos like I can get involved as well ... I like doing it as well, like taking part'. This example suggests volunteering was more attractive when linked to a favoured pastime. Thomas stopped volunteering to pursue football, an interest of his, and indicated that if he were to return to volunteering he would want to remain in a sporting environment.

When looking at the personal interests of participants, a gender divide, broadly in keeping with the division outlined in Figure 2.3, was evident in the activities they indicated they would be interested in doing. Although some female participants were involved in sporting activities, many expressed interest in activities more in

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<sup>42</sup> Thomas had stopped volunteering to play football, not voluntarily coach it.

keeping with gender stereotypes such as, dancing, looking after animals and creative activities. In each instance, the reasons given for wanting to volunteer in these environments stemmed from the participants' attachment to the activity in question, as Megan (13, volunteer) put it, 'it's the thing I love so much'. In contrast, male participants almost exclusively sought sporting activities, for the following reasons:

Ewan            It's the most popular, in't it?

Darren        Just like playing football.

(Ewan and Darren 17, ex-volunteers)

JD             Why sports?

Ross           Just 'cos we've done it and we know, we know a bit about it.

...

Paul            It's our strong point.

(Ross 12, Paul 16, non-volunteers)

Doing the football coaching would do it for me, like if it were for a football team, yeah I would enjoy that. (Brad 18, non-volunteer)

Sports, coaching, stuff like that, things that we're interested in. (Paul 16, non-volunteer)

These quotes highlight a desire for voluntary activities reflective of personal interests. Ross and Paul's remarks that they 'know a bit about' sport and that sport is their 'strong point' resonate with Harflett's position that it is important to examine how cultural capital shapes dispositions towards certain voluntary activities. Bourdieu (2010 [1984]) argued cultural competence develops over time and provides an actor with the skills necessary to navigate the field in question. Although an international phenomenon, football remains an important aspect of

the Glaswegian masculine identity (Fraser, 2015). Accordingly, it was an area male participants felt knowledgeable and skilful in, and thus a field in which they considered they would be able to contribute as volunteers. The desire to volunteer in these areas can be understood as an opportunity to express agency and develop their sense of self. Sport was part of their identity, their habitus. Acting on this would allow them to develop these facets of their selves and share their knowledge. In keeping with the notion that motivations emerged from participants' experiences, the following subsection examines motives that stemmed from relationships to specific organisations.

### *6.2.3 Maintaining specific attachments*

The prospect of gaining an award or certificate is a notable element in youth volunteering initiatives. In Scotland, the Saltire Awards offer multiple awards based on the number of hours volunteered, while Project Scotland and the Youth Achievement Awards enable participants to gain awards accredited by the Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA). In England and Northern Ireland, young people can 'graduate' from the National Citizen Service. It stands to reason that recognition, in the form of an award, is considered by those who design such schemes as an attractive hook enticing young people to take part.

Clare, a local government employee whose role included promoting the Saltire Awards, stated her 'utopia would be every young person who is volunteering in Glasgow should get a Saltire Award'. She thought the awards added value to volunteering experiences and believed employers looked favourably on them, although she stated she was unaware whether this ostensible benefit had 'ever been looked into that much'.<sup>43</sup> When asked whether she thought the prospect of accreditation was significant in young people's motivations, she responded:

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<sup>43</sup> Reilly (2013) found mixed opinions among Scottish employers on the value accreditation added. When accreditation was based on number of hours completed, however, she found it was considered 'meaningless'.

I think some do, and some don't, I think if a young person is already on-board with volunteering, they do think it's important, if a young person isn't particularly on-board with volunteering, I'm thinking particularly in some of the groups that Beth works with, they aren't really interested.

Later in the interview, Clare suggested those who were 'on-board' viewed accreditation as 'an extra layer' and 'something to show people' – a suggestion that resonates with the notion of the cult of experience. By contrast, the groups Beth worked with, in areas experiencing high levels of deprivation, saw volunteering as 'shite'. Clare's comment suggests that, for those furthest removed from formal volunteering environments, the prospect of accreditation carried little weight. Tracey thought university students who volunteered with her organisation were 'more open to the accredited stuff' compared to 'somebody who's like come through the ranks of being a young person to being a young volunteer'. She suggested university students saw:

The benefits of doing an accredited training course or like awards scheme, whereas young people who just want to help are like, "Well why do I need to do that? That's no' really going to benefit me right now".

Tracey suggested those who followed the participant-to-volunteer transition were more focused on the immediate and concrete than university students, who saw accreditation as potentially beneficial to their futures. In Skeggs' (2004, pp. 176-177) discussion of an 'accumulative model of self', she argues the 'ability to perceive future returns on wealth reflects ... different life conditions' and that the 'poorer can see less chance of future gain'. Although participants recognised the role volunteering could play in enhancing their future opportunities, much of their discussions centred on the immediacy of the enjoyment they received through it. As discussed in subsection 4.3.2, participants were recruited from areas experiencing higher than average levels of unemployment and young people classified as NEET

and thus faced challenging futures. Bourdieu (1990, p. 54) wrote the habitus 'inclines agents to make a virtue of necessity ... to refuse what is anyway denied'. Accordingly, volunteering was often sought for what it could provide now rather than what it might offer in the future. As Donna (14, volunteer) put it:

I think I'd still be volunteering if I didn't get ... them [awards or certificates], like, it's really fun.

Orla (16, volunteer) similarly stated she continued to volunteer because she enjoyed doing so and did not see certificates as a particularly strong motivator: 'out of all the volunteering I've done it's no' like, "You get a certificate at the end, this'll make you do it", no'. Furthermore, Amy (15, volunteer) said that, although she would 'really like' to get her award for the Duke of Edinburgh scheme, she would continue volunteering:

I'm still gunnae stick to volunteerin' an' that, just because I've completed ma volunteerin' for Duke of Edinburgh, but I still want to stick to it because I love helpin' and I cannae just, like, everything that I've gained, I cannae just throw that away.

In these instances, the participants had attended their respective organisations prior to volunteering with them. While the awards feature in their motivations, it was their enjoyable experiences and the relationships they had developed that were more significant to maintaining their involvement week in, week out. Ryan (16, volunteer) stated it was 'good' receiving awards for his volunteering, however, these were 'not really' that significant and 'it was the journey more than the end point' which was important for him. Emphasising the 'journey more than the end point' contrasts with Dean's (2014) contention that young people are encouraged to volunteer in order to be able to tell others they have done it, rather than for the intrinsic satisfaction of performing the activity itself. The acquisition of such

experiences and the communication of them to others can be used as resources for personal gain (Bourdieu, 2010 [1984]; Skeggs, 2004). Yet, rather than view volunteering in this way, participants often placed greater weight on more intrinsic motives for volunteering, such as the positive emotions generated. This was particularly so of those who had followed the participant-to-volunteer trajectory.

For some, experiences of seeing older youth volunteers initiated the thought process for becoming a volunteer:

It was kind of like, there was older girls when I went, so I was like eight or something and there were girls that were like eighteen and I was like, "Oh man, they've been at this for so long and they still seem pretty happy", and I was like, "Maybe one day that'll be me" ... and it is. (Olivia 17, volunteer)

It was not a desire to volunteer for personal rewards that could aid future transitions that motivated Olivia, but a desire to emulate the 'older girls' who seemed 'pretty happy'. While this experience was one that prompted an anticipated future, the motive was for an emotional state not an exchangeable resource. Furthermore, the motive stemmed from exposure to a particular organisation rather than preceding it. This was a notable trend among those with experience of volunteering, particularly in the context of wanting to help others and make an impact:

They've been coming to places like [Youth Charity 2] since they were tiny kids and they've got a lot out of that, so it's about giving back to the project so that's another, that's what they would want to do, give back to the community and kinda see other young people get the opportunities that they've had. (Tracey, volunteer coordinator)

Wanting to 'give back' is contingent upon the experience of having benefitted in the past and is suggestive of an emotional engagement with the organisation. Those who followed the participant-to-volunteer transition benefited from the services provided by organisations prior to volunteering. Niamh (14, volunteer), who had 'always' attended Youth Charity 1 stated:

I wanted to gi' time back intae it and do something to help everybody else that's like in the clubs, like everybody younger ... it's something that's going to benefit them, instead 'ae growing up just hanging about the streets and fighting and gangs and things like that.

There was a palpability to such motives, both in terms of participants' reflections on their experiences as attendees at youth organisations and the visible impact they had when volunteering. One of the volunteer coordinators, Lauren, believed the young people she worked with were driven to continue volunteering by the 'tangible outcome[s]' of their actions – 'they are out actually doing it ... they can see it first-hand'. In many instances, there was an immediacy to what they did and gained. It was this relationship to a concrete set of practices that frequently motivated continued participation.

In a press release for the youth social action campaign Step Up to Serve, the then Prime Minister, David Cameron stated the National Citizen Service enabled young people to give something back to their communities (Cabinet Office, 2013). The notion of 'community' in Cameron's statement is more abstract than it appears in participants' accounts. The marginalisation of socially disadvantaged young people in public space (Batchelor et al., 2017; Squires & Goldsmith, 2017), through 'stop and search' powers (Murphy, 2017; Murray, 2014) and negative media representations (Kehily, 2017), invites the question of what young people have to give back. Participants in this study were not driven to give back to the community

in an abstract sense, but to the specific placed based communities, in youth clubs and charities, to which they belonged.

The sense of personal attachment to organisations and places was a significant factor in understanding motives for volunteering. Amy (15, volunteer) stated the volunteer coordinator was her 'best friend'; Megan (13, volunteer) said that, because she had 'become good friends' with the youth workers at the organisation she attended, she wanted to volunteer; while Olivia (17, volunteer) wanted to 'stay and be a volunteer' with her Girls' Brigade group because it was 'a part of your life'. These extracts highlight an emotional attachment developed through attendance at organisations which prompted motivations for volunteering. One of the volunteer coordinators described the dedication of young volunteers to the organisation:

It's the commitment thing, they're committed to [Youth Charity 2] and they want to stay so they'll just stay [laughs] no matter what you put in front of them they'll be like "Ah ok I'll do that!". (Tracey, volunteer coordinator)

The strong emotional attachments volunteers expressed towards the organisations they attended (further discussed in Chapter 7) meant it was not volunteering in the abstract that they sought, but the concrete experience of participating in an organisation from which they had benefited. The specificity of their voluntary experiences, rooted in particular organisations and locations with persons they felt connected to, meant some were not interested in undertaking roles elsewhere. Farrugia, Smyth, and Harrison (2015, p. 129) argue young people's exposure to their lived environments generates 'affective and sensuous relationship[s] to space', which frame their 'basic experience of themselves'. A similar process was evident in participants' desires to help out in organisations which they had developed emotional attachments to.

By developing relationships, helping others and aiding the organisations from which they benefited, participants indicated they were motivated to continue and maintain these concrete experiences. Although individualistic motivations were not wholly lacking from participants' accounts, motives were often aligned with aspects of traditional volunteerism. Participants expressed loyalty, experienced social inclusion and were responsive to the needs of their organisations. Additionally, they were often long-term and regular volunteers who exhibited altruistic tendencies. These were not motives that preceded engagement with the organisations. Rather, they were the outcome of feelings and emotions developed with others over prolonged periods of time in specific organisations.

### **6.3 Chapter conclusion**

This chapter has addressed the second research question by exploring the factors that facilitated participants' access to volunteering opportunities. It also examined motivations for volunteering, paying attention to what interested non-volunteers about the prospect of volunteering as well as the reasons volunteers expressed for their initial and continued participation. Early exposure to volunteer-involving environments emerged as an important precursor to volunteering, while attachments to organisations and youth workers facilitated entry into opportunities. In terms of motivations, participants expressed individualistic attitudes in keeping with the notion of new volunteerism, as well as altruistic sentiments more attuned to traditional approaches. Furthermore, some participants expressed a desire to volunteer for leisure purposes in the context of limited alternative activities.

The idea of the participant-to-volunteer transition was proposed to capture the way in which many of the participants started volunteering. Volunteering was frequently the outcome of lengthy associations with particular organisations, often instigated by friends and family. These associations provided participants with ways of familiarising themselves with persons and practices in their respective

organisations. Accordingly, they provided a foundation from which participants felt able to respond positively to offers to volunteer, unlike those who lacked such connections. The singularity of their experiences – for example, having parents who volunteered in areas characterised by non-participation – emphasises the contention that, although habitus is marked by collective experience, each has a unique trajectory based on its social location (Wacquant, 2016). This raises the issue that, if organisations and institutions want to increase the proportion of young volunteers in areas of multiple deprivation, it is important to invest in such areas to provide young people with something to get involved in, become familiar with and develop relationships in. The evidence presented in this chapter indicates that without this foundation, encouraging volunteering will prove challenging. This suggests a difference from the confidence of middle-class young people who, less intimidated by the prospect of meeting new people, are more able to respond positively to calls to volunteer from youth workers with whom they do not have established relationships (Dean, 2016a).

In relation to the notion of ‘unintended’ working-class youth volunteers (Bradford et al., 2016), participants expressed a variety of motives for volunteering. In keeping with the individualistic emphasis of new volunteerism, there was widespread recognition of the notion that volunteering could enhance CVs and employment prospects. Interviews with local government employees and youth workers further highlighted how these motives were presented to young people to encourage volunteering. Some participants discussed employability benefits in a generalised manner, while others linked volunteering to specific career goals. This suggests that, like young people from middle-class backgrounds (Brooks, 2007; Storr & Spaaij, 2016), CV enhancement was a component of participants’ motivations and that, to certain extent, they were ‘intentional’ volunteers.

However, participants also expressed reasons for wanting to volunteer in keeping with traditional volunteerism’s emphasis on altruism and unconditionality, which

emerged following their attendance at particular organisations. Having benefitted personally from the organisations they attended, volunteers were often driven by a desire to give back. For those who had followed the participant-to-volunteer transition, reasons for volunteering stemmed from the relationships, attachments and support they enjoyed from their respective organisations. This was not evidence of a desire to give back to an imagined community, but one to which they belonged. In addition to this, the desire for leisure-orientated volunteering opportunities was related to a perceived lack of local activities to engage in. It was also associated with participants' relationships to organisations from which they anticipated volunteering would be enjoyable. These motives were, therefore, contingent on participants' relationships with specific organisations. They emphasise the point that volunteering was frequently the outcome of a process of familiarisation with an organisation and persons within it. Indeed, there was a sense that volunteering was motivated by a desire for the benefits it would give rise to 'right now' rather than in the future. Thus, while volunteers and non-volunteers discussed future-orientated motives, the translation of these drivers into volunteering was highly dependent on the social circumstances of each individual.

To conclude, by highlighting the extent to which volunteering was an outcome of participants' positions in social space and driven by particular motives, the chapter lends weight to the notion that volunteering was related to everyday life events (Hogg, 2016). Furthermore, participants' recognition of employability motives and their promotion in local government, school and youth organisations emphasises the relationship between macro changes in the nature of volunteering (Hustinx et al., 2016) and the micro experiences of participants. Yet, by and large, motivations to volunteer were not driven by a desire to invest in the self for the future, but rather to maintain and enjoy emotional attachments they had developed. This highlights the importance of holistic promotional strategies for youth volunteering that emphasise the social and present, rather than future, benefits it can provide. It is to an analysis of the benefits participants experienced that the thesis now turns.

## **7 The benefits of volunteering**

This chapter explores participants' accounts of the benefits they felt they derived through volunteering. Volunteering is often cast in policy as an employability enhancing practice (Holmes, 2009) and recognised as such by young people (Newton et al., 2011). For younger youth, however, such aspects have been reported to be inappropriate (Shannon, 2009). Volunteering can also be experienced as fun (Roberts & Devine, 2004) and, for vulnerable young people, has been reported to help them find their sense of self and moral identity (Melkman et al., 2015; Woodier, 2011). In light of the participants' age range and the suggestion in the previous chapter that they were, in part, motivated by the immediate benefits of volunteering, it is important to understand the nature of the benefits they enjoyed and how they acquired them.

To understand what volunteering meant to those who did it, the first section situates participants' accounts in the broader context of their restricted leisure opportunities and surveillance in public space. The second and third sections then examine the opportunities participants felt volunteering provided to act with agency, develop attachments to others and enhance their confidence. The chapter argues involvement in these organisations provided opportunities to interact with others in a way that participants felt was otherwise unavailable to them. Accordingly, the relational and emotional aspects of volunteering, as well as the chance to act with agency were most strongly valued.

### **7.1 Limited spaces to 'do' or 'be'**

Researchers have argued disadvantaged young people's attachments to community centres can be understood in terms of the opportunities they provide to 'do' and 'be' (Langager & Spencer-Cavaliere, 2015). The significance of such organisations may be heightened for teenagers who, due to a lack of alternatives, socialise in public space while having their presence framed by others as unwelcomed or

intimidating (Keung, 2015). The following subsections show how, in the context of limited leisure options, the organisations participants attended provided safe spaces in which they could ‘be’ and engage in activities – ‘do’ – with others.

### *7.1.1 Restricted leisure opportunities and spatial mobilities*

A recurrent issue expressed by participants was the feeling that there were few leisure opportunities available to them in their local areas:

Boring in’t it, there’s nothing else to do, we’ve got nothing to do like, just walking about yourself, like, with pals. (Callum 15, ex-volunteer)

There’s nothing really else to do where we stay, like, there’s only like a park in the whole scheme.<sup>44</sup> (Niamh 14, volunteer)

The leisure lives of young people in areas of Glasgow characterised by high levels of deprivation, have been found to be restricted by the limited number of public spaces available to them, the costs of commercial venues and territorial issues restricting spatial movements (Batchelor et al., 2017; Fraser, Batchelor, Li, & Whittaker, 2017). The accounts provided by participants in this study echoed such findings. Although only a few participants explicitly indicated the costs of leisure opportunities were a barrier to accessing them, their general absence in accounts of participants’ spare time activities suggested they were not used:

JD                      What sorts of things would you do in your spare time, like outside of the clubs?

[Brief pause]

Abbie                      I don’t know [brief pause] no’ much, me and Amy would like just go on walks or something.

JD                      Ok, where would you go for walks?

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<sup>44</sup> Fraser (2015, p. 87) writes that, in Glasgow, schemes are ‘shorthand for council-housing estates’.

Abbie Round the block [laughs].

Evidence suggests that although deprived areas of Glasgow have a higher prevalence of outdoor play areas than less deprived locations, they are often of a poorer quality (Ellaway, Kirk, Macintyre, & Mutrie, 2007). Such concerns were evident in Dylan's (15, non-volunteer) account of a 'ruined' park across the road from his house where 'the swings are always broken'. He stated:

It's annoying, especially because Ah've got a wee sister and she always wants to go to the park, but you need tae say tae her, "It's broke", she's to stay, run about the house.

The growth in commercialised leisure activities and the availability of digital technologies, such as computer games, has been linked to a decrease in time spent 'hanging out' in public space (Sweeting & West, 2003). Although participants indicated the 'streets' were an area in which leisure time was spent, it was common to hear volunteers indicate volunteering provided a way of getting 'oot the house' (Matt 15, volunteer) and that, in its absence, they would remain indoors, on their mobile phones or video games consoles:

If like I wasn't volunteering and stuff like I wouldn't be, like I'd probably be on the streets and stuff ... I wouldn't be doing anything else, like I'd probably be stuck on ma phone and stuff constantly. (Donna 14, volunteers)

You wouldnae be doing anything but sitting in the house ... I volunteer on a Saturday, now see if I didn't have, I'd probably lie in my bed until three o'clock rather than get up and be out by twelve. (Emma 14, volunteer)

I've done it from like the age of seven I've volunteered, like it's just a good way to get you off, like, not doin' anything in the house, like a way to get you out and just enjoy it like. (Katie 14, volunteer)

If it wasn't for [Sports Charity 3], I'd pretty much be in ma bed right now. (Isla 16, volunteer)

Street-based leisure has a long history among working-class young people (Shildrick & MacDonald, 2006).<sup>45</sup> Despite this, recent evidence indicates socialising in public space is becoming less common for those in their late-teens and early-20s (Batchelor et al., 2017). While 'the street' was commonly mentioned in participants' descriptions of where they socialised, as well as their accounts of where other young people socialised, they also reported staying indoors. This reflects a broader trend in which young people are forced to 'retreat to the private sphere' following their exclusion from public space and limited spending power (Batchelor et al., 2017, p. 118), a departure compounded by the closure of youth clubs under 'austerity Britain' (Cooper, 2012).

In addition to describing restricted leisure opportunities, participants' accounts also indicated limited spatial mobilities. This was due, in part, to anti-social behaviour and surveillance from adults and the police. Scott (15, volunteer) believed the lack of affordable leisure activities stimulated anti-social behaviour:

They want to try and get people off the streets and all that, like the council say that, but they shut, like see all the football parks, they shut them so you can't get in and then like, obviously like you need to pay but, it's not expensive, but some people who don't have a lot of money, like, that's why people say, "Poverty leads to like crime". (Scott 15, volunteer)

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<sup>45</sup> McRobbie (2000) criticised post-war youth studies for the exclusion of female participation in leisure practices. She also noted that while teenage girls did participate in the public sphere, the home and the bedroom were also prominent leisure sites.

A recent Unison (2016a) report detailed the negative impact of government spending cuts to youth services across Great Britain. Respondents in the report felt cuts were disproportionately impacting young people from poorer backgrounds, who they believed were left with 'nowhere to turn' (Unison, 2016a, p. 8). Limited leisure and employment prospects have been linked to engagement in anti-social behaviour. Fraser (2015, p. 125), for example, found that, through contact with older groups, marginalised young males could become 'habituated to the rules of the street', engaging in practices such as 'gang-fighting' to assert their masculinity. The notion that younger groups learnt anti-social behaviour through contact with older persons was evident during the fieldwork:

If people's older, then you're looking up to them and they're doing the crime and usually the young wans copy them ... the wee wans are gunnae, they're looking up to them for stuff tae dae and they're gunnae dae the same because they're doing it. (Callum 15, ex-volunteer)

Callum believed street-based leisure caused 'crime 'cos there's nothing else to do'. Participants often indicated fighting and anti-social behaviour were commonplace in their local areas. Ryan (16, volunteer) said there were 'a lot of things like fighting' where he grew up, while Niamh (14, volunteer) discussed 'drug users and gang fighting', as well as sectarian tensions between Celtic and Rangers supporters. Scott (15, volunteer) recounted a recent 'bad thing' that happened where he lived:

Last week with the Old Firm<sup>46</sup> happening, erm, one of the old houses in ma street, a guy was shouting, walking down the, threatening people with a shovel and then shouting like Rangers songs and taking his top off and that, then his next-door neighbour, he went down and booted the door, like really

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<sup>46</sup> Old Firm refers to football matches between Celtic and Rangers football clubs.

hard and then there was, he was just jumping about and then the police ended up getting phoned and then he got taken away like overnight.

Instances such as this were considered 'hard' as 'you don't really know like how 'ae get away from it, like how to, like ignore it 'cos it's happening all the time'. The threat of violence and anti-social behaviour, therefore, served to restrict participants' use of public space. This resonates with evidence that in known gang areas young people's use of public transport is curtailed due to anxieties about travelling through known gang areas and that their parents allow them to spend extended periods of time indoors to avoid potential dangers (Scottish Parliament, 2015). It also aligns with the notion that the perceived threat of 'dangerous others' shapes young people's use of space (France, Bottrell, & Armstrong, 2012, p. 41).

In addition to this, participants' mobilities were limited by virtue of their presence in public space being construed as anti-social by others:

It makes you feel as if you can't go out in like your own scheme and like your own area because people are gonnae jump to conclusions and think that you're up to no good, like, wi' young people that's what they always think, like they always think young people are up to no good, they're, like, you could do something and they'd be like, "Ohh, it's graffiti or being violent towards each other", when really it's just a carry-on or a way 'ae amuse yourself for a while, 'cos there's nothing else do to. (Niamh 14, volunteer)

Neary et al. (2013) found young people in deprived areas of Glasgow felt stereotyped as NEDs by both young people and adults, a label which added to their sense of alienation and acted as a self-fulfilling prophecy. This reflects evidence indicating attitudes towards young people are less positive in the 'most deprived' areas than they are the 'least deprived' locations (Scottish Government, 2017e). During a focus group with female volunteers, participants believed adults in the

local area thought 'we're all hooligans' (Ellie, 15) and 'cause trouble' (Hannah, 15). The girls were annoyed by these terms for their reductionism and for overlooking the heterogeneity of young people's experiences. Sean (15, volunteer) similarly felt the 'general public' thought teenagers just drank alcohol and took drugs. The following exchange illustrates how behaviour can be misconstrued and the impact this can have on young people's emotions:

- Nathan        Police can, like, when you're out with a big group of friends...
- Matt            They'll just pull you up.
- Nathan        Make you, yeah, pull you up and tell you to move and that just 'cos you're out with a big group of friends and it can be quite intimidating to other people.
- JD              How does that make you feel, when that happens?
- Matt            Like when they tell you to move, it's like you've never done anything so it's like you don't want to move, but you really need to, 'cos it's the police.
- JD              Is that something that happens often?
- Matt            See, that happens to me a lot because I've got, like all my friends, once we all go out, we all meet up and there's lots of us, so, you know, just go walking about, the police always pull us up and tell us to leave and, like, they think we've been fighting or something.

(Nathan 14, Matt 15, volunteers)

Rates of 'stop and search' usage in Scotland have been found to be nearly four times higher than in England and Wales (Murray, 2014). Scholars have argued young people's 'assumed aimless wandering' can be interpreted as cause for concern by the police (France et al., 2012, p. 44). One of the volunteer coordinators, Tracey, stressed that while she thought the police 'dae an amazing service ... a lot of the time they just target young people for no apparent reason', a sentiment echoed

by Nicky, a project manager. Such encounters were experienced unfavourably by young people. Nathan felt it was 'demeaning' as 'you're automatically suspected of doing something when you've not even done anything' while Matt stated it annoyed him 'cos they just think bad of you'. Such issues are indicative of a 'merging of reputations and place' (Bottrell, 2009, p. 494) through which young people are stigmatised by virtue of the area they come from. In such conditions, the 'retreat to the private sphere' was heightened, as summarised by Niamh (14, volunteer): 'you're getting stopped and it's like too much hassle, so that's why naebody really goes out, so everybody just really stays in'.

Participants' restricted leisure opportunities were compounded by the threat of anti-social behaviour as well as the policing and framing of their own behaviour as problematic by others. Young people's visibility in public space has long been a source of concern among the 'respectable' classes (Pearson, 1983). In the context of urban spaces, particularly regenerating cities, young people's presence can create anxiety and be subjected to surveillance (Coleman, 2004). While seeking leisure opportunities in constrained settings, participants felt stereotyped as potential trouble makers, leading them to avoid going out and restricting their movements. Local neighbourhoods and public space were experienced as 'spaces of exclusion' (France et al., 2012, p. 43) with few amenities, leading to feelings of boredom and alienation.

### *7.1.2 Escaping alienation*

When discussing why she thought young people volunteered at the organisation she worked for, Tracey stated 'they get to come in ... earlier and ahead of the other young people that are here to participate in an activity'. Volunteering increased the time participants could spend in youth charities thereby decreasing the time they had to look for things to do in 'spaces of exclusion' or the private sphere. However, it was not just volunteering that offered this possibility. Some of the participants'

accounts indicated attendance itself offered a way of escaping challenging circumstances.

During the fieldwork, a number of volunteers contrasted their activities with those of their peers whom they reported filled their leisure time by consuming alcohol:

Faye I'm the only out of ma friends at all that do anything like this, 'cos they're always like out and at parties ... I've tried to rope some friends in, but they're like, "Nah" [laughs].

Donna But you'll get a lot of, you'll get a lot of people that'll like, if you say, "I do volunteering", they'll be like, "Oh that's pointless, you could be out doing this or doing that".

Faye "Getting mad wi' it".

JD Yeah?

Donna Could be out with your friends and all that, and you're like, "I'd rather be volunteering".

Emma I'd much rather be here.

Donna And helping kids, rather than going out and drinking and on the streets.

(Faye 16, Emma and Donna 14, volunteers)

These participants differentiated themselves from their peers by outlining their preference for volunteering over activities such as drinking and being on 'the streets'. Evidence indicates adolescents are more likely to consume alcohol, cigarettes and drugs if they spend their leisure time unsupervised or in unstructured activities, such as socialising on the streets (Black & Martin, 2015). Volunteering can provide an alternative to such activities. In contrast, when asked what they did in their spare time, a group of female non-volunteers responded:

Sarah Gettin' mad wi' it.

Zoe            Gettin' on it.  
Taylor        Aye gettin' on it, gettin' high as a kite an' all that [laughter].  
Robyn        Translate that into English, getting drunk and smoking weed.  
(Sarah, Zoe and Robyn 15, Taylor 16, non-volunteers)

Other than an older group of male non-volunteers, who were old enough to legally drink in pubs in their spare time, the personal consumption of alcohol and drugs was only discussed by these participants. Batchelor (2007) argued the actions of young women drawn to risky behaviours, such as drinking, should not necessarily be viewed as a loss of control, but rather an exercise of agency in the context of limited opportunities. Indeed, alcohol use has been argued to play a significant role in the production of friendships (MacLean, 2016). 'Getting' mad wi' it' may therefore be a strategy employed to deal with limited leisure opportunities and the creation and maintenance of friendships.

In this context, participation in youth organisations was framed as enabling young people to escape, not only the lack of options available to them, but also personal issues they might be experiencing:

Donna        They could just be sitting in the house, you don't know what their home life is like, they could be getting, something happening at home or something.  
...  
Emma        It's like, it's like your session might be the only thing they look forward to, like, like, "Oh there's a Wednesday night, I can't wait", like, 'cos you can get to like get out or get away fae whatever.

(Donna and Emma 14, volunteers)

Demi (18, volunteer) described how the organisation she volunteered with took volunteers on residential trips. She believed these were important because:

Some people need a break away sometimes so, it, sometimes it's good for the kids to get away, like in a different area, if they're like having troubles at home and stuff.

The sorts of troubles young people could be experiencing at home were discussed by Tracey, one of the volunteer coordinators:

Family units are so busy trying to make ends meet, they're working constantly, they're, or they're studying or they've got lots of kids and they're trying to juggle that with making the dinner and tidying the house and paying the bills and they kinda forget about that [brief pause] paying attention to your children, and that's not intentional, it's, it's just about trying to live.

Longitudinal quantitative research conducted in Glasgow's 'most deprived' areas has found the decreased affordability of domestic goods, following the 2007/8 recession, to be positively correlated with increases in self-reported mental health problems (Curl & Kearns, 2015). Tracey's statement gives colour to such findings and highlights how stresses caused by living in financially precarious conditions have the potential to reduce parents' ability to pay for, organise or coordinate leisure activities for their children. The opportunity to 'get away' and engage in social activities through volunteering and participation in youth organisations, therefore, has added significance for young people from less advantaged backgrounds, particularly given constraints on their leisure options and spatial movements – on their opportunities to 'do' and 'be'.

## 7.2 Attachments and agency

One of the key findings in the study, in terms of how participants felt they benefited from volunteering, was the emphasis placed on its relational dimensions. Having opportunities to connect with young people and adults provided participants with reciprocal relationships, from which agency was exerted and affective attachments developed.

### 7.2.1 *Connecting with others*

Volunteering was considered by many participants to enable them to develop their social interaction skills. Ryan (16, volunteer), for example, stated he had previously been shy and avoided speaking to others. He felt volunteering had ‘kind of got me to speak to other people’, which had led him to make ‘really good friends’. Caitlin (13, volunteer) similarly referred to herself as having been ‘dead quiet’ and believed that by volunteering she ‘learnt to make more friends through talking to people’, while Niamh (14, volunteer) emphasised: ‘you just learn how to socialise with people’. Such comments are indicative of the notion that social interaction, particularly with new groups of people, was not something the participants’ prior experiences had led them to enter into with ease. Their lack of confidence (see section 7.3) was felt to limit their capacity to connect with others.

There was also a sense that, having become familiar and comfortable in the organisations they attended, participants were excited by the prospect of interacting with other young people. Caitlin (13, volunteer) stated she had made ‘funny friends [and] kind friends’, while Kieran (15, volunteer) spoke enthusiastically about the ‘brilliant’ people he had met:

The kids are brilliant ... they’ve got their own unique personalities, there’s one who’s just very, like, sassy, there’s one who’s just bonkers ... it’s just good because you get to meet these, you get to meet these exciting people.

In addition to forming relationships with young people, participants discussed the bonds they formed with staff. These stood in contrast with accounts of more problematic relationships with other adults, namely teachers and the police. Demi (18, volunteer) and Caitlin (13, volunteer) stated they got on 'very' and 'really' well with staff at the youth charity they frequented. The two volunteers valued staff members' personalities and felt they could be themselves in their presence. When asked if they had similar relationships with other adults, such as teachers, Caitlin made a splurting, laughing noise and Demi stated the relationship was 'completely different'. The participants felt it was harder to build trust with teachers, as they only saw them for certain subjects and in certain school years, unlike staff at the organisation whom they had forged relationships over extended periods of time.

Staff were also considered to treat participants with greater respect and patience than teachers. Nathan (14, volunteer) thought he had a 'completely different' relationship with teachers, whom he considered were more likely to shout at him. Similarly, Matt (15, volunteer) felt staff at the organisation he volunteered with 'don't treat you like kids' and 'try to reason with you', unlike teachers who were more likely to 'boss you' and 'moan at you a lot more'. Reay (2001, p. 333) argued working-class relationships to education have 'always been deeply problematic'. One aspect of this may be the agency they feel able to exercise. Young people are compelled by law to attend school in Scotland until they are 16 years old. The volunteers in this study chose to participate in their respective organisations and thus were able to exercise a greater degree of agency when volunteering than in to school.<sup>47</sup> They also valued the respect they felt they were given by volunteer coordinators and the relationships they developed with them.

Participants described encountering inclusive atmospheres at the organisations they attended. This contrasted with potentially unwelcoming or seemingly hostile environments such as school, which can be a source of anxiety for young people

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<sup>47</sup> By contrast, evidence suggests compelling young people to volunteering can give rise to feelings of disempowerment (Warburton & Smith, 2003).

from low-income households (Ridge, 2011), and public space, where young people can be subjected to surveillance and social control. Inclusive atmospheres were considered significant in allowing friendships to develop. Cheryl (16, volunteer), for example, stated: 'the people are really friendly and nice and they make you feel really settled in'. During the focus group in which Cheryl took part, participants spoke fondly of the positive relationships they had with the staff in the organisation. Inclusive atmospheres were valued, along with the fact that 'it's local and it's with the people I like and that's what's easier to talk to them' (Daniela 16, volunteer). The proximity of organisations to where participants grew up was a common theme during the fieldwork. Relationships formed in these tight-knit environments can be viewed as a form of bonding social capital, reinforcing shared identities among homogeneous groups (Putnam, 2000). These networks were used as resources from which to build confidence, social skills and self-esteem (see section 7.3).

Although less prevalent, there was evidence of bridging social capital in the form of relationships developed across territorial and sectarian divides. The organisation Faye (16, volunteer) volunteered with transported young people from disadvantaged areas across the city to sporting complexes to engage in physical activities. She stated:

Some people through [Sports Charity 2] I probably would never have spoken to in ma life ... we're all from different areas ... like ten year ago that wouldn't have been able to happen because, like, of all the gangs and stuff, but now like, we've managed to break barriers and make friends.

Niamh (14, volunteer) volunteered in an area with a history of sectarianism and tensions between Celtic and Rangers supporters. She described befriending persons she felt she would not otherwise have interacted with on account of:

Wherever they stay, or wha'ever team they support an' what religion they are and all that ... so you could be opposites wi' people and you wouldnae be able to speak to them because 'ae wherever they came fae or stuff like that ... [At Youth Charity 1] it doesnae matter what team ye support or what, what you believe in, like you all just get treated equally ... it's just a way for yous all to socialise.

In these extracts, Faye and Niamh indicated volunteering provided a way of broadening their social networks to 'encompass people across diverse social cleavages' (Putnam, 2000, p. 22). Putnam (2000, p. 23) argued one of the benefits of bridging social capital was its capacity to 'generate broader identities and reciprocity'. This can be seen in Faye and Niamh's assertions that volunteering enabled them to make friends and socialise with people who might otherwise have been considered 'opposites'. The interaction inherent in volunteering with people from varied social backgrounds can therefore provide a way of broadening the identities of those whose movements and relationships are marked by territorial and sectarian divisions.

Another benefit of bridging social capital is its ability to create links to 'external assets' and otherwise inaccessible information (Putnam, 2000, p. 22). This notion is evident in volunteering initiatives, such as Project Scotland, that promote volunteering as a way of meeting new people and establishing 'useful contacts'.<sup>48</sup> Yet, while these participants formed relationships across social cleavages, a question remains concerning the extent to which they facilitated access to external assets. In light of the fact that the organisations they attended worked with young people in areas of multiple deprivation, the bridging social capital they developed would have been with persons from similar class backgrounds. Although separated by neighbourhood or religious divisions, they nonetheless were united by the experience of residing in deprived areas and encountering the disadvantages this

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<sup>48</sup> See <https://www.projectscotland.co.uk/volunteers/faqs/> (18 January 2018).

gives rise to (Scottish Government, 2017a). Rather than straightforwardly providing opportunities to 'get ahead', bridging social capital provided these participants with opportunities to develop friendships with persons from similar class backgrounds who they otherwise would not have met. Indeed, as discussed in the following section, it was often the emotional attachments developed through volunteering that were highly valued.

### *7.2.2 Reciprocal and emotional attachments*

An issue with assessing the benefits of volunteering is determining whether they derive from the connections forged through participation or the act of volunteering itself (Musick & Wilson, 2008). One way in which the act can be seen to differ from the relationship is through the opportunity to help others rather than simply socialise with them. During the fieldwork, participants indicated many of their relationships were of a reciprocal nature; they helped others and, in doing so, personally benefitted. In some instances, participants outlined clear emotional attachments to those they engaged with while volunteering, which gave rise to feelings of pride and worthiness.

The concept of emotional capital has been proposed as a way of analysing affective relationships among family and friends and the ways in which emotional resources are passed on to those an individual cares about (Reay, 2000). The concept has been theorised in different ways. Reay (2004a, p. 71) posited that, unlike the other forms of capital – social, cultural and economic – emotional capital is about 'investment in others rather than the self'. Zembylas (2007) sought to broaden the notion of emotional capital by conceptualising it as central to group relations through which it can be developed into social and cultural capital. As the extracts in this subsection demonstrate, participants made emotional investments with persons in the organisations where they volunteered. While these were partly directed towards others, they were also attachments from which they personally benefitted. Furthermore, participants' emotional capital was linked to their social

capital, in that it led to stronger relationships, and helped them develop their self-perceptions as individuals who were able to help others.

Amy (15, volunteer) highlighted the reciprocal nature of her volunteering when stating she enjoyed being able to 'teach people things that you know, but they don't, and they could also teach you things that they know and you don't'. Being able to help others was often cited as a factor that brought happiness to those who were able to do so. Connor (17, volunteer) volunteered at a school based reading group for younger pupils and described how giving a 'confidence boost' to those who 'felt embarrassed about not being able to read' was 'really nice' and something he 'enjoyed'. Other participants described how seeing young people enjoy activities they helped organise was a source of happiness:

They just enjoy themselves so if they're enjoying their selves, you enjoy yourself, so it's good working with young people, so it is. (Thomas 17, ex-volunteer)

Just playing games with them and watch them, like, be happy and be children, I love that. (Orla 16, volunteer)

I get a kick outtae it, helping people ... It's just like, you feel good about yourself and you just feel proud. (Sean 15, volunteer)

Being able to help others was something felt particularly strongly by Donna (14, volunteer). The belief that she was providing support to those who might otherwise be lacking was something Donna took seriously and considered to make her feel content:

[Volunteering] actually gives us a happier life ... knowing that we're going out there and helping someone ... rather than just sitting there, like, you

know there's people out there that actually need help to do stuff ... and now that you're actually helping them you feel like a lot better about yourself, like, knowing that you are really helping someone.

The extract captures a reciprocal exchange between Donna and the young people she helped. Rather than being 'stuck on her phone' or on 'the streets', volunteering enabled her to act with purpose and agency. The sense of happiness that stemmed from helping others contrasted with the boredom and alienation associated with participants' restricted leisure opportunities. Positive emotions were also developed in instances where volunteers adopted mentoring roles with other young persons:

You also gain trust as well with the younger ones, like some younger ones are, like, dead wary of who they speak to and stuff and like when you have like a bond with them they can tell you anything and that's kinda a good thing to have, like, 'cos when you see some of them, they don't want to talk to anybody else and you just say, "Oh can I talk to you?", and it feels like you're actually doing something, 'cos they want to come and speak to you.  
(Demi 18, volunteer)

The extract highlights the sense of purpose Demi found through volunteering. She felt she was the only person certain young people would talk to and this feeling bolstered her sense of self-worth. Melkman et al. (2015, p. 46) argue care leavers who volunteered to help young people in similar situations to those they experienced often came to acknowledge the 'fact they possess something which is of value to others'. Furthermore, they contend this transition in attitude enhanced their participants' sense of self and agency. A similar process was evident in this study. Kieran (15, volunteer) believed helping others boosted his confidence and that doing so taught him 'a lot of things I never thought I knew about myself', demonstrating how volunteering offered ways of developing agency and identity.

Related to this were the emotional bonds participants developed with those they helped:

For me it's like, they're attached, it's as if they're attached to you now so you can't exactly walk away and leave. (Donna 14, volunteer)

If I left my session, I'd think I'd become a bit emosh, like, you're emotionally attached, that's what it is, you become like attached to your group or whatever it is your volunteering for. (Faye 16, volunteer)

These extracts highlight the extent to which the relational and emotional aspects of volunteering were central to what participants valued about it. Although there was evidence of career-related motivations (see subsection 6.2.1), the benefits discussed were not orientated towards participants' futures but their present emotional states. Relationships were not viewed as resources with the potential to yield future returns – as Skeggs (2004) suggests is characteristic of middle-class approaches to social networks – but were valued for their intrinsic aspects. This suggests a divergence from government interventions that frame volunteering as a 'commodity to be marketed' (Davies, 2017), as well as middle-class approaches that view volunteering as a way of acquiring and mobilising social and cultural capital (Storr & Spaaij, 2016). Instead, volunteering was engaged with affectively. Participants' emotional capital was about helping others, developing group attachments and the sense of satisfaction that followed. The immediacy of these benefits echoes Tracey's suggestion, noted above, that the young people with whom she worked were concerned with how volunteering would help them 'right now'.

The immediacy of such benefits was evident in discussions about how volunteering contributed to participants' wellbeing. Amy (15, volunteer) fondly recalled the

excitement with which she was greeted by the young people she helped, who excitedly shouted her name and gave her hugs. She considered this 'really good' and stated that 'if you're having a bad day ... they can kinda cheer you up'. Liam (18, non-volunteer) similarly described how volunteering to coach football had made a positive impact on his wellbeing:

It was wan of the best thing I've done, aye actual 'cos, obviously I was, they were looking forward to seeing me, it made me feel worthy and all that, know what I mean, going in and actual helping them, and I wasnae the brightest person in school, I'm no' goin' to lie, doean that with them, it was, it was heart-warming.

The sense of 'worth' Liam experienced adds weight to the notion that, for some participants, a notable benefit was the sense of purpose derived through reciprocal relationships with other young people. In addition to this, these relationships could be a source of amusement. Matt (15, volunteer) stated he enjoyed working with young people because 'they could just say something really funny that they just didnae know they said funny'. Although participants benefited greatly from volunteering, they were keen to emphasise much of this stemmed from knowing that others were benefiting too:

It's not even the fact of getting the certificates or anything for it, like people say, "Oh aye, I'm going to do it so I can get this and that", but, it's not even that, it's just really fun to watch all the children ... have fun. (Donna 14, volunteer)

At times, relationships were described in familial terms, as a 'big' (Emma 14, volunteer) or 'second' family (Abbie 15, volunteer). The sense of belonging and support that accompanied these relationships meant that, for some, the youth clubs and charities where they volunteered acted as safe spaces. One of the

participants who reported volunteering during school time, Sean (15, volunteer), indicated he had been the victim of bullying and got into fights at school. Sean stated he volunteered 'mostly at lunch breaks', which 'kept me out the social space' and that as a result of volunteering was 'getting less names called at me'. The space of volunteering offered Sean momentary respite from difficult encounters with other pupils.

Those who volunteered in youth clubs and organisations variously described feeling 'really settled in' (Cheryl 16, volunteer) and 'dead safe' (Donna 14, volunteer). Niamh (14, volunteer) described the youth charity she frequented as a 'place where you can like socialise wi' everybody instead 'ae all the arguing and all the fighting'. Kieran (15, volunteer) recalled an instance where an attendee that regularly visited the youth cafe 'wasn't himself'. It transpired the attendee had been bullied at school that day. Kieran's advised him:

That was school, you can be safe here, if anybody tries that, we're gonna step in, so you're here to enjoy yourself, not to think, "Oh is this going to happen to me here".

These extracts indicate participants perceived the youth clubs and charities they attended to offer more than opportunities to enhance their CVs and future prospects. In some instances, they were described in terms of offering refuge from potentially difficult personal lives. Tracey emphasised this point, stating that while she wanted the young people to 'come out their comfort zones', she also sought to ensure they 'feel safe'. By 'safe', Tracey was referring to the provision of 'a space where ... they don't need to worry about what's happening in the house' or 'outside their doors'. She believed the youth charity was 'definitely a safe space for them in that sense'.

The relational dimensions of volunteering were thus a central aspect of what participants valued about it. The development of participants' social capital was not framed in terms of its capacity to help them 'get ahead' but rather for its affective dimensions and the immediate wellbeing benefits it provided. As discussed in the following section, the relationships developed through volunteering also offered ways of developing self-confidence.

### **7.3 Developing confidence**

With the introduction of the Curriculum for Excellence, the Scottish Government sought to develop young people into 'confident individuals' with 'physical, mental and emotional wellbeing' (Scottish Executive, 2004a, p. 12). Youth volunteering was considered to help achieve this goal through the Saltire Awards. While the capacity for volunteering to enhance wellbeing has been found in existing studies (Linning & Jackson, 2017; Low et al., 2007), the following subsections seek to add to these debates by exploring the ways in which participants felt their confidence had been developed through volunteering. Many of these perceived improvements stemmed from social interactions, support from volunteer coordinators and the leadership roles participants were given.

#### *7.3.1 Social interactions and familiar environments*

The most common way participants indicated they developed confidence was through opportunities to meet and socialise with others, reinforcing the significance of the attachments discussed above. Several believed that, prior to volunteering, shyness would have prevented them from speaking up in social situations:

I used to be very shy and now I'm like obviously really talkative ... a few years ago I wouldn't ah been able to go up to someone and go, "Hi my name's Isla", I'd be like, just, in my own little corner. (Isla 16, volunteer)

I used to be a very shy, erm, like very very shy and I never spoke to anybody or anything and now I'm a bit better. (Ryan 16, volunteer)

Donna            Before I started volunteering like, it would have just been our group like, we're best friends so it'd be like us and then you wouldn't have spoken to like...

Emma            Anybody else.

(Donna and Emma 14, volunteers)

Shyness can be conceptualised as an outcome of the interaction between the perception we have of ourselves and the perception we have of how others view us in social encounters (Scott, 2004). Not knowing the accepted behaviours of a particular environment can be the source of such emotions (Scott, Hinton-Smith, Härmä, & Broome, 2012). Furthermore, emotional dispositions are embedded in the habitus in accordance with early experiences (Sayer, 2005). Thus, the confidence of privileged young people is not an innate disposition, but one which has been learnt and embedded in the body through formative social experiences (Khan, 2011). Conversely, the experiences of participants in my study led to the development of shy dispositions. Participants reported they typically only interacted with those they already knew. Dylan (15, non-volunteer) indicated he only communicated with those to whom he was familiar, while Callum (15, ex-volunteer) stated: 'I know everyone I'm going to talk to'. Restricted spatial mobilities lead to circumstances in which social interactions were limited to finite numbers of people. Shyness towards new people thus related to uncertainty about the social norms governing situations beyond participants' immediate milieu.

This was the case for Callum, who found volunteering at a community garden with older volunteers 'strange' due to the fact of 'just no' knowing who they are'. He found it difficult to interact with others at the garden because 'naebody there was my age', meaning he 'didn't have anybody to talk to'. Callum's account resonates

with Bourdieu's (1990) notion of the hysteresis effect, akin to a fish out of water. The different lived conditions younger and older people are subjected to can cause 'generational conflicts' between each group's habitus (Bourdieu, 1977, p. 78). Accordingly, the difficulty Callum experienced interacting with those at the garden led him to stop volunteering shortly after starting.

Unlike Callum, the majority of volunteers interacted with persons of a similar age. Kieran (15, volunteer) considered interactions with young people were 'easier' than with adults, because 'you have a lot more things in common'. Accordingly, generational conflicts based on differing positions in social space were minimised, leading to 'easier' interactions. It was from these that participants frequently outlined confidence gains. This was especially so of Donna (14, volunteer), who perceived volunteering to have had a big impact on her life:

Ever since I like started volunteering, it's like completely changed your confidence and stuff it's, never used to feel confident and stuff and then ... you just get to know new people and stuff.

The notion that participants found it easier to interact with persons of a similar age was also evident in Orla's (16, volunteer) discussion of how the other attendees at her Girls' Brigade group were of a similar age and thus easy to socialise with. The comparative ease of interaction, in contrast to Callum's experiences, suggests volunteering with persons of a similar age is an important factor facilitating the development of confidence. This reflects the finding that young people in Scotland are most strongly motivated by the desire to volunteer with their friends (see Table 2.2). In terms of bonding and bridging social capital, although volunteering with persons with shared characteristics is characteristic of the former, this can provide an important stepping stone for bridging out to wider networks later on (Holland et al., 2007). Indeed, as discussed in the following subsection, there was evidence of the foundations developed in volunteering environments providing participants

with the confidence to challenge figures of authority and feel capable of adopting leadership roles.

In addition to sharing characteristics, such as age, time was an important factor in developing confidence. Kieran (15, volunteer) stated he was a 'shy person' before volunteering and that he found it 'a bit weird' entering 'new environment[s]'. He felt, however, that he 'had to go and try and speak to people' and found that 'through the weeks you start to ... grow more and more confident, so you start to like grow out of your wee shell and start to interact with the other kids'. As explored in section 6.1, time was a significant element in many participants' transitions into volunteering roles. The confidence participants described did not precede volunteering experiences, but was developed through them. The time to develop relationships and bond with those they helped enabled them to become familiar with their social settings and enhance their confidence within them.

Some volunteers contrasted their experiences at youth clubs and charities with school. Amy (15, volunteer) felt school did not provide her with the same opportunities to develop confidence. She said: 'I like school, but it's like boring sometimes and nothin' really goes in unless I like it'. Moreover, Amy felt she was 'distracted easily' and that if she didn't want to listen she would 'distract the class'. In contrast, she felt that, at the youth charity 'you can learn things without even noticing because you're having fun'. Amy's different attitudes towards learning in school and the youth charity may be related to the greater amount of agency she experienced in the latter and its comparative informality. The difference between attendance at school and voluntary organisations was highlighted by Tracey (volunteer coordinator):

I think it's that fear of, erm, the kinda, the uniform side o' things if you like, the kinda going to school and being told what to do whereas they come here

voluntarily and they, they're kinda encouraged to do what they want to do as a career path or just as a hobby.

School can be a source of anxiety and unhappiness for young people from low-income families (Ridge, 2011). Moreover, working-class cultures and identities have been found to be invalidated and misrecognised in educational settings (Ingram, 2009; Reay, 2001). For participants such as Amy, youth clubs facilitated a greater alignment of habitus and field. This was reinforced by the lengthy periods of time many reported spending at their respective organisations. In addition to this, participants were able to exercise greater autonomy over their involvement in youth organisations than at school. The volunteer-involving organisations frequented by participants therefore provided an environment in which they had become comfortable, had developed positive relationships and were able to enhance their self-confidence.

### *7.3.2 Support from volunteer coordinators and leadership roles*

In addition to gaining confidence through social interaction, participants described how volunteer coordinators provided emotional and practical support. Although volunteering is often framed as a way of supporting transitions into employment (Newton et al., 2011), the explicit encouragement of this approach was avoided by Tracey (volunteer coordinator) on the grounds that it would be 'totally off-putting' to the young people she worked with. Tracey believed young people were getting 'the employability thing fae every angle, they don't need to get it from me as well'. Instead, she focused on what she termed the 'simple things':

With the young people, it's about what they get out of it personally so, they build their confidence, but for me, building their confidence is ensuring that they're able to apply for a job, they might no' know that, but that's ultimately what's gunnae happen, if they feel more confident in their self they'll be able to apply for a job, they'll be able to book a doctor's

appointment, they'll be able to go and walk into the hairdressers, those simple things.

Despite not emphasising employability to the young people she worked with, Tracey nevertheless framed volunteering as a way of supporting their routes into employment. The confidence issues faced by many of the participants meant support from youth workers was discussed in terms of social skills. This process was well illustrated in Amy's (15, volunteer) case. Amy described how her anxiety was lessened by support she received while volunteering:

I have anxiety, like, really bad sometimes and when I come here it's like ... I feel comfortable when I come here, so like, and then I'm just like, "Mmm ok", 'cos they help me a lot and I'm like, "Thanks".

Having attended and volunteered at the organisation for a number of years, Amy had developed a strong attachment to the volunteer coordinator, whom she referred to as her 'best friend'. She trusted staff at the charity who were able to support her to perform tasks such as using a telephone and catching a bus:

I couldnae even phone anybody at all, but like, I was pure scared to pick up the phone or answer ma door if somebody came tae it, but like they've kind of helped me, like develop to be better at that and now I can phone somebody or answer the phone, so I'm glad with that.

I'd be like, "Oh no, I'm no' going to school, I cannae, I cannae get on the bus, I cannae walk down that road, people's gunna look at me", but I'd come to [Youth Charity 3] and [Youth Charity 2] and they'd help me to stop thinkin' that and then, like, I can get on the bus and stuff like that now and it's like, it's good because I think nothing 'ae it now.

The relationships she described at the charity contrasted with her experiences of school. Amy felt the ‘teachers don’t have patience’ and that ‘if you’re struggling, they can only help you for like two minutes’. Her experience of school, despite the Curriculum for Excellence’s aim, was not turning Amy into a ‘confident individual’; indeed, her detachment from it was arguably having the opposite effect. Her relationships in the charity, however, offered ways for Amy’s personal development needs to be met. Scholars of childhood studies have argued for the importance of recognising children and young people as beings in their own right (James et al., 1998). By recognising and supporting her needs, the charity offered Amy something school did not, helping her to ‘get on with life’ and ‘feel better about ma self’. In this way, her experiences of volunteering were contributing to the development of citizenship characteristics in the Curriculum for Excellence.

The development of such characteristics was also evident in the leadership and responsible roles volunteers undertook with support from staff. Olivia (17, volunteer) believed her confidence had grown due to ‘a lot of trust and responsibility’ being placed in her to undertake activities at school and the Girls’ Brigade group she attended. While these were described as ‘a bit daunting’, Olivia reflected positively on being entrusted, noting, ‘I feel really grown up, because they’re putting that much trust in me’. This sentiment was echoed by Kieran (15, volunteer) whose volunteering at a youth club involved taking a lead on drama activities and looking after attendees. He stated these actions made him ‘more confident’ and gave him ‘a lot more responsibility’, which led to feelings of pride:

Looking after all the kids, that was a lot of responsibility and I’m kinda proud of myself that ... they could trust me with that ... if they’re giving you this amount of responsibility to look after the health and wellbeing of these kids, it kinda makes you think, “Well, I must be doing something right”.

Olivia and Kieran described themselves as 'timid' and 'really shy' prior to volunteering. Being put in positions of responsibility with younger children was interpreted as being treated with trust and like an adult. Orla (16, volunteer) described how volunteering at Scouts had given her the confidence to lead group activities with younger children. Orla stated that while initially she would have felt out of place telling the children what to do, through her role, she learnt how to respond to such circumstances:

Like ma confidence skills have gone way up, like with the children I would never be like, "You do this. Stop that", I would never be able to do that, I would never feel like it's my place or anything, but since like the volunteering and stuff, it's like, "You are the leader, be the leader instead of just acting like one of, like, the children".

These extracts demonstrate a transition being made from a position of alienation (see section 7.1) to one of confidence and agency. This shift was evident in Tracey's description of her young volunteers' interactions with councillors at a hustings event. The volunteers made a presentation about child poverty and asked the councillors 'are you doing the best you can?'. Following this, a couple of the young people went to the Scottish Parliament to question the same councillors:

I cannae remember what the question was, but the councillor came back wi' something totally different and the wee girl said, "Well that wasnae what I asked you", and she asked the question again, until she got an answer that she thought was suitable.

The extract attests to the role voluntary action can play in enhancing democratic competencies (Dodge & Ospina, 2016; Garrard, 2002). It also demonstrates a sense of agency not present in participants' descriptions of the shyness and social anxieties they experienced before. This modification was also evident when

contrasting Matt's experiences of socialising on 'the street', where his agency was lessened through surveillance, and volunteering on 'the street':

You need to talk to people in the street ... you need to be able to talk to the kids that ... have just come here the first time so you know if they're ok.

In this extract, Matt describes his volunteering role at the charity's street-play sessions. Rather than being subject to surveillance and having his movements policed, Matt engages with others, welcomes newcomers and checks they are ok. He has moved from a passive to an agential actor. Furthermore, it was through these experiences of getting 'to know a lot of people' and being able to 'communicate with people' that he developed his confidence. Although this represents a significant alteration, it is not the case that Matt is fully emancipated from his alienated position. Context is key, the charity's sessions provided a framework in which Matt could exert agency, yet his leisure time beyond these settings remained constrained by the factors discussed in section 7.1.

Although not freeing participants from structural constraints, the responsibilities given to them through volunteering developed their confidence, provided them with a sense of purpose and were reflected upon favourably. Thomas (17, ex-volunteer) had enjoyed helping young people and 'seeing everybody enjoying their selves'; Paige (18, volunteer) thought the responsibility she was given 'feels quite good'; while Demi (18, volunteer) found volunteering with children a 'challenging' but 'good experience to have'. As well as benefiting participants at the time, some felt the skills they developed would be helpful as they entered adulthood. Kieran (15, volunteer) thought the skills he gained through volunteering enhanced his knowledge of the kinds of responsibilities adults encountered and provided him with experiences that would ease his ability to cope with these:

As you get older through, like, when you leave school and that and whatever, you have, you get more and more like responsibility as it is, like getting your own house and stuff like that, so this sort of gives you the backbone of what it's sort of like, so it kind of gives you like steps on how you could improve as well ... it kind of shows how much adults have to deal with, how much responsibility they have, like you might not know before ... it kind of shows you what it's like to be an adult.

In this sense, an anticipated benefit of volunteering was that it would enable a smoother transition into adulthood. Confidence gains were expected by Niamh (14, volunteer) to make the school-to-work transition less 'awkward' by increasing her willingness to 'speak to people and socialise wi' different people' rather than 'being shy and nervous'. Indeed, one participant described how volunteering helped his transition into employment. Liam (18, ex-volunteer) had volunteered on a sports charity's volunteering programme, an experience which made him feel 'more confident in myself'. He contrasted his employment experiences with a colleague who had not volunteered:

Ah'm so much more've a confident person and like he is, but I think if he had, this is him just basically jumping into the deep end, if he had, say if he had volunteered before, even for a bit in a primary school or anything like that, that would help him with his job just now, so the volunteerin' actually has helped me, from working with the kids on tae my job to working with kids playing football and all that, so it has benefited me a lot.

Due to the age range used in this study, 12-18 years old, only Liam, Demi (18, volunteer) and Sophie (17, volunteer) were employed, making it difficult to assess the extent to which participants felt volunteering aided this transition. Although the benefits participants described were often not framed in terms of employment, the confidence gains discussed suggest a role for volunteering in aiding their transitions

into work or further education. Yet, the level of support required by some participants indicated an explicit focus on such aspects could be off-putting. Indeed, as explored in the following chapter, the complex needs of some young people were found to give rise to significant barriers to supporting them as volunteers.

## **7.4 Chapter conclusion**

This chapter has addressed the third research question by exploring the benefits participants gained through volunteering. The relational aspects of volunteering, such as the opportunity to interact with others and develop affective attachments, were of central importance. From these relationships, volunteers derived a sense of purpose and agency, which gave rise to feelings of pride and worthiness. Experiences of volunteering contrasted sharply with participants' accounts of restricted leisure opportunities, the surveillance of their presence in public space and the 'retreat indoors'. Although there was some evidence of volunteering being valued for its potential to ease future transitions, overall, greater significance was placed on the benefits it gave rise to in the present.

Participants indicated that, beyond the organisations where they volunteered, there were limited places available to them in which to engage in activities ('do') and socialise in risk-free environments ('be'). Walking around the local area was commonly cited as a way to fill spare time, yet was problematised by the risk of encountering anti-social behaviour or having their presence in public space policed by others. In light of these concerns, many participants stated they spent time indoors, on their mobile phones or digital devices. Against this backdrop, youth clubs and charities offered ways of escaping the boredom and alienation associated with restricted leisure options. For those who had followed the participant-to-volunteer trajectory, such benefits were not solely an outcome of volunteering but also prior attendance at youth clubs and charities. There was a sense that attendance and volunteering at these organisations could provide momentary respite for those experiencing difficult circumstances.

Given that participants often indicated the organisations they attended were in their local areas, the relationships formed were characteristic of bonding social capital, tying together those with shared characteristics. In a minority of instances participants formed relationships with persons they felt they would previously have been unable to interact with due to territorial and sectarian issues, thereby indicating the development of bridging social capital. It was argued that, although relationships were developed across social cleavages, participants were still interacting with persons from similar class backgrounds, raising the issue of whether their bridging social capital facilitated access to 'external assets'. It did, however, provide opportunities to develop friendships with persons they would otherwise not have interacted with.

The emotional attachments developed through volunteering were a central aspect of what was valued about it. Participants' emotional capital was orientated towards helping others and gave rise to personal benefits, as well as strengthening their social attachments. This finding suggests the nature of youth volunteering in deprived areas is characterised by a greater emphasis on its social and emotional aspects than its capacity to enable an individual to stand out from others. Participants' emotional investments meant their social capital was less about future focused strategies for 'getting ahead' than it was being with others and belonging in the present. Their experiences thus differed from the largely instrumental focus of youth volunteering initiatives and policy, as well as middle-class approaches to volunteering as ways of mobilising social and cultural capital.

The chapter highlighted how generational conflict in the habitus of older and younger people meant voluntary activities that involved youth-to-youth interactions were considered by participants to provide better opportunities for developing confidence than youth-to-adult opportunities. The comparative ease of these interactions, alongside support from youth workers, enabled participants to

undertake leadership roles and positions of responsibility with the young people they helped. It was often reported that seeing the positive impact of their volunteering and developing trust with other young people left participants with feelings of satisfaction and happiness. These interactions imbued participants with a sense of pride that contrasted with their experiences of public space and showed them they possessed something that was of value to others.

The confidence gains participants described were often contrasted with their experiences of formal education. This suggests that, like the nature of their interactions, the environments in which participants volunteered had implications for understanding the benefits they acquired. The participant-to-volunteer trajectory provided opportunities for an alignment of habitus and field which differed from the sense of anxiety some experienced at school. This highlights the importance of youth organisations and formal volunteering opportunities for participants' personal development. While these competencies were largely valued for how they made participants feel in the present, there was a sense that they could prove useful as participants transitioned into adulthood.

To conclude, the benefits described were largely orientated towards participants' present states. Volunteering provided an alternative to otherwise restricted leisure lives and opportunities to develop bonding social capital and emotional attachments to other young people. In contrast to the notion that volunteering provides 'useful contacts' for 'getting ahead' in life, these relationships were predominantly valued for the sense of satisfaction, agency and trust they provided as well as their affective dimensions. These positive experiences were often contrasted with negative experiences of school, highlighting the importance of volunteering in an organisational setting to participants' personal development. In light of these benefits, it is important to understand the factors that restrict young people's access to volunteering opportunities in deprived areas. It is to this topic that the following chapter turns.

## **8 Factors obstructing access to volunteering opportunities**

This chapter explores the factors that obstructed access to volunteering opportunities. Longstanding barriers noted in the literature include the negative image some young people have of volunteering, lack of information about it and not knowing how to start (Ellis, 2004; Low et al., 2007; Lukka & Ellis, 2001; NatCen, 2011; Smith, 1999). This chapter adds to these debates by looking at the relationships between objective and subjective barriers to participation. In doing so, it employs a Bourdieusian approach to exploring how the objective and subjective dimensions of social life structure action (Bourdieu, 1990).

The first half of the chapter focuses on the objective dimensions. It examines how participants were hindered from volunteering by resource issues, which negatively impacting the capacity of voluntary sector organisations to support them, the perceived failure of schools to provide information about volunteering, as well as issues of collaboration between youth organisations and schools. These factors left participants with few chances to learn about volunteering or opportunities to do so. This lack of information was compounded by restrictions on their spatial movements, limiting their ability to travel to opportunities should they become aware of them.

In the second half of the chapter, the concept of habitus is used to argue these objective constraints were internalised by non-volunteers into subjective dispositions that meant volunteering risked encountering peer disapproval. In light of the lack of opportunities to volunteer and widespread non-participation, to volunteer was to go against the grain of accepted peer behaviour and thus risk being 'slagged'. These pressures were particularly felt among young males for whom volunteering was perceived as a feminine activity and thus at odds with

being one of ‘the boys’. Despite widespread perception of informal penalties, the chapter suggests, in certain circumstances, their impact may be overstated and that attendance and volunteering at youth organisations could generate resilience towards the collective disposition to not volunteer.

## **8.1 Institutional and spatial barriers**

This section examines institutional and spatial barriers to volunteering opportunities. The first subsection examines how funding constraints limited youth workers’ capacity to perform their roles. It also explores the potential implications for young people’s wellbeing should the organisations they attend close or reduce the services they offer. The second subsection explores participants’ perceptions of the challenging relationships between schools and volunteering. The third subsection discusses how spatial barriers, relating to attachments to places and people and geographic immobility, restricted access to opportunities. The fourth section discusses the lack of information both volunteers and non-volunteers encountered.

### *8.1.1 Resource issues to supporting young people*

France (2016) argued that the use of austerity as a policy response to the economic crisis of 2007/8 accelerated the process of neoliberalisation in the UK. He contended this was not merely an economic response but a political and moralising one, an approach that sought to further strip back state funding, normalise the use of markets in the delivery of public services and individualise social problems. Research indicates the impacts of austerity have been felt severely and unequally, often hitting the most disadvantaged groups hardest (Cooper & Whyte, 2017; O’Hara, 2014). A recent Unison (2016a) report estimated that, from 2010 to 2016, £387 million was cut from youth services spending across the UK and that, between 2012 and 2016, a total of 603 youth centres closed down. In Scotland, cuts to local government have been found to reduce youth workers’ capacity to perform their jobs effectively (Unison, 2016b). By removing and limiting these supports, the

Scottish Government's (2011) claim to be adopting a preventative approach to public service delivery is thrown into question. In this context, the voluntary sector is positioned as providing a way of fixing Britain's social problems yet, as critics note, it amounts to the sector being asked to 'achieve more with less' (Alcock, 2010, p. 385).

The accounts provided by youth workers attested to the difficulties they experienced supporting young people to volunteer. Lack of funding and resources were commonly cited as restricting youth workers' capacities to perform their roles. Clare, who worked for a local government agency, stated that six months prior to our interview her position had been full- rather than part-time. Resultantly, Clare believed she did not have the time to adequately promote volunteering at schools and youth organisations or to support young people into opportunities. Those who worked in youth clubs and charities also discussed how they were negatively impacted by funding constraints. Nicky, a project coordinator, stated 'we don't have a designated volunteer coordinator anymore, purely based on funding' and noted her current position was 'not secure'. Tracey, a volunteer coordinator, described a similar set of circumstances. Prior to her position, the charity did not have a dedicated member of staff to support young volunteers. Yet, her current position was insecure as its funding was only guaranteed for one year.

The implications of these circumstances are, to a certain extent, obvious. Without members of staff to support young people, there are fewer resources that can be put towards this end. In addition to this, funding constraints created emotional anxieties. Tracey described how limited resources caused stress for young people who used and volunteered at the organisation:

They're upset about that kinda thing, but it's also about looking at other options for them, so we don't just go, "Right that's it finished, bye", so it's about me saying, "Right ok, what's, what else is out there that you can get

involved in, that you can put your time into”, and make sure that they’re ready for that step ... I don’t think funders quite grasp the fact that you’re actually playing with people’s kinda emotions and their lives and, and people commit a hundred percent to places like [Youth Charity 2] and if you were to take that away the impact could be really great, I mean it’d be massive for people if you take something like that service away from them.

As discussed in Chapter 7, many participants developed strong, emotional attachments to the organisations and places where they volunteered. Farrugia et al. (2015) argue young people’s emotional attachments to specific places can generate anxieties when leaving them. In a similar manner, the connections participants had to organisations meant that if they were to close, reduce their opening times or make staff redundant, there would be significant emotional ramifications. This is both a barrier to initial volunteering and continued participation. Although Tracey stated she would signpost young people towards other opportunities, the finding that participants often started volunteering after having built foundations suggests her efforts might struggle to materialise.

Cuts to services were considered by Tracey to generate anxiety among young volunteers. She believed many found it ‘hard to understand’ how a funder, a person unknown to them, was able to make decisions concerning the future of the organisation. Tracey believed this had the potential to damage relationships between staff and young people which had been build up over prolonged periods of time:

It makes it really extremely difficult, because you build up that relationship with people and you built up that trust and if you take that away then ultimately [they think] it’s your fault, because they don’t see it as anybody else’s.

Tracey believed the young people she worked with did not deal well with adults 'parachuting' in and out of their lives. As explored in subsection 7.2.1, some participants discussed how they preferred their relationships with youth workers to teachers, due to the perceived consistency with which they encountered the former. The sense of identity, belonging and support developed through bonding social capital (Bottrell, 2009; Holland et al., 2007; Phillips, 2010) was, therefore, put at risk by funding constraints. If these organisations were to close, Nicky, a project manager, wondered:

Where would some of these young people be? 'Cos they are not at school and they're not going to go into a job centre, they're not goin' to go into a careers office, because they don't get that support with the barriers and I think that's what's good about the volunteering, you get to address those barriers.

In contrast to those who, through privileged education, develop the self-confidence and self-assurance to enter and navigate various social settings with ease (Khan, 2011), the participants in this study expressed anxiety at the notion of meeting new people and entering new environments. Nicky's extract draws attention to the benefits of volunteering in terms of young people's development and future transitions. Although participants' attachments to specific areas limited their mobility regardless of whether they were volunteering or not, it is plausible that the support received from youth workers and the opportunities to engage in leadership roles (see subsection 7.3.2) could address the barriers she discussed.

In terms of supporting young people into volunteering opportunities, resource restrictions meant some young people's complex needs were an insurmountable barrier to participation. Beth, a youth volunteer advisor at a local government organisation, spoke at length about the complex needs of some of the young people who were referred to the volunteering programme she delivered. She stated,

'there's so many different issues that need addressed from their literacy to their mental health, to the offending, to what's going on at home'. She raised the point that 'there's only so much you can do', because 'we're there to tell them about volunteering' and cannot get involved 'with what's going on at home because we're not, we're not trained up to deal with that, we're not qualified to deal with that'. Beth recalled instances where young people had shown up drunk and under the influence of drugs to taster sessions. She sought to situate such behaviour in her perception of its wider context, for example, referring to the levels of poverty she encountered in some areas as 'quite shocking' and recounted a harrowing story of a boy who had been through the care system after having seen his mother 'shot dead'. Nonetheless, certain behavioural issues meant she used to 'dread' working with some groups, leading her to become 'quite anxious' and finding particular situations 'really stressful'.

Beth wanted to provide 'one-to-one support for the young people', but felt 'we don't have the resources to do that'. She expressed disappointment at this and felt young people were often 'bounced from one programme to the other' and not 'able to sustain anything'. This was evidenced in a programme Beth described, which was cancelled 'because the attendance just dropped off'. The pathways to participation exhibited by the young people Beth worked with contrasted sharply with the experiences of the participants in this thesis. While the latter often followed the participant-to-volunteer trajectory, the former were referred to volunteering programmes by other agencies. The lack of attachment Beth's young people had to the organisations they attended may explain her doubt that any of them continued volunteering beyond the programme.

The implications of resources issues discussed in this subsection resonate with concerns expressed by local government employees facing funding cuts (Unison, 2016b). Furthermore, the notion that the voluntary sector can pick up the slack is problematised by the issues facing youth clubs and charities. In terms of young

people's wellbeing under austerity, the stresses faced by those seeking to enter the labour market in deprived areas have been found to have 'serious' negative implications for their mental health (Ruddy, 2017, p. 262). Additionally, the 'psychological wellbeing' of young people, aged 13-15, in England was reported to have worsened between 2005 and 2014 (Lessof, Ross, Brind, Bell, & Newton, 2016). In international comparisons, children's subjective wellbeing in the UK has been found to rank poorly (Rees & Main, 2016). The issues reported by youth workers during the fieldwork raise concerns not only for their personal wellbeing, due to the precarity of their jobs, but their capacity to facilitate and sustain youth voluntary action, as well as concerns for the wellbeing of the young people they work with. Those already volunteering were at risk of losing their affective attachments to others, while those who were not volunteering were restricted in terms of the support and opportunities they were provided with to start doing so.

### *8.1.2 Problematic relationships with schools*

Teachers and schools have been reported to be among the most important actors facilitating volunteering for young people (Clement & Lafferty, 2015; Harper & Jackson, 2015; Pye & Michelmore, 2016). Furthermore, scholars have argued schools can act as important sources of information for young people to learn about volunteering (Musick & Wilson, 2008; Smith, 1999). In contrast, many of the participants in this study felt their schools created barriers and often indicated they did not do enough to provide them with information about, or promote opportunities for, volunteering. When asked whether they were aware of opportunities in school, the following responses were common:

Fraser            No.

George           No.

Harry            Naw, I've never really heard of any.

(Fraser 16, George 16, non-volunteers, Harry 17, ex-volunteer)

Donna           No' really.  
Faye            Nah.  
Emma           They don't even like bother.  
Donna           Naw, my school ain't even.  
(Donna 14, Emma 14, Faye 16, volunteers)

Nah, they don't advertise it or anything. (Callum 15, ex-volunteer)

I've never heard of them speak about it or anything like that. (Abbie 15, volunteer)

In addition to this, there was a sense that within schools pupils had unequal access to information. Although Kieran (15, volunteer) said his teachers did not talk about volunteering, he thought the school's careers officer might be able to assist in this area. He believed, however, that this option was mostly available to those who were about to leave school. Younger students, Kieran cautioned, have 'got nobody ... there's nobody in ma school that could really talk about it'. This sentiment was echoed during a focus group with female volunteers. Faye (16) also believed her school's careers advisor only spoke to those who were about to leave, while Donna (14) said 'you need to wait for weeks to get an appointment'. Emma (14) added to this, stating there was a need to have someone 'actually explaining what volunteering is'. The lack of information and opportunities participants reported appeared at odds with evidence suggesting in-school volunteering rates were equally highest (33 percent) in schools containing no pupils living in the 'most deprived' areas of Scotland and schools where 60-100 percent of pupils resided in such areas (see Figure 2.6).

In circumstances where schools did offer opportunities to volunteer, some participants felt they were only available to certain pupils. When discussing the

Duke of Edinburgh scheme during a focus group with non-volunteering males, Will (18) stated:

I don't think they done it at ma school ... in fact they did do it at ma school, but it was for the people wi' like ... disability, special needs and stuff like that that got to do it, 'cos I remember in our school it was like, there was like a certain bit for people with like learning disabilities and that.

In a separate interview, Thomas (17, ex-volunteer) also stated the scheme was not open to all pupils. Rather, because so 'many people wanted to do it, they just picked names out of a hat'. This approach left Thomas feeling 'gutted', as he had wanted to take part. Owen (15, non-volunteer) thought there were not many opportunities to volunteer in school. Of those that were available, he said, 'I think it's more older people that get the chance'. The notion that volunteering opportunities were only open to older pupils resonates with data indicating in-school volunteering rates in Scotland are highest among secondary school pupils in their final year (Linning & Jackson, 2017) and that teachers play a greater role in facilitating access for pupils aged 16-18 than 11-15 (Harper & Jackson, 2015). Participants' perceptions that schools only focused on older cohorts may be an outcome of a drive to enhance pupils' CVs as they leave school and seek to enter further education or employment.

Those who worked in local government organisations as well as youth clubs and charities also discussed issues they encountered working with schools. Clare, whose job included promoting the Saltire Awards, felt the schools that 'buy into it, buy into it big time' in contrast to those she had 'never heard from'. She believed those who bought into it were partly driven by the fit they saw between the awards and the Curriculum for Excellence. Those recruiting young people to volunteering opportunities in England have reported grammar schools were more receptive to their efforts than comprehensive schools (Dean, 2016b). They suggested

comprehensive schools prioritised the ‘vital above the important’ and did not view volunteering as standard or part of pupils’ education biographies (Dean, 2016b, p. 651). Unlike high achieving schools in deprived areas of Glasgow, low achieving ones have been found to be unable to fund extra time for working with external partners, such as career advisors (McKinney, Hall, Lowden, McClung, & Cameron, 2013). The extent to which schools bought into the Saltire Awards may, therefore, be related to the resources at their disposal and the degree to which they viewed the awards and volunteering as central to pupils’ development.

Volunteer coordinators also expressed frustration when recounting their experiences of working with schools. Harriet, a project coordinator interviewed during the pilot study, described going into schools with the aim of recruiting young people to volunteer and being given, what she referred to as, ‘the Blue Peter kids’, i.e. fifth and sixth year pupils who were performing well academically. Harriet wanted to ‘see volunteering open to all young people’, but felt that teachers often denied young people the opportunity. She stated:

We’ll say, “We’re looking for some young people for volunteering at youth bank to support the project” or, and they’ll say, “We don’t really have anybody that’d be able to do that”.

Her experiences had led her to believe ‘schools only see the kids that are doing well, that can achieve in a volunteering role because they’re responsible in school’. Educational attainment is structured by area-based deprivation, with those from the ‘most deprived’ areas performing less well (Scottish Government, 2016e). Furthermore, disengagement from school in deprived areas can be understood as a response to minimal employment prospects available post-education (MacDonald & Marsh, 2005). Teachers, however, have been found to adopt a ‘deficit’ model, presuming socially disadvantaged pupils to have low aspirations, when attempting to explain low attainment, rather than acknowledging broader structural factors

(Thompson, McNicholl, & Mentor, 2016; White & Murray, 2016). Thus, the teachers Harriet described not only removed pupils' capacity to exert agency in responding to the offer but, by selecting 'the Blue Peter kids', were potentially making it harder for those from more disadvantaged backgrounds to enter volunteering opportunities.

In addition to this, it may be the case that schools are only willing to put forward their 'best' or highest achieving pupils for reputational reasons. The labelling of schools as 'unruly' can lead to (middle-class) parents going to great lengths to avoid enrolling their children (Reay, 2007). Prior to a focus group at School 1, a teacher informed me the pupils I would be speaking to were the 'cream of the crop'. While it may have been the case that these were the only volunteers available at the time, the school might have been seeking to present a positive image. It is plausible that a similar process was at work in Harriet's account.

One youth worker, Nicky, stated she was put off working with schools because she believed, 'anything that the school gets in the school is for the benefit of the school, it's not really, it's no benefit to me, it not a benefit to the young people'. She felt schools were not as attentive to the needs of pupils as they ought to be. Nicky described an incident involving a young volunteer she worked with, who had been put on a reduced timetable at school which involved work experience at Nicky's youth charity, where the girl already volunteered. Nicky was frustrated that the school had 'never ever phoned to see how she's getting on', despite the positive progress Nicky felt the girl had made. The same girl had to attend a children's panel due to her truancy from school. Again, Nicky was frustrated that, at the panel, the 'school never mentioned that she was in here as a work placement', which Nicky felt was 'important because the skills that she has got are really, really good'. She continued:

It's really frustrating, cos there's loads of young people who are not good at school, but their volunteering skills and their engagement skills here and other projects are really good, but they don't get the opportunity to, you know, to link it into their education.

Nicky's account suggests that while there are ways in which volunteering can support educational aims, for example the correspondence between the Saltire Awards the four capacities of the Curriculum for Excellence, schools do not always appear to recognise them. The accounts provided in this subsection indicate that while some schools developed positive relationships with outside organisations, who could promote and facilitate volunteering opportunities, others did not. Scholars have debated whether schools can be said to have an 'institutional habitus', through which they focus, for example, on academic courses or vocational training (Atkinson, 2011; Burke, Emmerich, & Ingram, 2013). Within this framework, the embedding of volunteering into the normal practice of a school would constitute part of a school's institutional habitus. Yet, as Dean (2016b, p. 655) contends, whether a school can be said to have an institutional habitus is 'ultimately an unimportant theoretical debate' which should be reframed empirically. The issues encountered by youth workers in this study were that some schools appeared open to the notion of partnership working and volunteering while others did not and that, among those who did, it was only 'the Blue Peter kids' who were put forward. These sometimes-problematic relationships dissuaded youth workers from seeking to collaborate with schools, thereby restricting young people's opportunities for learning about volunteering and opportunities to do so.

### *8.1.3 Lack of information*

Lack of information has been reported to be a 'considerable barrier' obstructing young people from volunteering (Ellis, 2004, p. 18) and 'particularly problematic' among socially excluded adults (Smith et al., 2004, p. 33). Notably in this study, neither volunteers nor non-volunteers felt they had much access to information

about volunteering. Many of those who had followed the participant-to-volunteer trajectory felt that, without access to their social networks, volunteering would have been a significantly more difficult activity to participate in. Thomas (17, ex-volunteer) stated volunteering was difficult to get into if 'you don't really have an idea about it', while Faye (16, volunteer), referring to the volunteers in her focus group, reported:

We all know about it 'cos we do it, there's people who just sit about or kick about the streets ... they don't know how to, where to go or who to speak to.

During Faye's focus group, each of the participants used the language of volunteering to refer to their activities. They also stated they had gained Saltire Awards and Youth Achievement Awards. Faye's comment, 'we all know about it 'cos we do it', followed a discussion in which the participants indicated volunteering was rarely mentioned at school. It suggests their awareness of the concept of volunteering stemmed from their participation and volunteering at the organisation they attended, where volunteering was made explicit through awards which encouraged reflection on their practices. The implication was that, had they not followed this trajectory, they would have little idea about volunteering.

In addition to this, there was a sense that not following the participant-to-volunteer trajectory limited opportunities for finding out about opportunities to volunteer. Kieran (15, volunteer) suggested those who did not attend youth clubs as participants were disadvantaged in this respect:

I think it's only when ye go to these clubs, but if they nae have the time for the clubs, you're never going to go to the clubs, you're never going to find the opportunities.

Reinforcing the significance of attachments to organisations to finding out about opportunities to volunteer, a number of those who did volunteer indicated they only knew about the organisations they were involved in:

Other than [Youth Charity 1] I don't know any, like, other clubs, never mind any other opportunities to volunteer. (Niamh 14, volunteer)

This is the only one I really know about ... I never really hear about it, or like I never really see it like on a board saying, "Volunteering for this". (Isla 16, volunteer)

This suggests that without the processes that facilitated initial access to volunteer-involving organisations, discussed in subsection 6.1, volunteering would have remained an opaque phenomenon, both in terms of understandings and access. In addition to being unaware of other places where they could volunteer, there was a sense that 'we don't really actively look for them [opportunities to volunteer]' (Paige 18, volunteer). These findings give weight to evidence indicating only a small number of young people start volunteering on their own (Harper & Jackson, 2015) and the notion that those who are not connected to volunteer-involving networks are less likely to be asked to volunteer (Rochester et al., 2010).

Indeed, without the experience of having volunteered, non-volunteers' awareness of opportunities was even more restricted. Participants in a focus group of non-volunteering males indicated they did not have a 'clue about it', while Dylan (15, non-volunteer) stated 'I dunno, don't know about it' when asked about volunteering. When discussing his perception of his peers' knowledge of volunteering, Liam (ex-volunteer) said:

People have no clue that goes on and it's just like wi' anything, I think people will just, "Ah, it's charity shop", or something they're gonnae hate. (Liam 18, ex-volunteer)

Liam had previously volunteered with a sports charity. This experience had changed his opinion on volunteering, from negative to positive, and widened his perspective on the types of activities it entailed. During the interview, Liam expressed frustration at the mismatch he perceived between opportunities to volunteer and young people's awareness of them. This was compounded by the narrow and stereotypical view they had of it, leading them to dismiss it out of hand. Liam's comments point toward a distinction between volunteering in the abstract and concrete. His remarks indicated that, for those without experience of volunteering or access to it, the lack of information they possessed limited their possibilities for engaging with it or seeking it out.

This was evidenced during discussions with non-volunteers. Zoe (16), Taylor (17) and Sarah (16), for example, all indicated they were unaware of places where they could volunteer. Similarly, Paul (16, non-volunteer) thought there were 'no options ... there's not enough options'. Limited knowledge of options appeared to stem from the minimal discussions, talks or exposure non-volunteers had encountered in relation to volunteering:

Brad            This is the first time I've ever thought about it.

Will            This is the first time I've spoke about it as well.

Stu             When somebody comes in and makes you aware of it, what you can do and then you start actually thinking, "Oh well, if you can go and do that, then I would", but they never tell.

(Brad 18, Will 18, Stu 17, non-volunteers)

We hardly ever hear about volunteering, at all, like naebody ever comes up to ye and says, “Do ye want to volunteer for this?”, or, “Do ye want tae dae this?”, you have to go yourself and find it don’t ye? So it’s no’ easy to volunteer. (Taylor 16, non-volunteer)

You never really get asked, so you’d have to go find it yourself. (Harry 17, ex-volunteer)

The limited encounters non-volunteers had with the topic of volunteering left them feeling they would have to find opportunities by themselves, a prospect they did not think they would be able to do with ease – ‘I don’t know how you would do that’ (Alex 18, non-volunteer). Furthermore, this was neither the path volunteers in this study, nor young people across Scotland (Harper & Jackson, 2015) followed into volunteering opportunities. Young people have been found to report, more so than adults, that being asked would make it easier to start volunteering (Low et al., 2007). The evidence presented in this section adds weight to this claim.

Based on his fieldwork with volunteer recruiters, Dean (2016a) argued young people in working-class areas were susceptible to developing a non-volunteering habitus due to the target driven pressures recruiters were under, which led them to focus their energies on middle-class young people whose past experiences meant they more readily fit into volunteering opportunities. Dean contended the conditions working-class groups were subjected to did not provide opportunities to internalise the disposition to volunteer as part of their biographies. It was not that they were against the notion of volunteering, but rather that their collective experiences had not encouraged them to adopt volunteering as a habit. Similarly, although volunteers, ex-volunteers and non-volunteers in my study held positive views of volunteering, the objective environments in which they were located presented challenges for accessing opportunities. Such barriers are further explored

in the following subsection in relation to participants' uses of and movements across space.

#### *8.1.4 Spatial barriers*

Further obstacles to accessing volunteering opportunities came from participants' attachments to place, as well as restrictions on their spatial mobilities. In keeping with findings from other studies (Ellis, 2004; NatCen, 2011; Smith et al., 2004), participants expressed a preference for volunteering in their local areas. Yet, while participants in other studies have indicated travel-related barriers are more of an excuse than a genuine obstacle (Brewis et al., 2010), participants in my study experienced restrictions on their movements in public space by virtue of threats of violence and their behaviour being labelled as anti-social (see section 7.1). Related to this, participants indicated they rarely left the areas in which they lived – 'I basically don't leave here' (Callum 15, ex-volunteer) – and there was a sense that they did not anticipate moving out – 'it's where you live ... most likely where you're going to live your whole life' (Dylan 15, non-volunteer). Their attachments to place can be understood using the concept of bonding social capital (Putnam, 2000), which can limit geographical mobility (Holland et al., 2007). The constraining effects of bonding social capital were evident during the fieldwork:

Young people are great in their projects, but not so good in other projects, 'cos their confidence and self-esteem's a bit different ... I still have workers who are born and bred in this area and have worked here for a long time, great workers, but put them in another project and it won't show, because they don't have the confidence to go. (Nicky, project manager)

This extract indicates bonding social capital could also restrict willingness to enter new environments. It suggests the development of confidence is partially bounded by social context. The friendships and relationships embedded in familiar surroundings were considered by Nicky to provide a 'safety blanket' for the people

she worked with. Such feelings were evident in interviews and focus groups with young participants. Callum, who rarely left his local area, provided the following rationale for his immobility, 'I feel safe here ... I know everybody ... so nothing's going to be strange about it'. His response echoes findings from France et al.'s (2012, p. 47) study in which young people's feelings of safety came from 'familiarisation with the area and with local people' and was 'only achieved in areas that they know or feel they are known'.

Bourdieu (1989, p. 17) argued 'a sense of one's place' was derived through an actor's location in social space alongside those who share similar conditions and develop comparable dispositions. The sense of safety participants described is indicative of an attachment to place cultivated over a prolonged period of time in a given locality, whereby the location becomes part of the habitus. Matt (15, volunteer) sought to remain in his local area. When asked why he stated, 'prefer here and I like the people', furthermore, he favoured being with 'people that I know' and raised the point that 'if something happens ... I know ma area off by heart'. Matt's relationships were firmly embedded in his area, it was a part of who he was. His assertion that he knew the area 'off by heart' suggests he experienced it like a 'fish in water' (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992, p. 127) – an embodied disposition towards the place and people within it.

In terms of understanding access to volunteering opportunities, attachments to place constrained participants' willingness to enter unfamiliar territory:

It is difficult, 'cos you're no' familiar with it and stuff, 'cos usually like I, say I'm familiar with like this area and stuff, like going out to different areas is like, where you don't know it's quite, you don't know where you're going and stuff. (Thomas 17, ex-volunteer)

France (2016, p. 242) argues mobility has become 'central to the process of growing up'. Although there are diverse and complex reasons why people move, being mobile can provide 'a way of acquiring the cultural capital to find jobs in a highly competitive environment' (France, 2016, p. 243). The mobility exhibited by those who volunteer overseas during their gap years (Heath, 2007) is indicative of this. Yet, as France argues, the capacity to be mobile is not evenly distributed. Spatial mobility affords those who can move privilege and advantage, while disadvantaging those who cannot. The participants in this study exhibited notably restricted mobilities. Beth, who worked at a local government organisation, described regularly struggling to engage young people from disadvantaged areas in volunteering programmes:

If they are from as far out as [area to the east of city] or [area to the west of city], getting them to come into the town is a bit of a stretch, because you'll probably find that they haven't, they maybe haven't done that, they've never done that before in their lives.

Like many of the participants in this study, the young people Beth worked with were tied to their immediate locales. One volunteer, Orla (16), stated she had been encouraged by a teacher to volunteer in an area roughly three miles from the organisation where I met her, yet declined the offer, stating, 'that's way too far away'. Attachments to place and restricted mobilities were, for some, further compounded by the 'invisible walls' of territorial divisions (Pickering et al., 2012), constraining unbridled movement across the city.

Some participants stated accessing volunteering opportunities was problematised by the possibility of conflict between young people from different 'schemes'. Matt (15, volunteer) described how the presence of gangs hindered movement:

There's lots of gangs and that and like some people can't go into this, like, people fae ... just over the bridge, can't come over to here without getting chased back over, because of like gangs and where they're from.

In this instance, the 'invisible wall' of a bridge restricted opportunities for accessing the organisation Matt attended. In his discussion of territoriality in Glasgow, Fraser (2013, p. 979) noted the irony in how roads and canals, originally designed to facilitate mobility, restricted movement for certain groups of young people. Although none of the participants indicated they were in a gang, the possibility of such conflict was highlighted as a potential barrier to travelling. As Ryan (16, volunteer) stated, 'I didn't really want to go outside ... if people were out fighting and stuff, like 'cos I'm not really a person who fights or anything'. These findings support evidence indicating the presence of 'dangerous others' restricts young people's mobilities (France et al., 2012) and that growing up in known gang areas can lead to marginalisation and exclusion, regardless of whether or not young people are gang members (Ralphs, Medina, & Aldridge, 2009).

Among adult interviewees, there was a sense that the pervasiveness of gang and territoriality-related issues was declining. Lauren (volunteer coordinator) said that, having grown up in the area, she was aware of the 'rigid boundaries' but had been 'lucky' in her role at the organisation as she had 'not really had anything like that'. Nicky (project manager) stated it was 'much easier' for young people to move about than it had been in the past and believed 'young people will tell you there is not as much of a gang thing' anymore. Despite this, she described four known youth gangs in the area of the city where the organisation was based and provided an account of a young male whom she felt was 'a danger to the group because he'd a gang thing'. Thus, although there may be tendency to mythologise gangs in Glasgow (Fraser, 2015) and for moral panics to overstate the reality of gang activities (Bartie, 2010), the fieldwork indicated restrictions on movements, based on gang-related issues or perceived threats of conflict, remained.

Olivia (17, volunteer) stated she was put off volunteering at a community garden because 'there's certain types of people that hang around there and stuff, it kind of makes it a bit impossible to just kinda go up there'. Safety fears over travelling across the city were also expressed by female participants during a focus group. When asked why, they responded:

Jade            It's because of the world.

...

Lucy            Just like, just like people, just like, nasty people like.

Jade            Yeah.

Lucy            And we don't know what's going to happen to us if we go ourselves, where, if there's a big group we can contact someone.

(Jade 12, volunteer, Lucy 16, non-volunteer)

In addition to personal risks to safety, one participant, Dylan (15, non-volunteer), felt voluntary initiatives to improve his local area would be undermined due to threats of vandalism. He stated there was 'nae point' to volunteering because 'if anything was done in the area it would just get ruined'.

The places in which participants lived, therefore, presented various barriers to their capacity and willingness to access volunteering opportunities. In some cases, attachments to people and place limited participants' readiness to enter new environments. This was compounded by territorial factors and the threat from 'dangerous others', who were perceived to pose risks to personal safety and the utility of voluntary efforts. This section has shown how these objective conditions limited opportunities for volunteering. The following section explores how this set of factors generated subjective dispositions through which volunteering was perceived to be subject to peer disapproval.

## 8.2 Informal penalties

Using the concept of habitus, this section explores how the lack of information available to participants provided the conditions in which subjective dispositions that penalised volunteering could develop. The first examines the development of attitudes which created further barriers to accessing opportunities. The second section argues informal penalties were felt acutely among male participants, while the third looks at how those who volunteered managed the stigma associated with it.

### 8.2.1 *Getting 'slagged'*

Non-volunteers were particularly likely to indicate their friends were not involved in volunteering and that it was not a topic discussed among their peers:

I don't think anyone our age would actually think about volunteerin' or anything, they're all too busy getting mad wi' it an' all. (Taylor 16, non-volunteer)

None of ma pals done it, that's why I've never done it. (Alex 18, non-volunteer)

None of ma mates said they wanted to go, so we just never thought about it. (Will 18, non-volunteer)

Such comments attest to the notion that volunteering was not widely practiced or visible in non-volunteers' day-to-day lives. Due to its non-normative status within their networks, volunteering was anticipated to be an act that would be subject to informal penalties. This was most clearly evident during a focus group with female non-volunteers who, when asked whether there had been volunteering opportunities at school, discussed:

Taylor            Aye, you can get involved, but you don't really want to.  
Robyn            Aye, because you'd probably get like slaughtered.  
...  
JD                What would put you off doing it do you think?  
Zoe                Because we'd get slagged and bullied.  
Robyn            Reputation an' all that.

(Taylor 16, Robyn 16, Zoe 15, non-volunteers)

Bourdieu argued the habitus tends to generate behaviours which are compatible with the position individuals and groups occupy in social space. Accordingly, practices that are 'objectively adjusted to the logic characteristic of a particular field' are likely to be positively sanctioned, while those that are 'incompatible with the objective conditions' are negatively sanctioned and regarded as 'not for the likes of us' (Bourdieu, 1990, pp. 55-56). The lack of information about volunteering and opportunities to engage in it experienced by these participants led them to characterise it as a 'pure no go' and something that was 'not in style or fashion'. Throughout this focus group, participants emphasised their reluctance to volunteer stemmed from the fear of peer disapproval they anticipated volunteering would lead to. Those who volunteered were labelled 'wee geeks' and 'teacher's pets'. Through a Bourdieusian lens, the notion of participating in voluntary action was internalised as 'unthinkable' (Bourdieu, 1990, p. 54). The doxa, from their positions in social space, was one of non-participation.

Scholars have argued that being known in disadvantaged areas can be an important resource, creating feelings of safety, community and shared identities (France et al., 2012; McKenzie, 2015). Furthermore, the desire to be 'ordinary' has been found to be imperative to understanding how individuals see themselves in relation to others (Savage, Bagnall, & Longhurst, 2001). The reactions of Robyn, Taylor and Zoe to the notion of volunteering are comparable with MacDonald and Marsh's (2005) finding that growing up in disadvantaged areas generated informal penalties towards

educational success. Participants in their study considered 'saving face' more important than academic attainment. In a similar vein, the non-normative status of volunteering within the girls' peer networks meant volunteering was atypical and thus to be avoided in order to maintain their reputations.

Volunteers were also aware of the informal penalties associated with performing an act that was out of sync with the behaviour of their peers and felt this could create a barrier for others:

Some people don't want to volunteer 'cos their friends don't want to do it, like that's a big one, like, they go, "Oh no, I don't want to do that 'cos like ma friend doesn't do it and, it's just like, that will make me look different to my friends and stuff". (Demi 18, volunteer)

Volunteering was framed as something that would make an individual appear 'different' to their peers. Although theorists of late-modernity contend social pressures encourage individualistic approaches to life (Beck & Beck-Gernsheim, 2002; Giddens, 1991) and scholars have argued young people are urged to stand out from one another (Holdsworth, 2015), volunteering was not a difference many participants believed their peers sought. The stigma attached to it deterred participation in it:

If someone turns 'round and says, "Volunteering's shit", someone's like, "Oh that's really uncool", you're kind of like, "Oh, I don't want to be uncool". (Olivia 17, volunteer)

There was a sense among participants that their peers 'don't wantae be oot o' their wee social group' and that expressing interest in volunteering might mean their friends 'slag them' (Niamh 14, volunteer). Hearing others refer to volunteering in disparaging terms left some feeling 'you don't really want to waste your time

[volunteering] when you could be doing something better' (Darren 17, ex-volunteer). Such comments highlight how the habitus is both a structured and structuring mechanism. The institutional and spatial barriers discussed in the previous section showed how the objective conditions participants encountered limited their opportunities for volunteering. The extracts in this section reveal how structural constraints were internalised by non-volunteers into subjective dispositions that 'refuse what is anyway denied' (Bourdieu, 1990, p. 54). For Bourdieu (1989), the social world is perceived and accepted as natural when dispositions align with structural conditions. The production and maintenance of this view is contingent upon the 'constant reinforcement' (Bourdieu, 1990, p. 58) each member of a group receives from others regarding acceptable practices. Collective attitudes towards volunteering as 'shit' and 'uncool' thus produce conditions in which volunteers are at risk of being 'slagged and bullied'. Not volunteering, therefore, appears normal because the subjective dispositions of the habitus are adjusted to the objective conditions which make volunteering challenging in the first place.

Chapter 6 demonstrated that, although challenging, routes into volunteering were possible, but often contingent upon the development of a foundation in a particular organisation. Opportunities for developing such roots, however, were shaped by peer behaviours. During the fieldwork, some volunteers recounted instances where their friends had been deterred from attending or volunteering at youth organisations in order to socialise with their peers:

She used to want to do it all the time and then she just stopped going 'cos she ... started hanging about with different people. (Matt 15, volunteer)

There's been people I know that's ... been interested in volunteering, but just because they've got caught up with, like, the wrong crowd of people they don't, they're like still interested, but they don't wantae go and do that

'cos they'd rather kick about and do things wi' other people. (Niamh 14, volunteer)

In contrast to the experiences of the female non-volunteers discussed above, these comments suggest volunteering was 'thinkable' for Matt and Niamh's peers. The translation of their interest into action, however, was hindered by the misalignment of volunteering with group behaviour. Although 'individuals occupying similar positions may have different opinions' these are always 'exerted within the limits of the inherent effects of class' (Bourdieu, 2010 [1984], p. 458). Thus, although Niamh's peers were 'interested' in volunteering, their interest had to be balanced against the dominant disposition to 'kick about'. Indeed, there was a sense that being the sole volunteer among peers would 'push you away fae your friends' group a wee bit' (Will 18, volunteer). This was a notable issue for Callum (15, ex-volunteer) for whom volunteering became 'boring' when he realised he was 'missing out' on socialising with his friends:

When they said they done something good and that or, "This day was good" and that, then I was going ... "I could've been with them, and that, if I was there".

This extract demonstrates how 'individual trajectories' which run counter to group norms are always 'marked by the collective destiny' (Bourdieu, 2010 [1984], p. 106). The quotes from Matt and Niamh suggest group norms can inhibit initial access to volunteering, while Callum's extract demonstrates they dissuade continued participation. One of the volunteer coordinators, Tracey, believed sustaining attendance and volunteering became more challenging as young people entered secondary school and their early teenage years:

No matter if it's volunteering or if it's attending a youth club ... to keep them coming is quite a difficult thing, retaining them is just unreal at that age,

because they're just no' interested or it's just no' cool, it's no' seen to be cool.

Tracey's belief was borne out in Callum's statement that he fell away from volunteering around the age of 12 and Dylan's (15, non-volunteer) account of how, around the same age, he started to find the youth club he attended 'boring', a feeling compounded by the fact that his friends stopped going and he 'started hanging oot with other people, people who didnae go'. His comment also reflects data from the 2016 wave of the *Young People in Scotland*, which indicate a fall in volunteering rates from 44 percent for those aged 12, to 35 percent for those aged 13 and 32 percent for those aged 14 (Linning & Jackson, 2017). This dip in participation highlights the importance of situating volunteering in the life-course (Hogg, 2016). Evidence suggests transitions from primary to secondary school can lead to friendship networks expanding and contracting, giving rise to new identities (Weller, 2007). Continued attendance at youth clubs and volunteering around this age may, therefore, prove challenging for those whose friendship networks do not include volunteering and those who enter environments in which volunteering is perceived to lack peer approval.

Some volunteers believed the interests of non-volunteers would more likely be translated into action if volunteering was more widely practiced:

I think if more people's friends were into it, they might get more people to go along. (Ryan 16, volunteer)

If a certain amount of people don't want to do it, then they don't want to do it, because they'll feel like they'll be judged and they'll slag them. (Abbie 15, volunteer)

Such comments further highlight the social imperative to appear 'ordinary' (Savage et al., 2001). Moreover, they infer it is not necessarily the act of volunteering itself that is the issue, but the meanings attached to it and the reactions it gives rise to. The notions that volunteering is stigmatised and that peer pressure can prevent participation are longstanding ones (Clement & Lafferty, 2015; Ellis, 2004; Lukka & Ellis, 2001; Smith, 1999). This subsection has argued the objective limits participants encountered to accessing volunteering could lead to the generation of subjective dispositions which further restricted the ease with which they and their peers could start volunteering. The following subsection examines the notion that such obstacles were acutely felt among male respondents.

### *8.2.2 Masculinity as an obstacle to volunteering*

As shown in Figure 2.2, adult rates of volunteering across Scotland have continuously been lower for males than females, a trend reflected in Glasgow (see Figure 2.7) and among young people across the country (Linning & Jackson, 2017). During the fieldwork, it became apparent that the informal penalties associated with volunteering were considered to be more pronounced for males. This was partly related to the perception, borne out in the data, that females were more likely to volunteer and, therefore, that volunteering was a more feminine pursuit:

Ye think more feminine and all that 'cos there is a lot more girls doing it and I think, teenagers and all that, they're gunnae think, "Oh whits he doae? He's doae that", and they're gunna make him embarrassed and then he's no' going to dae it. (Liam 18, ex-volunteer)

The non-standardised nature of volunteering among male peer groups meant doing so would mean acting out of sync with collective norms:

None of the boys are really interested, so you're an idiot because you're the guy with the lassies by yersel' kinda thing ... so you, it doesnae appeal to you. (Harry 17, ex-volunteer)

As in the previous subsection, these extracts demonstrate an internalisation of objective conditions and the development of subjective dispositions which naturalise the self-evidence of non-volunteering in their social worlds (Bourdieu, 1977). In light of the benefits accruable through volunteering, the self-exclusion of 'the boys' can be understood as a form of symbolic violence – 'a gentle violence, imperceptible and invisible to even its victims' (Bourdieu, 2001, p. 1). In a similar vein to Stahl's (2015) contention that working-class male pupils experience symbolic violence in educational settings, through the imperative to 'averageness' rather than social mobility, the desire to avoid being 'embarrassed' and labelled an 'idiot' by volunteering can be interpreted on the same grounds. Indeed, this sentiment was reiterated by a group of female volunteers, one of whom noted that because volunteering is 'generally perceived as a thing that girls do', young males 'don't wanna kinda be grouped into that ... in with the girls' (Olivia 17, volunteer). Another of the participants in this group, Paige (18, volunteer), felt 'teenage boys are so sensitive, it's ridiculous ... everything affects them and they can't do anything without, like, thinking, "Oh what's everyone going to think?"'. This is not to blame 'the boys' for their exclusion, but rather to assert their "'submissive" dispositions ... are the product of objective structures' (Bourdieu, 2001, p. 40).

The issue for males appeared partly related to the nature of volunteering opportunities. Figure 2.3 demonstrated the gendered nature of the organisations adults volunteer with and subsection 6.2.2 explored the extent to which participants' desires for voluntary activities broadly reflected gender norms. Lauren, a volunteer coordinator whose organisation delivered street-play sessions, stated that despite putting 'opportunities ... out to everyone', they had 'a lot more female volunteers'. Although stating she had never really considered it before, Lauren

queried whether the nature of the volunteering roles offered by the charity inadvertently hindered the willingness of young males to volunteer:

The image of volunteering or the image of, maybe, being in their own local area, being out doing street-play and maybe drawing chalk on the pavement, how that would look to their pals maybe would be more off-putting to boys than girls ... what would their pals say or what would their big brothers say or, you know, that type of thing, whereas for girls for some strange reason it's maybe more acceptable to play with kids.

MacDonald and Marsh (2005, p. 84) found '[b]eing "streetwise" and "one of the lads" connected into the publicly visible, social life' of young men in a deprived neighbourhood. Furthermore, they found social networks 'played a powerful role in shaping the way young people perceived and acted on the choices open to them' (MacDonald & Marsh, 2005, p. 87). Fraser (2015, pp. 117-118) similarly found being 'wan ae the boays' was an important resource for his male participants in a disadvantaged area of Glasgow, which was maintained through group loyalty and adherence to the group's codes of behaviour. The attitudes associated with volunteering indicated it was not considered a 'streetwise' activity and its association with femininity hindered the extent to which participation could be viewed as being 'wan ae the boays'. For example, although sporting activities were viewed more favourably, volunteering for 'something daft' was anticipated to give rise to probing questions, such as 'What are you doing? What's the schedule? What's happening?' (Will 17, non-volunteer). In her analysis of habitus as situated intersubjectivity, Bottero (2010, p. 17) posits 'calls to order from the group' operate through demands for accountability from each other, alongside the ability to provide plausible accounts of action with reference to shared expectations and ways of acting. The questions posed by Will suggest providing an 'intelligible narrative' (Bottero, 2010, p. 17) for volunteering could prove difficult due to its perceived antagonistic relationship with groups norms.

The importance of peer approval for males had implications not only for starting but also sustaining volunteering. Tracey (volunteer coordinator) stated:

We see a lot more boys drop out at that age, 'cos I think there's a lot of pressure to be in a gang or hanging about the streets and, I think boys tend to, they don't really deal with that kinda slaggin', erm, the name calling, they don't really deal wi' it as well as girls ... they tend to just go, "Well ok then I'll just no' get involved 'cos they're gunnae slag me or they're gunnae bully me and they're gunnae batter me when I leave 'cos I'm a nerd for going to volunteering".

Tracey was referring to boys around 13 years old, the age at which Pickering et al. (2012) found young males were most likely to engage in aggressive forms of territorial behaviour. In his discussion of masculine domination, Bourdieu (2001, p. 51) argued male privilege requires the constant assertion of 'manliness' predicated upon the 'capacity to fight and to exercise violence'. Moreover, 'manliness must be validated by other men' and there exists an imperative to avoid "'losing face" in front of one's "mates"' (Bourdieu, 2001, p. 52). As Tracey's extract suggests, such pressures pulled young males away from volunteering and the organisation she worked for. Niamh (14, volunteer) summarised the pressures she perceived males to be under, 'I think it's easier for boys to get caught up in gang fighting ... instead of going to a club or volunteering'.

In contrast, Paige (18, volunteer) believed that, for girls, 'nobody says anything bad about you if you're going to volunteer'. Her statement supports the notion that peer disapproval was gendered, yet contrasts with the attitudes of the female non-volunteers discussed at the beginning of subsection 8.2.1. This suggests the reputational costs of volunteering may be overstated. The following subsection

explores how participants managed the informal penalties associated with volunteering.

### *8.2.3 Resilience to informal penalties*

Resilience to peer disapproval often appeared to stem from the security of having built a foundation in a particular organisation and the associated benefits accrued through volunteering. Yet, it was also related to the nature of the volunteering activity in question and the resources available to participants. For example, when discussing peer disapproval, Liam (18, ex-volunteer) stated, 'I do what I want ... I don't care what people think o' me'. Liam had volunteered as a football coach. Part of his resilience appeared to relate to the socially acceptable status of sport-related activities in relation to masculine identities (Cleland, 2016). While stereotypical ideas about volunteering (see subsection 5.2.2) might be at odds with the imperative to be 'wan ae the boays', football-related volunteering did not suffer the same fate.

When asked why he had not been affected by the penalties associated with volunteering, Liam stated he had been 'wan ah the popular people' at school and contrasted his experiences with less popular pupils:

It did actual happen wi' other people I noticed, 'cos, obviously at school and all that there's all different types of people ... the more popular group and all that, the wans that are less popular, say they were doing a bit ah volunteerin' people would make fun ah them 'cos of it.

In the previous subsections, participants indicated volunteers were at risk of being labelled 'geeks', 'nerds' and 'uncool', thus assigning volunteering a lowly social status. By contrast, Liam's popular social status reduced his chances of being 'slagged'. The intersubjective nature of habitus requires individuals to 'provide plausible justifications of their activities' to themselves and others in relation to

shared practices, thereby 'establishing what is acceptable and what "one can get away with"' (Bottero, 2010, p. 17). Liam was aware of the stigma associated with volunteering but, due to his popular status, felt able to 'get away' with volunteering in a manner he considered less available to his less popular peers.

A group of non-volunteering males who were completing full-time paid apprenticeships indicated that while they might be made fun of for volunteering, this was insufficient to deter them.<sup>49</sup> Brad (18) stated he might get a 'wee slaggin' or 'wee roastin' from his friends, but framed this in terms of light teasing rather than costly deviation. This suggests the informal penalties associated with volunteering may be felt more acutely among those whose resources are tied to inward looking social networks, which lack broader symbolic legitimation.

Those who volunteered often indicated the benefits derived through participation, such as confidence and sense of belonging, enhanced their capacity to deflect penalties targeted towards them. When asked whether they were affected by disparaging comments, Jade (16, volunteer) and Isla (12, volunteer) outlined how their attitudes had altered over time:

- |      |   |
|------|---|
| Isla | Well a few years ago, maybe, but not now.                                 |
| Jade | Yeah ... a few years ago, I'd ah been worried about bullying, and then... |
| Isla | People like laughing at me, like, "What's she doing?"                     |
| Jade | Yeah, not anymore though.   |

The reasons they gave for their changed perspectives stemmed from the enjoyment and personal benefits they received, such as a 'boost of confidence'. Orla (16, volunteer) also noted a change in her attitude. Like her friends, Orla had previously

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<sup>49</sup> The main barrier for this group was the lack of time they felt they had to volunteer, by virtue of the full-time apprenticeship they were undertaking, and their lack of personal connections to volunteer-involving organisations.

thought volunteering was for 'goody-two-shoes' and questioned why people would do it without getting paid. Having volunteered, however, Orla found 'the buzz and like the euphoria you get from it is like amazing', which led her to state 'it doesnae bother' her that her peers considered volunteering to not be 'what cool people do'.

One participant, Amy (15, volunteer), stated she was berated by her siblings and classmates for volunteering. Amy described her brother and sister's responses to her volunteering, 'they're just like the people in school, they're like, "Haha", they just laugh'. She believed her classmates thought volunteering was a 'boring' or 'goody-goody' activity and said they responded to a presentation she delivered about the youth club where she volunteered by saying 'Ha, you go to a group'. Despite this, Amy was defiant, stating:

I don't care ... they don't realise how good it actually is for you, 'cos it's really helped me a lot in ma confidence and everything, and I was like a wee shy wean.<sup>50</sup>

These extracts indicate resilience was built into the habitus based on the benefits accrued through volunteering. Their accounts demonstrate how new experiences can modify the dispositions of the habitus (Sayer, 2005). The participants who reached this point had often followed the participant-to-volunteer trajectory, thus highlighting the significance of having a foundation in a particular organisation from which penalties could be deflected. As Niamh (14, volunteer) stated, 'I've done it since I was young ... so it doesnae bother me or anything like that'. In terms of understanding participation in volunteering, this finding highlights the importance of early exposure to volunteer-involving environments for developing dispositions towards it (see section 6.1).

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<sup>50</sup> Wean is a Scots word for a child, particularly a young one.

### 8.3 Chapter conclusion

This chapter has addressed the fourth research question by examining the factors that obstructed access to volunteering opportunities. The first half examined how objective barriers – funding constraints, educational resources and spatial factors – limited the amount of information available to participants about volunteering. The second explored how these conditions generated attitudes which created further barriers to accessing opportunities. The concept of habitus was used to contend these subjective dispositions were an outcome of the internalisation of the objective structures that restricted opportunities for volunteering in the first place. It was argued these penalties were felt acutely among males for whom volunteering went against masculine norms.

Cuts to local government and funding restrictions were reported by youth workers to constrain their capacities to perform their roles effectively. Concerns were also raised over what would happen if youth organisations were to close, reduce their services or make staff redundant. Youth workers believed such circumstances would negatively impact the young people they worked with who, as shown in Chapter 7, developed strong affective attachments to organisations and persons within them. In addition to this, some of the youth workers felt ill-equipped to deal with the sometimes-complex needs of young people referred to volunteering programmes and unable to support them into volunteering roles.

In contrast to evidence from other studies, schools were considered by volunteers and non-volunteers to be ineffective in providing information about volunteering. Where participants were aware of opportunities, they often felt these were only available to older pupils. Youth workers also encountered difficulties working with schools. Furthermore, there was a sense that schools were only facilitating volunteering for certain pupils. Accordingly, both volunteers and non-volunteers indicated they encountered a dearth of information about volunteering. Volunteers were frequently only aware of the opportunities they were involved in, often as a

result of the participant-to-volunteer trajectory, while some non-volunteers reported the fieldwork was the only time they had discussed volunteering. These objective restrictions were compounded by limits on participants' spatial mobilities. Attachments to particular areas created a sense of familiarity and safety, yet restricted willingness to enter new environments, while the risks of 'dangerous others' and territorial conflict constrained their capacity to freely move across the city.

Using the concept of habitus, it was argued these objective conditions were internalised by non-volunteers into subjective dispositions that denied what they were anyway restricted from accessing. This broad collective disposition towards non-volunteering created informal penalties for those who acted in this way. Informal penalties were reported to be particularly acute for young males due to the association of volunteering with femininity and the imperative to fit in with the rest of 'the boys'. The desire not to volunteer was argued to be a form of symbolic violence through which male participants excluded themselves from volunteering, thereby diminishing their chances of enjoying the benefits it can bring. The weight of informal penalties, however, was asserted to be contingent upon the activity in question. Football-related voluntary activities, for instance, were generally deemed acceptable for males. This suggests structure is not wholly deterministic but that engagement with volunteering is subject to negotiation among peer groups. Furthermore, it indicates that if organisations wish to expand their numbers of young volunteers, it is essential to provide opportunities that reflect their interests.

Although there was widespread discussion of informal penalties, it was suggested their significance might be overstated. Indeed, while some volunteers reported their friends mocked them for volunteering, it was generally not sufficient to deter them from continued participation. Furthermore, it was argued that the foundations and benefits acquired by those who had followed the participant-to-volunteer trajectory enabled them to deflect criticisms of their actions. Finally, the

necessity of examining participation in the context of the life-course was highlighted by the finding that the transition from primary to secondary school presented difficulties for continued participation in youth clubs, both as attendees and volunteers. Given the importance of the participant-to-volunteer trajectory, this raises concerns that attendees who fall away from organisations will not build the necessary foundations to facilitate subsequent volunteering.

To conclude, the chapter highlighted notable challenges facing those seeking to enhance levels of youth volunteering in deprived areas. Objective constraints, such as limited resources, and subjective dispositions, such as the low status of volunteering among peer networks, placed restrictions on the capacity of youth workers to support young people to volunteer and the willingness of certain groups of young people to engage with volunteering. The finding that informal penalties might have been exaggerated, however, suggests that if information about volunteering and the 'right' opportunities are available and accessible, barriers to participation may be reduced.

## 9 Conclusion

This concluding chapter summarises the central arguments of the thesis. The chapter starts by revisiting the background to the study. Following this, an account of the original contribution to knowledge this thesis makes is provided. The chapter then concludes with a discussion of the limitations of the study, areas for future research and policy recommendations.

### 9.1 The background revisited

The thesis started from the point that, based on the lower levels of formal volunteering found in areas of multiple deprivation, there was a need to understand the challenges and possibilities young people in these areas faced, in relation to accessing opportunities. It was argued that statistics showing the relative stability of rates of formal volunteering, despite a challenging environment for the voluntary sector, indicated it was an important activity that gave rise to individual and collective goods. Moreover, the examination of policy interventions into youth volunteering revealed their future-orientated and employability enhancing dimensions. It was argued that it was important to examine young people's attitudes to examine the extent to which they reflected the 'radical change' volunteering is reported to be undergoing. Accordingly, it was important to explore the formal volunteering landscape among young people in deprived areas. Glasgow was selected as a suitable location in which to conduct the research, due to the high levels of deprivation found in the city. To better understand young people's attitudes and experiences, the thesis sought to examine four research questions: i) understandings of and attitudes towards volunteering; ii) routes in and motivations for volunteering; iii) the benefits of volunteering; and, iv) barriers to opportunities.

These questions emerged following a thorough analysis of the existing literature on young people and volunteering. The first part of the Literature Review looked at definitional debates over that which constitutes volunteering, as well as the areas in

which volunteering takes place. It was argued that while there were three commonly accepted criteria – free will, helping others and non-remuneration – these were not black and white characteristics, but existed along a spectrum. It also contended young people expressed varying attitudes based on their gender and experience of volunteering and that it was unclear how those in deprived areas related to the concept. Rates of volunteering were also examined. Although greater proportions of young people were shown to volunteer than to adults, their engagement was structured by similar demographic factors. Males and those in urban and deprived areas were less likely to volunteer than females and those in rural and less deprived locations.

Following this, the Literature Review explored what is known about the nature of engagement in terms of motivations and pathways to participation, the benefits of volunteering and barriers to opportunities. It was argued that focusing on motivations only provided a partial picture of how individuals start volunteering and that it was also necessary to consider trigger factors, such as being asked to volunteer, and life events, such as transitioning from primary to secondary school, in order to more fully comprehend participation. When examining benefits, the review noted the difficulties of isolating volunteering from other factors when examining increases in confidence or moves into employment. Indeed, in contrast to the policy focus, evidence was presented indicating employability benefits were of secondary importance to more intrinsic elements and that causal links between volunteering and employment were difficult to establish. Finally, the review examined barriers to volunteering. These were also intertwined with the life-course and it was noted that lack of time, confidence, information, financial and social resources were known to restrict participation. It also reported the attitudes of others and difficult relationships with school could hinder opportunities for volunteering.

Although much has been written about engagement with volunteering, it was argued a gap existed concerning the ways in which the attitudes and experiences of young people, aged 12-18, were shaped by their interactions in areas of multiple deprivation. The lower than average levels of volunteering in such areas were indicative of a culture of non-participation in formal opportunities which, in light of the salience of trigger factors, raised questions concerning routes to participation. This lack of formal engagement also raised questions to do with the information available to them, how they framed volunteering and what it meant to those who did it.

To aid the analysis of these issues perspectives on volunteering, Bourdieu's theory of practice and social capital were used. An historical approach was employed to examine different conceptions of voluntary action from the 19<sup>th</sup> century to the present day. While scholars have argued volunteering is increasingly presented and approached on individualistic grounds, it was argued individualism was also evident in Victorian philanthropy and mutual aid. Similarly, the altruism traditionally associated with these formations was argued to be present in contemporary approaches to volunteerism. These frameworks were used to understand participants' attitudes and approaches towards volunteering.

Bourdieu's theory of practice was outlined in order to explore how the objective and subjective dimensions of social life shaped participants' attitudes towards and experiences of volunteering. The concept of habitus occupied a central position in this framework. Habitus facilitates an analysis of how subjective dispositions are deeply embedded in individuals in accordance with their positions in social space. Rather than viewing tastes and preferences as individual phenomena, habitus shows how these are internalised based on the objective conditions and possibilities available to a group or individual. Through this process, the world appears as natural and taken-for-granted. Accordingly, individuals occupying similar positions in social space develop comparable dispositions and approve or penalise behaviours

based on their perceived fit with group norms. Although statistical regularities attest to the existence of collective or group dispositions, each habitus internalises a unique set of experiences and has the potential to deviate from collective norms. Bourdieu's approach, therefore, provided a way of understanding how individuals in areas characterised by non-volunteering started volunteering, as well as the extent to which such actions were subject to informal penalties.

The bonding and bridging components of social capital were used to examine the nature of participants' relationships, both within and outside their volunteering experiences. Bonding social capital refers to inward looking networks which tie homogenous groups together, while its bridging counterpart denotes outward looking relationships that bridge across social divides. This distinction aided the analysis of the opportunities participants' peer networks presented for engaging with volunteering, as well as the meanings and implications relationships developed through volunteering acquired.

To empirically address the research questions, a qualitative methodology was employed. Research sites in Glasgow were selected on the grounds that they were located within the 0-20 percent 'most deprived' areas according to the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation. A total of 16 focus groups and 12 semi-structured interviews, containing a total of 68 participants, were conducted with different cohorts of young volunteers and non-volunteers. Additionally, six semi-structured interviews were conducted with youth workers in local government and youth organisations. The use of focus groups provided a way of exploring how different groups of young people related to and thought about volunteering, while individual interviews enabled a deeper understanding of individual experiences. Recruiting youth workers to the study facilitated an analysis of broader factors shaping opportunities for volunteering.

## 9.2 Contribution to knowledge

Overall, the thesis contributes to knowledge by exploring how participants' attitudes and experiences of volunteering were shaped by and embedded in areas of multiple deprivation in Glasgow. It contributes by exploring how social conditions led to the development of a habitus which positively or negatively sanctioned volunteering. Volunteers often recounted lengthy histories of attendance at youth organisations prior to volunteering as well as familial volunteering. It was argued that these circumstances provided a foundation from which calls to volunteer in specific environments could be responded to positively. Beyond this, however, both those with and without experience of volunteering encountered a dearth of information relating to it. Accordingly, those who had not developed relationships in youth organisations lacked a foundation from which volunteering could follow. Indeed, the non-normative status of volunteering among participants' peer groups provided the conditions for informal penalties to develop. Despite the generally positive attitudes participants held about volunteering, peer reactions were considered to create potential barriers to participating in it. The rest of this subsection discusses how each of the research questions were met.

Chapter 5 addressed the first research question; 'What understandings and attitudes do young people in areas of multiple deprivation express in relation to the notion of volunteering?'. The chapter showed that, although participants identified similar features of volunteering to those outlined in policy and scholarly contexts, their discussions were sometimes at odds with these dimensions. The provision of aid featured prominently in both volunteers and non-volunteers' definitions. Participants felt the recipients of volunteering ought to be 'other people' and the 'community'. A minority felt family members could be beneficiaries, while less attention was given to the notion that volunteers could personally benefit. Furthermore, volunteers and non-volunteers believed volunteering should be an unpaid act, although those without experience of it appeared less certain in their assessments and, at times, appeared to mix volunteering with employment in the

voluntary sector. The notion that volunteering is a freely performed act received less attention. Indeed, when free will was mentioned, it was sometimes taken to mean acting during an individual's spare time, not necessarily without coercion. Additionally, there was a sense that volunteering in an organisational setting was a more desirable form of volunteering due to the social goods it could generate. Relatedly, participants struggled to recall instances of helping activities beyond organisational contexts and felt poor social connectivity between residents in their local areas constrained opportunities for informal volunteering.

The contribution this makes is to advance knowledge on what this cohort of young people understood by the notion of volunteering. Although some studies have explored young people's attitudes towards volunteering, fewer have examined what they think it is. The finding that non-volunteers were less certain about the nature of volunteering reinforces findings from elsewhere (Ellis, 2004). The thesis adds to this by showing how volunteers also expressed uncertainty. Furthermore, while young people have been found to view volunteering as an exchange, benefitting the actor and recipient (NatCen, 2011), only a minority of participants in this study included this in their definitions. One interpretation of this is that participants' understandings were in keeping with the net-cost approach, which postulates an act as volunteering if it creates a greater cost than reward to the actor (Cnaan et al., 1996; Musick & Wilson, 2008). However, volunteers in this study did discuss personal benefits, but only when reflecting on their own practice. This suggests a divergence between what participants thought volunteering was and how they engaged in it. Additionally, participants' perception that informal volunteering was not widely practiced in their neighbourhoods contrasted with the notion that this form of volunteering reflects the participatory culture of deprived areas (Williams, 2003a). This is a significant finding that suggests organisations which facilitate volunteering were considered important actors in participants' neighbourhoods. This preference may, however, have been related to the fact that

many of the participants were formal volunteers or were associated with volunteer-involving organisations.

The chapter also examined attitudes towards volunteering. It found that, by and large, participants exhibited positive attitudes. At times, their discussions of the provision of aid echoed the notion of dominant paradigm, in that they framed volunteering as an altruistic act towards those in less fortunate circumstance. At others, participants' accounts echoed the notion of mutual aid, whereby volunteering was seen as a way of helping those in similar circumstances to their own. In these ways, their attitudes reflected somewhat traditional approaches to volunteering, as a way of providing help to those in need. Despite this, there was a widespread belief that, among their peers, volunteering was held in negative terms as a stigmatising activity. These concerns were considered to relate to its image as an 'uncool' activity and its non-remunerated status. It was argued that these attitudes came from the non-normative status of volunteering within participants' social networks. Volunteering was not part of the collective habitus and was thus considered 'not for the likes of us'. Indeed, one youth worker reported the young people she worked with considered volunteering in stereotypical terms and as something done by 'other people' who are 'really selfless', while one participant did not feel the term reflected his actions. Despite the stigma, participants also felt volunteering could develop skills and experiences. Among male non-volunteers, there was a sense that volunteering would be a positive addition to a CV, in keeping with the notion of the cult of experience. Volunteers expressed similar attitudes, yet also felt volunteering could provide enjoyable life-experiences. Relatedly, they also thought of volunteering as a way of making friends in accordance with their experiences of this happening. Differences between volunteers and non-volunteers' attitudes support the notion that experience of volunteering often leads to 'radical changes in attitudes towards the activity' (Musick & Wilson, 2008, p. 71). They also highlight Bourdieu's contention that ways of seeing are related to the practices individuals are exposed to and their positions in social space.

These findings contribute to existing knowledge by highlighting how, despite participants personally expressing favourable views, there was strong sense that volunteering has retained the stigmatised image some groups of young people associate with it (Gaskin, 2004; NatCen, 2011; Smith, 1999). The contingency of volunteers' attitudes on their experiences of volunteering suggest that, in the absence of accessible information, non-volunteers drew on stereotypical images of volunteering. The stigmatisation of volunteering as 'uncool' and as 'something other people do' suggests non-volunteers lacked knowledge of the breadth of voluntary activities. The notion that it is unpaid indicates it was viewed as preparation for paid work, yet the idea that volunteers are 'really selfless' suggests non-volunteers did not always see the personal benefits accruable through volunteering. In contrast, volunteers' broader attitudes about volunteering as providing life experiences and facilitating friendships emphasise how experiences alter attitudes. An implication of these findings is that the lack of negative attitudes personally expressed by participants suggests there is a foundation which can be used to build knowledge about and, potentially, facilitate volunteering. Doing so however, is made challenging by the perceived stigma of volunteering within peer networks. As the next chapter showed, translating attitudes into action was often contingent upon prior attendance at youth organisations.

Chapter 6 addressed the second research question; 'What motivates and facilitates young people's involvement in volunteering opportunities in deprived areas?'. The notion of the participant-to-volunteer trajectory was proposed to capture how volunteering was often an outcome of prior attendance at youth organisations. Alongside familial experience of volunteering, it was argued that this attendance provided a foundation from which calls to volunteer could be responded to positively. Thus, the notion that young people from working-class backgrounds develop a non-volunteering habitus (Dean, 2016a) overlooks the unique trajectory of each individual's habitus. Regarding motivations, there was evidence of both new

and traditional approaches to volunteerism. In terms of the former, both volunteers and non-volunteers expressed CV and future-orientated motives in keeping with the instrumental promotion of youth volunteering. In relation to the latter, particularly for those who had followed the participant-to-volunteer trajectory, altruistic motives and loyalty to specific organisations were expressed. It was argued that these motives pose a challenge to the notion that working-class young people are 'unintended' volunteers (Bradford et al., 2016).

The contribution this makes is to highlight the importance of developing a foundation from which calls to volunteer can be responded to positively. The lack of self-confidence participants described and their anxieties about entering new social situations suggested familiarisation with a particular organisation and the development of positive relationships with persons in it were indispensable for understanding transitions into volunteering. The notion that volunteers 'grew up' in the organisations where they volunteered suggested participation in these settings was built into their habitus. Furthermore, the finding that parents and families were often involved in youth organisations or volunteering emphasises how disproportionate weight is given to early experiences in the family and home in the development of the habitus, rather than later life encounters. In light of the low levels of adult volunteering in the 'most deprived' areas of Glasgow, evidence of parental volunteering suggests the volunteers in this study were somewhat atypical of young people from such backgrounds. This implies early participation was an important stepping-stone to later volunteering and that, without it, encouraging volunteering was made challenging. This was evident in the finding that although teachers promoted volunteering at schools, they were largely absent in discussions of routes into volunteering – unlike in other studies (Harper & Jackson, 2015; Pye & Michelmore, 2016). In light of the difficult relationships some participants had with formal education, the development of a foundation in the more informal setting of a youth organisation was often a crucial precursor to volunteering.

Although prior experiences were important antecedents to volunteering, the chapter also contributed by arguing that volunteering could be orientated towards a particular end and that motives reflected elements of traditional and new approaches to volunteerism. Evidence was presented demonstrating the existence of employability motivations, the desire to pursue leisure and motives to 'give back' to organisations. The promotion of CV-orientated motives was evident in local government, schools and youth organisations. Like young people from middle-class backgrounds, participants saw volunteering as a way of enhancing their CVs (Brooks, 2007; Storr & Spaaij, 2016), yet, for volunteers, these motives often appeared of secondary importance to their desires to maintain and extend their involvement and attachments in the organisations they had frequented for lengthy periods of time. This finding highlights the importance of situating motives in the context of the participant-to-volunteer trajectory. The desire for leisure-related volunteering activities was shaped by gender norms and acquired added salience when viewed alongside participants' limited leisure opportunities.

These findings suggest attendance at volunteer-involving organisations was significant to facilitating later volunteering. Developing familiarity with the people and practices in organisations not only provided opportunities for finding out about volunteering roles, but also a base from which they could be entered. Additionally, it is important to have opportunities that reflect young people's interests. Furthermore, while there was evidence that the CV enhancing aspects of volunteering were considered an important reason for engaging with it, overall, the weight of evidence suggested volunteering was not engaged with in order to invest in the self for the future, but for the intrinsic pleasures associated with it. This suggests a divergence from more middle-class approaches to cultural practices (Skeggs, 2004) and indicates an affective dimension to youth volunteering in deprived areas. Additionally, while volunteers wanted to help their communities, these were specific communities based around the organisations they attended, rather than more amorphous communities in society at large. Indeed, as discussed

in the subsequent chapter, participants often indicated they felt alienated or excluded beyond the organisations where they volunteered.

Chapter 7 addressed the third research question; 'What do those who volunteer in deprived areas value about doing so?'. A significant finding was the extent to which both attendance and volunteering in youth organisations provided an alternative to the otherwise restricted leisure opportunities available to participants. Participants often felt they had little to do, with some stating they filled their spare time by walking around their neighbourhoods. This was made challenging, however, by the presence of 'dangerous others', as well as the labelling of their behaviour as anti-social and the policing of their presence in public space. There was evidence of a 'retreat indoors', where leisure time was spent on digital devices and technologies. Attendance at youth organisations, therefore, enabled participants to connect with others, while volunteering provided circumstances in which they could exert agency, enjoy emotional and reciprocal relationships and receive support from youth workers.

The chapter contributes to understandings of the benefits of volunteering by highlighting the significance of the relational and emotional aspects of youth volunteering in deprived areas. Against a backdrop of difficult relationships with teachers and police, as well as the stigmatisation of their presence in public space, volunteering provided a way of developing affective attachments to other young people and youth workers. The nature of these relationships was predominantly indicative of bonding social capital, although there was some evidence of bridging social capital. Indeed, participants' social networks were not valued for their capacity to provide 'useful contacts' that would help them 'get ahead' in life, but rather for the immediate benefits they gave rise to. Participants were often emotionally invested in their roles and acquired a sense of personal satisfaction from the knowledge that they were providing a service that others enjoyed. The benefits they described suggest volunteering was experienced in a more affective

manner than framed in youth volunteering initiatives and policies. Volunteering was not valued as a way of investing in the self for the future, but rather as a way of being with others, belonging and experiencing personal satisfaction.

The chapter also contributed by showing how emotional dispositions could be altered following attendance and subsequent volunteering at youth organisations. Many participants indicated they had previously felt shy and nervous when interacting with new people and in new environments, but now felt more confident doing so. The success of this was related to the perceived similarities between participants and those they were interacting with. One participant who volunteered with adults, for example, found it 'strange' being in an environment where no one was his age. This contrasted with the ease of interactions reported by participants who volunteered with persons of similar ages and from similar backgrounds. Confidence was also developed through the leadership roles participants undertook and the sense of responsibility and agency they gave rise to. Unlike their disempowering experiences in public space and often difficult relationships with school, volunteering enabled participants to feel 'proud' and 'grown up'. Their bonding social capital thus contributed to their sense of self as agential actors who possessed something of worth that could be offered to others.

These findings indicate the benefits of volunteering were not framed in instrumental terms, as ways of enhancing transitions into further education or employment, suggesting a divergence from policy interventions and more middle-class approaches to volunteering, but rather for the emotional attachments and sense of agency developed. The realisation of these benefits, however, was contingent upon a number of environmental factors. Interacting with other young people rather than adults provided a stronger base for developing attachments to others. Informal environments, particularly when contrasted with formal education, were considered better settings in which to develop relationships with youth workers who could offer support and guidance. Furthermore, the capacity to

undertake leadership roles, from which a sense of agency could be gained, was often the outcome of the participant-to-volunteer transition. This suggests that without the process of familiarisation with an organisation and the people within it, young people may struggle to reach the point at which they feel able to undertake such roles. Obstacles to establishing foundations in youth organisations and accessing volunteering were discussed in the subsequent chapter.

Chapter 8 addressed the final research question; 'What factors hinder or obstruct young people's access to volunteering opportunities in deprived areas?'. Using a Bourdieusian approach, the chapter examined how barriers were constructed by exploring the relationship between the subjective dispositions participants developed in the context of the objective conditions they experienced. The lack of opportunities and information participants received in relation to volunteering, in addition to widespread non-volunteering within their social networks, led to the development of attitudes which penalised volunteering on the grounds of its perceived incompatibility with group norms. These pressures were argued to be particularly acute for male non-volunteers whose self-exclusion was contended to be a form of symbolic violence. Despite widespread recognition of the peer disapproval associated with volunteering, there was a sense that its impact may have been exaggerated as, by and large, volunteers felt unaffected by it.

On the objective side, the chapter contributes by showing how resource constraints and funding cuts negatively impacted youth workers' abilities to support young people into volunteering opportunities. Funding constraints meant roles were reduced from full- to part-time, organisations lacked specific volunteer coordinators or volunteer coordinators' jobs were not guaranteed beyond particular time frames. These factors were considered particularly detrimental to supporting young people with complex needs. Moreover, the possibility of reduced services or closed organisations was anticipated to have negative emotional impacts for young people who had developed attachments to organisations and people within them. In the

broader context of 'austerity Britain' and in light of the significance of the participant-to-volunteer trajectory, these factors represented notable obstacles to facilitating volunteering. Furthermore, in contrast to evidence indicating schools are important facilitators of youth volunteering, participants felt their teachers and schools did not do enough to raise awareness about volunteering or opportunities to do so. Where information and opportunities were available, participants felt they were only accessible to certain groups. Some youth workers also encountered issues when seeking to work with schools. One felt teachers tended to put forward only their brightest pupils, while the experiences of another led her to believe the school did not always have pupils' best interests at heart.

In this context, both volunteers and non-volunteers encountered a dearth of information relating to volunteering. Volunteers often reported they were only aware of the opportunities they were involved in, thus further highlighting the importance of the participant-to-volunteer trajectory. Indeed, some non-volunteers indicated the fieldwork was the first time they had spoken or been spoken to about volunteering. In addition to lacking awareness of volunteering, participants discussed restricted spatial mobilities based on attachments to specific locations, territorial divisions and the threat of 'dangerous others'. Accordingly, lack of information about opportunities was compounded by restrictions on participants' willingness and ability to travel beyond the areas of the city in which they felt familiar.

On the subjective side, the chapter contributes by arguing that these objective restrictions were internalised by non-volunteers into a habitus which penalised voluntary action due to its deviation from peer norms. A consistent lack of exposure to volunteering, or familiarity with it, meant that, from non-volunteers' positions in social space, not volunteering was naturalised as normal. Volunteers were 'geeks' and 'nerds' and volunteering was a 'pure no go' that risked negative reputational costs. Yet, as discussed in Chapter 5, it was not the case that non-volunteers

derided the notion of volunteering itself, rather it was its abnormality among their friends that made it undesirable. Some volunteers reported their friends expressed interest in volunteering, but did not follow through, instead opting to socialise with other peers. The desire to be 'ordinary' was considered to reduce willingness to express interest in or engage with volunteering. These concerns were particularly evident in discussions with male participants who, due to the overrepresentation of females, felt volunteering would make them 'embarrassed' or look like 'idiots'. Participation in youth organisations, particularly around the early teenage years, was also made difficult due to peer reactions, thereby reducing possibilities for the realisation of the participant-to-volunteer transition. It was argued that self-exclusion from volunteering constituted a form of symbolic violence, whereby non-volunteering was framed as the norm.

Despite this, there was evidence to suggest the impact of peer disapproval might have been exaggerated. The nature of the activity in question appeared to reduce penalties associated with volunteering. Football-related activities, for instance, were generally considered to be more acceptable for males. Furthermore, participants who had personally benefitted from volunteering felt their resilience to negative comments was enhanced. These findings suggest the impact of informal penalties may be reduced if opportunities that reflect young people's interests are available and accessible and if greater awareness is created about the range of benefits accruable through volunteering. They also highlight the intersubjective dimension of habitus, through which attitudes and behaviours are not just an outcome of the relationship between habitus and field, but also group negotiation (Bottero, 2010). Accordingly, as a set of deeply embedded dispositions, habitus is difficult, but not impossible, to alter. Indeed, volunteers in this study reported their attitudes changed from deriding volunteering to placing significant value in it based on their participation in youth organisations and volunteering. New experiences, interactions and group dynamics, as well as structural changes thus present opportunities for inhabited behaviours to alter. Section 9.6 proposes seven policy

recommendations, based on the fieldwork, designed to make volunteering more accessible for young people in deprived areas. Before this, however, reflections on the concepts and theories employed throughout the thesis are provided.

### **9.3 Conceptual reflections**

In addition to making a contribution to understandings of youth volunteering in deprived areas, the thesis also raises broader conceptual and theoretical issues relating to the nature of volunteering, the development of individual and group habitus as well as the role of bonding and bridging social capital in areas of multiple deprivation.

The thesis started by discussing the notion that volunteering was undergoing 'radical change' with an increased emphasis on self-orientated engagement. It was suggested that young people were encouraged by volunteering initiatives and policies to adopt individualised and future-orientated motives. This change in the nature of volunteering was characterised as a shift from 'traditional' to 'new' forms of participation. Although there was evidence of participants expressing future-orientated motives, the weight of evidence suggested reasons for volunteering were more heavily focused on the immediate benefits it could provide. Rather than viewing volunteering as a way of developing a 'portfolio of evidence', as middle-class young people have been reported to do (Storr & Spaaij, 2016, p. 498), participants valued volunteering for what it could give rise to 'right now'. The individualism of new volunteerism characterises volunteering as an 'exchange' driven by a 'cost/benefit' analysis. In contrast to this somewhat clinical approach, the fieldwork indicated volunteering was engaged with for affective reasons relating to attachments to others, sense of belonging and opportunities to engage in enjoyable activities in the context of limited leisure options.

The desire to 'give back' to the communities and organisations from which participants had benefited, as well as their long-term associations with specific

organisations, was more in keeping with the notion of traditional volunteerism than the episodic and individualistic participation associated with new volunteerism. While the emphasis on social attachments rather than individual gain may be related to the age of the participants, many of whom were too young to enter employment, it may also be related to their experiences in deprived areas. It has been argued that 'living with precarity produces different orientations towards others' that predispose individuals to 'different forms of sociality than individualism' (Skeggs, 2011, p. 506). The expression of emotional attachments, rather than a desire for future gains, can be understood in the context of participants' marginalisation in public space, limited leisure opportunities and sometimes difficult relationships with formal education. In such settings, volunteering acquired a different meaning from the instrumental focus of youth volunteering initiatives. Accordingly, while there might be broad changes in the nature of volunteering opportunities and a policy emphasis of the role of volunteering in preparing young people for employment, these ideas and motives were not dominant in how participants in this study approached and related to volunteering.

To understand participants' engagement with volunteering, Bourdieu's theory of practice was employed. The concept of habitus was used to understand the possibilities and restrictions participants encountered in terms of accessing volunteering opportunities in areas characterised by non-participation. By focusing on the individual trajectories of volunteers, it was possible to explore how their early experiences – such as having attended a youth organisation for a lengthy period of time or having parents who volunteered – provided foundations from which calls to volunteer could be responded to positively. Habitus helped analyse how individual dispositions to volunteer in specific organisations were developed in circumstances where volunteering was not widely practiced among peer groups. This approach aided the development of the notion of the participant-to-volunteer

transition. Furthermore, as an 'open system of dispositions', habitus provided a way of analysing how attitudes towards volunteering altered following experiences of it.

Although participants developed 'individual trajectories', the informal penalties associated with volunteering meant these were 'marked by the collective destiny' (Bourdieu, 2010 [1984], p. 106). Yet, while the collective destiny might have been characterised by a non-volunteering habitus (Dean, 2016a), volunteering was not always considered 'unthinkable' by non-volunteers. Critics of habitus have argued the 'habitual guidelines' it provides are increasingly redundant in a world characterised by 'personal reflexivity' (Archer, 2012, p. 64). Although volunteering had not been incorporated into the habitus of non-volunteers, there was a sense that, if the right opportunity arose, volunteering would be considered a worthwhile pursuit. Volunteering was thus 'thinkable', but activity dependent. Scholars have suggested the notion of a 'single habitus' guiding action is 'problematic', but that a focus on 'heterogeneous embodied dispositions' (Farrugia & Woodman, 2015, p. 642) provides a more nuanced way of understanding attitudes and behaviour. For example, while volunteering in an abstract sense was considered something an individual would get 'slagged' for, if it was for a socially approved activity, such as football for males, it was considered less likely to be penalised. Thus, rather than habitus being solely the outcome of the relationship between habitus and field, an intersubjective dimension exists, underdeveloped in Bourdieu's thesis, through which the acceptability of practices are negotiated among groups (Bottero, 2010).

Finally, bonding and bridging social capital were used to understand the nature of participants' relationships and their implications for volunteering. Bonding social capital provided a helpful way of understanding the tight-knit relationships participants developed through volunteering. Less evident in participants' accounts were instances of bridging social capital. Where it did exist, participants crossed social cleavages but connected to those who were, by virtue of residing in deprived areas, likely of similar class backgrounds. Accordingly, it was unclear whether

bridging social capital facilitated access to 'external assets' and information in the manner Putnam envisioned. Rather than enabling participants to 'get ahead', the affective attachments they developed to those to whom they bridged out, were more attuned to the notion of 'getting by'. Bridging social capital thus had value in generating 'broader identities and reciprocity' (Putnam, 2000, p. 23), but, based on the networks participants developed, was constrained in its capacity to link to external goods. Bonding and bridging social capital thus benefit from a structural perspective that examines the nature of the networks that are being bridged out to and the possibilities individuals have for connecting to others beyond their class backgrounds.

## **9.4 Limitations**

The thesis provided a detailed analysis of young people's attitudes and experiences of volunteering in areas of multiple deprivation. There are, however, limitations which must be noted when taking the conclusions of the study into consideration. This subsection considers six such shortcomings.

Firstly, approaching schools and youth organisations to recruit non-volunteers may have excluded the most socially disadvantaged or 'hardest-to-reach' young people. Evidence indicates those who truant are more likely to come from families with low socio-economic statuses (Attwood & Croll, 2006) and reside in the 'most deprived' areas (Scottish Government, 2015b). Moreover, young people in disadvantaged neighbourhoods have been reported to find youth clubs unappealing (France et al., 2012). Accordingly, the sampling framework may have excluded young people with the lowest levels of social capital or resources. This may have had the greatest impact in relation to the analyses of understandings, attitudes and barriers, as this group are perhaps most likely to have the least amount of access to volunteering and thus face the greatest barriers. However, as the thesis focused on the 'most deprived' areas rather than the most disadvantaged young people, this limitation did not detract from the overall aim.

Secondly, when recruiting participants to focus groups, I encountered problems relating to group homogeneity in terms of their statuses as volunteers, ex-volunteers and non-volunteers. When approaching gatekeepers, I stated I was looking to speak to groups of young people who were currently volunteering or not volunteering. It was anticipated this might result in groups of non-volunteers containing ex-volunteers, but not current volunteers. In one non-volunteering focus group at Sports Charity 3, however, three out of the five participants were currently volunteering – one at the organisation in question, the others with different groups. This had the effect of reducing the input from those who had not volunteered. The focus group occurred during a busy holiday camp for young people and the heterogeneity of the group was a result of miscommunication between myself, the staff and the young people.

Thirdly, the thesis aimed to recruit different cohorts of young people to demographically specific focus groups before conducting individual interviews with focus group participants. The intention was for the focus groups to provide insight into how different groups related to volunteering and for individual interviews to explore individual experiences of volunteering. In practice, however, this only happened on two occasions. This shortcoming was partly related to scheduling issues, in that it was difficult to arrange repeat visits to conduct multiple interviews at research sites without disrupting their planned activities. It was also related to the fact that some of the organisations recruited to the study only had a small pool of young volunteers. In such circumstances, individual interviews were conducted as participants did not meet the focus group inclusion criteria. I was also unable to recruit participants to each of the eight desired focus group categories. Despite this, I was still able to develop a deep account of the attitudes and experiences of different cohorts of young people, as well as exploring individual volunteer journeys. Furthermore, while there were roughly equal numbers of male (31) and female (37) volunteers, male participants were more likely to be non-volunteers,

while females were more likely to be volunteers. The skewed nature of the participants' characteristics limited the extent to which the thesis was able to discuss the experiences of male volunteers and female non-volunteers.

Fourthly, I was unable to recruit teachers or school staff to the study. Although the teachers I contacted during the fieldwork stated they were open to the idea, it failed to materialise. I found it notably more challenging to recruit schools to the study than youth organisations. Only four out of the 15 educational institutions contacted took part. My feeling was that this was partly related to research fatigue on their part (Clark, 2008) and the time-related costs of participation. Interviewing teachers would have strengthened the analysis of why participants felt their schools did little to promote volunteering. Despite this, I was still able to provide valuable insights into the limited role participants felt their schools performed in facilitating volunteering.

Fifthly, the thesis focused on formal rather than informal volunteering. The rationale for this was to understand how young people started volunteering in areas where formal participation has been referred to as 'alien' (Williams, 2003b, p. 539). Although there was evidence to suggest participants did not think informal volunteering was widely practiced in their neighbourhoods, due to poor social connectivity, an explicit focus on the question of informal volunteering among young people in deprived areas is required to provide further understanding on this topic.

Finally, as with all qualitative research, the thesis opted for depth over generalisability (David & Sutton, 2004). In light of the high levels of deprivation found in Glasgow, the city's status as Scotland's largest city and the singularity of each participants' experiences, there may be limits on the extent to which the findings will resonate in other contexts.

## 9.5 Future research

While exploring the research questions, the thesis gave rise to new avenues of exploration. Given the limitations of this study, it would be fruitful to gain a deeper understanding of the culture of volunteering in schools located in areas of multiple deprivation. As teachers are widely cited as significant facilitators of volunteering and rates of in-school volunteering appear equal in schools with the highest and lowest proportions of pupils residing in the 'most deprived' areas, it was surprising to hear participants describe their schools as barriers to volunteering. Future research could adopt a case study design to generate detailed pictures of schools in the 'most' and 'least' deprived areas and similarities and differences in how they promote volunteering.

The thesis highlighted the sense of agency participants developed in their volunteering roles. Future research could explore the extent to which they feel able to effect change through voluntary action. Exploring how young people experience their own marginalised position and the limits and possibilities this creates for aiding other disadvantaged groups would yield further insights into how this group experiences volunteering. It would also be interesting to explore whether they develop a 'sociological imagination' (Mills, 1959) through volunteering, encouraging them to see social issues as structured, or whether they generate individualistic accounts of social problems – similar to Holdsworth and Quinn's (2012) notion of 'deconstructive' and 'reproductive' volunteering.

In light of the affective attachments many participants developed with youth workers, future research could explore what happens in circumstances when youth organisations can no longer offer volunteering roles due, for example, to funding cuts or when workers leave organisations. The thesis showed the significance attachments had in terms of providing support, enhancing wellbeing and offering opportunities for social interaction. Understanding what happens when these

bonds are damaged or dismantled would help generate a fuller picture of the youth volunteering lifecycle in deprived areas.

Another avenue would be to examine why it is that volunteering rates and attendance at youth organisations appear to drop off as young people enter their teenage years. Researchers have argued that, in disadvantaged urban areas, being male and between 13-17 years old are the most common characteristics for aggressive forms of territorial behaviour (Pickering et al., 2012). In light of the finding that attitudinal barriers were acutely felt for young males, it would be interesting to narrow in on this group, particularly those furthest removed from formal volunteering opportunities, to explore this issue in more detail.

The thesis examined the restricted spatial mobilities of participants, a factor shaping their opportunities for volunteering. Although attachments to place were felt to provide a 'safety blanket' through localised support networks, in policy debates, spatial immobility is often framed as an obstacle to the realisation of aspiration (Evans, 2016). Future research could explore how volunteering opportunities characterised by spatial mobility, such as overseas placements, are experienced by those typically constrained in their movements. It would be interesting to examine the implications young people feel experiences of spatial mobility have for their own social mobility. Furthermore, as attachments to place were problematic, in that they restricted mobility, and a strength, in that they encouraged involvement in local organisations, conducting longitudinal research into the implications attachments have for volunteering and transitions into education or employment as young people enter young adulthood would generate important insights.

There is also scope to explore the opportunities and challenges faced by different cohorts of young people in different areas of deprivation. Comparing the experiences of young people in rural and urban deprived areas would yield insights

into the different ways in which place shapes opportunities. Furthermore, although the thesis examined the attitudes and experiences of different groups of young people in deprived areas, future research could examine additional cohorts to develop a more detailed account of the different ways in which volunteering is experienced in such areas. Potential groups could include, young offenders, young people with disabilities, young people from different ethnic backgrounds, young carers or young people with mental health concerns.

## **9.6 Policy recommendations**

The Literature Review argued there exists a lengthy policy interest in youth volunteering as a way of developing citizenship characteristics and preparing young people for employment. The fieldwork suggested volunteering could lead to significant benefits for those who engaged in it. Accordingly, improving access to volunteering opportunities has the potential to enable a wider range of young people in deprived areas to benefit from participation. Based on the research presented in this thesis, the following seven policy recommendations are made to improve access to opportunities:

1. *Improve access to information*: both volunteers and non-volunteers lacked information about volunteering. This meant they were unaware of opportunities and were liable to developing stereotypical ideas about it. Enhancing awareness about the broad scope of activities entailed by volunteering may reduce the stigma associated with it and enhance opportunities for engaging in it.
2. *Early engagement*: as confidence was an issue for participants, facilitating early involvement in youth organisations may provide an important foundation from which the participant-to-volunteer transition can occur. Early exposure to volunteer-involving organisations may also help reduce the informal penalties associated with volunteering.

3. *Offering meaningful and accessible activities*: in order to engage young people as participants or volunteers, it is necessary to offer meaningful activities reflective of their interests that they are able to access. Part of the reason volunteers sustained their involvement in organisations was due to the enjoyment and sense of agency they derived through it. The evidence in the thesis suggested youth-to-youth engagement was more fruitful in this respect than youth-to-adult activities. Enhancing the suitability and availability of opportunities may prove fruitful for encouraging engagement.
4. *Being sensitive to age and gender*: the fieldwork suggested young people were liable to fall away from organisations as they entered their teenage years and that males were particularly susceptible to informal penalties. Supporting these particular groups and providing opportunities reflective of their interests may help maintain their engagement.
5. *Greater coordination with schools*: both the young people and youth workers reported difficulties regarding schools as facilitators of volunteering. In light of the second and fourth recommendations, it would be pertinent for volunteer-involving organisations to work with primary schools to inform pupils about volunteering and enhance their awareness of opportunities, as well as maintaining relationships as young people transition into secondary education. Furthermore, the creation of stronger links between volunteering and policy interventions, such as the Curriculum for Excellence, and government bodies, such as Education Scotland, may ameliorate some of the school-based barriers reported in the thesis.
6. *Investing in youth organisations*: participants in this study described the support they received from youth workers, as well as the emotional bonds they developed with them. Yet, youth workers reported the services they offered were threatened by funding cuts. It is therefore essential to ensure youth organisations are well funded, staffed and accessible in order to provide the level of support necessary to engage young people in deprived areas in volunteering.

7. *Local engagement*: the thesis highlighted constraints on participants' spatial movements. Accordingly, it is important that organisations are geographically accessible. Moreover, by being embedded in their communities, youth workers were able to develop relationships with young people over time. Ensuring organisations are properly resourced, therefore, can help facilitate opportunities for such relationships to develop from which participation and volunteering in youth organisations can be encouraged.

Although often framed as a panacea for social problems, volunteering alone is limited in its capacity to address persistent and structural inequalities. However, as this thesis has shown, it can give rise to significant benefits to those who engage in it. It is therefore important to ensure young people are aware of volunteering and that, should they want to, they are able to access opportunities regardless of background. Implementing these recommendations may go some way to realising this prospect.

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# Appendices

## Appendix 1: Participant information sheets

### Information sheet for volunteers

Name of department: School of Social Work and Social Policy

Title of the project: Young People's and Volunteering

#### Introduction

Hello, my name is James Davies and I am a student at the University of Strathclyde. Thank you for your interest in my project. Before you decide whether or not to join my project I would like to tell you more about it.

#### What is this project about?

The project is about young people's attitudes and experience of volunteering. I would like to learn what you like about volunteering, how you became involved in it and what makes it difficult for you to volunteer.

#### Do you have to take part?

If you don't want to take part you don't have to. If you decide to take part now, but change your mind later, you can stop whenever you want.

#### What will you do in the project?

You will be asked to take part in a group discussion about volunteering. This is to talk about what you think about volunteering.

You may also be asked to take part in a conversation with me. This is so I can learn about your own views on volunteering, how you became involved in volunteering and what you like and dislike about it.

So I don't forget our conversations, I would like to use a voice recorder to record our discussions.

**Why have you been invited to take part?**

You have been invited to take part because you volunteer and because the school or group you volunteer with is in an area at the lower end of the Government's deprivation scale.

**Are there any risks in the project?**

There are no risks to taking part in the project. If you are worried or concerned about anything at any stage, please contact me or my supervisor (see below for contact details).

**What happens to the information in the project?**

All the information will be anonymised so no one knows your name, where you live or where you volunteer. All the information will be securely stored at my university. None of the information you tell me will be passed on to anyone else unless you tell me you or someone else are in danger. If this happens I will need to contact the appropriate services, but I will discuss this with you first. When I have finished the project, I will put the information in a "data library".

The University of Strathclyde is registered with the Information Commissioner's Office who implement the Data Protection Act 1998. All personal data will be dealt with in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998.

**What happens next?**

If you want to take part in the project, you will need to sign a form called a consent form. A time and location will then be agreed for the group discussion. If you do not want to take part in the project please say and you won't have to.

When the project is complete I will write my dissertation based on the interviews. This information may also be published elsewhere. Your name will not be used in any reports. I will send a summary of the project to the school or organisation you volunteer with when it is finished.

Thank you very much for your interest in this project and for reading this information. Please ask any questions if you are unsure about anything.

**Contact details:**

If you have any questions or concerns at any stage of the project, please do not hesitate to contact me or my supervisor:

James Davies (Researcher)  
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16 Richmond Street  
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Email: james.davies@strath.ac.uk

Daniela Sime (James' supervisor)  
School of Social Work and Social Policy  
Lord Hope Building, Level 6  
16 Richmond Street  
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Email: daniela.sime@strath.ac.uk  
Phone number: 0141 444 8676

This investigation has been granted ethical approval by the University of Strathclyde Ethics. I am a registered member of the protecting vulnerable groups (PVG) scheme.

If you have any questions or concerns, during or after the investigation, or wish to contact an independent person to ask questions or obtain information, please contact:

Secretary to the University Ethics Committee  
Research & Knowledge Exchange Services  
University of Strathclyde  
Graham Hills Building  
50 George Street  
Glasgow  
G1 1QE  
Telephone: 0141 548 3707  
Email: ethics@strath.ac.uk

## **Information sheet for non-volunteers**

Name of department: School of Social Work and Social Policy

Title of the project: Young People & Volunteering

### **Introduction**

Hello, my name is James Davies and I am a student at the University of Strathclyde. Thank you for your interest in my project. Before you decide whether or not to join my project I would like to tell you more about it.

### **What is this project about?**

The project is about young people's attitudes and experience of volunteering. I would like to learn what you think about volunteering, whether you have volunteered and about the things that make it difficult for you to volunteer.

### **Do you have to take part?**

If you don't want to take part you don't have to. If you decide to take part now, but change your mind later, you can stop whenever you want. If you want to take part you will be asked to do an activity.

### **What will you do in the project?**

You will be asked to take part in a group discussion about volunteering. This is to talk about what you think about volunteering.

You may also be asked to take part in a conversation with me. This is so I can learn about your own views on volunteering and the things that make it easy or difficult for you to volunteer.

So I don't forget our conversations, I would like to use a voice recorder to record our discussions.

### **Why have you been invited to take part?**

You have been invited to take part because you do not volunteer and because the school or organisation you attend is in an area at the lower end of the Government's deprivation scale.

**Are there any risks in the project?**

There are no risks to taking part in the project. If you are worried or concerned about anything at any stage, please contact me or my supervisor (see below for contact details).

**What happens to the information in the project?**

All the information will be anonymised so no one knows your name, where you live or where you volunteer. All the information will be securely stored at my university. None of the information you tell me will be passed on to anyone else unless you tell me you or someone else are in danger. If this happens I will need to contact the appropriate services, but I will discuss this with you first. When I have finished the project, I will put the information in a "data library".

The University of Strathclyde is registered with the Information Commissioner's Office who implement the Data Protection Act 1998. All personal data will be dealt with in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998.

**What happens next?**

If you want to take part in the project, you will need to sign a form called a consent form. A time and location will then be agreed for the group discussion. If you do not want to take part in the project please say and you won't have to.

When the project is complete I will write my dissertation based on the interviews. This information may also be published elsewhere. Your name will not be used in any reports. I will send a summary of the project to the school or organisation you volunteer with when it is finished.

Thank you very much for your interest in this project and for reading this information. Please ask any questions if you are unsure about anything.

**Contact details:**

If you have any questions or concerns at any stage of the project, please do not hesitate to contact me or my supervisor:

James Davies (Researcher)  
School of Social Work and Social Policy  
Lord Hope Building, Level 6  
16 Richmond Street  
Glasgow  
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Email: james.davies@strath.ac.uk

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Email: daniela.sime@strath.ac.uk  
Phone number: 0141 444 8676

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50 George Street  
Glasgow  
G1 1QE  
Telephone: 0141 548 3707  
Email: ethics@strath.ac.uk

## **Youth workers**

Name of department: School of Social Work and Social Policy

Title of the project: Young People and Volunteering

### **Introduction**

Hello, my name is James Davies and I am a student at the University of Strathclyde. I am grateful you have expressed interest in my project. I would like to tell you more about it before you decide whether you would like to take part.

### **What is the purpose of this project?**

The project is about young people's attitudes and experience of volunteering. I would like to learn what young people like about volunteering, how they become involved in it and what makes it difficult for them to take part. I would also like to explore the views of those involved in the coordination of volunteering programmes and the recruitment of young people to them.

### **Do you have to take part?**

If you do not want to take part, you do not have to. If you decide to take part now, but change your mind later, you can stop whenever you want without any consequence to you. If you decide to take part, you should make your decision voluntarily.

### **What will you do in the project?**

You will be asked to participate in an interview with me. The interview should last roughly an hour and, with your permission, will be audio recorded. During the interview I will ask about your experiences of recruiting and working with young people as volunteers. The interview will be arranged at a time and location suitable for you.

### **Why have you been invited to take part?**

You have been asked to take part because you are involved in the coordination or recruitment of young people to a volunteering programme or scheme in an area at the lower end of the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation's scale.

**What are the potential risks to you in taking part?**

There are no risks to you taking part in the project. If you are worried or concerned about anything at any stage, please do not hesitate to contact me or my supervisor.

**What happens to the information in the project?**

All the information will be anonymised so no one knows your name, where you live or where you work. All the information will be securely stored at my university. None of the information you tell me will be passed on to a third party unless you tell me you are at harm or are harming someone. If this happens I will need to contact the appropriate services, but I will discuss this with you first. When I have finished the project, I will put the information in a data archive.

The University of Strathclyde is registered with the Information Commissioner's Office who implements the Data Protection Act 1998. All personal data on participants will be processed in accordance with the provisions of the Data Protection Act 1998.

**What happens next?**

If you are happy to take part in the project, I would kindly ask for you to sign the consent form. A time and location will then be arranged during which the interview will take place. If you do not wish to take part in the project I would like to thank you for your interest up to this point.

After the analysis I will write my doctoral dissertation. The findings may also be published in academic journals, at conferences and in organisational reports. Your name, the school or organisation you work with and the area in which you are based with will never be used. In addition to this, when the project is finished I will send a summary of the research findings to the school or organisation you work for.

Thank you very much for your taking the time to read this information. Please ask any questions if you are unsure about anything.

**Researcher contact details:**

If you have any questions or concerns during any stage of the research, please do not hesitate to contact me or my supervisor:

James Davies (Researcher)

School of Social Work and Social Policy

Lord Hope Building, Level 6

16 Richmond Street

Glasgow

G1 1XQ

Email: james.davies@strath.ac.uk

Daniela Sime (Supervisor)

School of Social Work and Social Policy

Lord Hope Building, Level 6

16 Richmond Street

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G1 1XQ

Email: daniela.sime@strath.ac.uk

Phone number: 0141 444 8676

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Glasgow, G1 1QE

Telephone: 0141 548 3707

Email: ethics@strath.ac.uk

## **Parents of participants under 16 years old**

Name of department: School of Social Work and Social Policy

Title of the project: Young People & Volunteering

### **Introduction**

Hello, my name is James Davies and I am a student at the University of Strathclyde. Your child has expressed interest in taking part in my project. I would like to give you some information about it.

### **What is the purpose of this project?**

The project is about young people's attitudes and experience of volunteering. I would like to learn what young people like about volunteering, how they become involved in volunteering and what makes it difficult for them to volunteer.

### **Does your child have to take part?**

No, your child doesn't have to take part. Your child should only take part in the project if they want to. If they agree now but change their mind later, they can stop whenever they want without any consequences to them.

### **What will they do take part in the project?**

If they decide to take part they will be asked to do the following. They will be asked to take part in a group discussion about volunteering. This is to talk about what young people think about volunteering. They may also be asked to take part in one-to-one conversation with me so I can learn about their individual thoughts and experiences of volunteering.

### **Why have they been invited to take part?**

They have been asked to take part because they are either involved or not involved in a volunteering opportunity in an area at the lower end of the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation's scale. Their attitudes and experiences of volunteering are important to this project.

**What are the potential risks of taking part?**

There are no risks to taking part in the project. If you are worried or concerned about anything at any time, please do not hesitate to contact me or my supervisor (see below for contact details).

**What happens to the information in the project?**

All the information will be anonymised so no one knows your child's name, where they live or where they volunteer. All the information will be securely stored at my university. When I have finished the project, I will put the information in a "data library".

None of the information they tell me will be passed on to anyone else unless I am told a young person is at harm or is harming someone. If this happens, I will need to contact the appropriate services, but I will discuss this with the young person first.

The University of Strathclyde is registered with the Information Commissioner's Office who implements the Data Protection Act 1998. All personal data on participants will be processed in accordance with the provisions of the Data Protection Act 1998.

**What happens next?**

If your child agrees to take part, they will sign a consent form. A time and location will be arranged for the group interview. If your child does not want to take part in the project, they can say and they won't have to.

When the project is complete, I will write my dissertation based on the interviews. This information may also be published elsewhere. Your child's name will not be used in any reports. I will send a summary to the school or organisation your child volunteers with when the project is finished.

**Researcher contact details:**

If you have any questions or concerns during any stage of the research, please do not hesitate to contact:

James Davies (Researcher)  
School of Social Work and Social Policy  
Lord Hope Building, Level 6  
16 Richmond Street  
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G1 1XQ  
Email: james.davies@strath.ac.uk

Daniela Sime (James' supervisor)  
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Email: ethics@strath.ac.uk

## Appendix 2: Consent form

Name of department: School of Social Work and Social Policy

Title of the project: Young People and Volunteering

- I confirm that I have read and understood the information sheet for the above project and the researcher has answered any queries to my satisfaction.
- I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw from the project at any time, without having to give a reason and without any consequences to me.
- I understand that I can withdraw my data from the study at any time.
- I understand that any information recorded in the investigation will remain confidential and no information that identifies me will be made publicly available.
- I consent to being a participant in the project.
- I consent to being audio recorded as part of the project.

Please indicate whether or not you agree to the above statements (circle as appropriate):

Yes / No

Please print name:	Signature:
Age:	Date:

## Appendix 3: Interview guides

Owing to the semi-structured nature of focus groups and interviews, the following interview guides were used to guide conversations rather than rigidly proscribe them (Bryman, 2008). Questions were not always asked in the same order, certain areas received greater attention in different interviews and I responded to the answers participants gave to questions.

### Interview guide for focus groups with volunteers

1. When some young people think about volunteering, they think of: Helping people; A way to develop skills or experience; A way to make friends; Boring; It's a bit "goody-goody".
  - a. What do you think about these ways of describing volunteering?
  - b. What do you think about volunteering?
  - c. Do you think it is important to volunteer? If so, why? If not, why not?
2. What do you do when you are volunteering?
  - a. Are you involved in a range of activities? If so, what sorts of things do these include?
  - b. Who decides what activities you do?
3. Where do you go to volunteer?
  - a. How do you get to there?
  - b. Do the places you volunteer change?
4. Who do you volunteer with?
  - a. How important is it for you to volunteer with these people? Why is that?
5. When do you volunteer?
  - a. After or during school, during the holidays, weekends, does it vary throughout the year?
  - b. Do you experience any pressures on the time you have to volunteer?

6. How did you find out about the volunteer opportunity?
  - a. Who told you about it?
  - b. Who encouraged you to take part in it?
  - c. How did you start taking part in it?
  
7. What attracted you to volunteering when you first started?
  
8. What do you enjoy about volunteering?
  - a. How do you feel when you are volunteering?
  - b. How does it feel to help other people by volunteering?
  - c. What do you get out of volunteering?
  - d. What makes you want to keep volunteering? Have your attitudes changed over time?
  
9. What benefits do you get from volunteering?
  - a. How important is it to get rewards from volunteering?
  - b. Has volunteering helped with other aspects of your life? If yes, what and how?
  - c. Do you think volunteering could help you in the future? If so, how? If not, why?
  
10. Is there anything that makes it hard to volunteer?
  - a. As a group of girls/boys, what can make it difficult for you to volunteer?
  - b. What do you dislike about volunteering?
  - c. Are you able to get to all the opportunities you want to go to?
  - d. Do other people's attitudes (e.g. friends, family) ever put you off volunteering?
  - e. Are there things in your neighbourhood that make it difficult to volunteer? If so, what are they and why do they make it difficult?
  
11. Have you ever been unable to volunteer in the past when you wanted to? What was it that stopped you?
  
12. What would make it easier for young people to volunteer?
  - a. How would you make volunteering more attractive to you?
  - b. Are there any other activities you would be interested in doing?

13. Is there anything else you think is important in relation to volunteering?

## **Interview guide for interviews with volunteers**

1. In the focus group we talked about phrases some young people associate with volunteering. I was wondering what your views on volunteering were?
  - a. Was there was anything you wanted to add?
  - b. Was there was anything you disagreed with?
2. Could you tell me about the types of volunteering activities you have been involved in?
3. How did you find out about the opportunity to volunteer?
  - a. Has anyone encouraged you to volunteer before? If so, who?
  - b. What role have your Mum/Dad/family/guardian had in your volunteering?
  - c. What role have your friends or schoolmates had in your volunteering?
4. What attracted you to volunteering when you first started?
5. In what ways has volunteering helped to develop your skills?
6. Are there ways in which volunteering has been helpful in your life, or to your future?
7. Are there ways in which volunteering has helped you socially?
8. Are there ways in which volunteering has helped you personally?
9. Do you experience any negative aspects of volunteering? If yes, what?
10. Are there things that make it difficult for you to volunteer?
  - a. As a girl/boy, what can make it difficult for you to volunteer?
  - b. Have you always felt you could volunteer if you wanted to?
  - c. Are there other activities you do outside of school? If so, what are they and how do they affect your ability to volunteer?
  - d. Are there things in your neighbourhood that make it difficult to volunteer? If so, what are they are why do they make it difficult?

11. What would make it easier for young people to volunteer?
  - a. How would you make volunteering more attractive to you?
  - b. Are there any other activities you would be interested in doing?
  
12. Is there anything else you think is important in relation to volunteering?

## Interview guide for focus groups with non-volunteers

1. When some young people think about volunteering, they think of: Helping people; A way to develop skills or experience; A way to make friends; Boring; It's a bit "goody-goody".
  - a. What do you think about these ways of describing volunteering?
  - b. What do you think about volunteering?
  
2. How much do you know about opportunities to volunteer?
  - a. If aware of opportunities:
    - i. Have you tried to engage in them? If so, what happened? If not, what has stopped you from doing so?
  - b. If not aware of opportunities:
    - i. Have you ever tried to find out about opportunities? If so, what did you do/what happened? If not, what has stopped you from doing so?
  
3. Do you think it is important to volunteer?
  - a. Why do you think it is / is not important to volunteer?
  - b. Do you think volunteering could help you in the future? If so, why and how? If not, why?
  
4. Describe the factors that put you off volunteering.
  - a. As a group of girls/boys, what can make it difficult for you to volunteer?
  - b. Do you have time to volunteer?
  - c. Are you able to get to all the opportunities you want to go to?
  - d. Do other people's attitudes (e.g. friends, family) ever put you off volunteering?
  - e. Are there things in your neighbourhood that make it difficult to volunteer? If so, what are they are why do they make it difficult?
  
5. Have you ever been unable to volunteer in the past when you wanted to? What was it that stopped you?
  
6. Would you like to start volunteering?
  - a. If yes, what stops you from doing more/starting?

- b. If no, why not? Are there things that would encourage you to do more/start?
  
- 7. What would make it easier for young people to volunteer?
  - a. How would you make volunteering more attractive to you?
  - b. Are there any other activities you would be interested in doing?
  
- 8. Is there anything else you think is important in relation to volunteering?

## Interview guide for interviews with non-volunteers

1. In the focus group we talked about phrases some young people associate with volunteering. I was wondering what your views on volunteering were? (Helping people; A way to develop skills or experience; A way to make friends; Boring; It's a bit "goody-goody")
  - a. Was there was anything you wanted to add?
  - b. Was there was anything you disagreed with?
  
2. In the focus group we talked about how much the group knew about opportunities to volunteer, I was wondering whether you had anything to add?
  - a. Are you aware of opportunities?
  - b. If aware of opportunities
    - i. Have you tried to engage in them? If yes, what happened? If not, what stopped you from doing so?
  - c. If not aware,
    - i. Have you ever tried to find out about opportunities?
    - ii. If you haven't tried to find out, what has stopped you from doing so?
  
3. Have you ever been involved in volunteering before?
  - a. If yes, what sort of things did you do?
    - i. Who did you volunteer with?
    - ii. How did you find out about the opportunity?
    - iii. What attracted you to the opportunity?
    - iv. What did you enjoy about it?
    - v. In what ways did it help you, either personally or socially?
    - vi. Why did you stop volunteering?
  - b. If not, have you ever tried to do any volunteering activities?
    - i. What other activities would you be interested in doing?
  
4. Are there any things that put you off volunteering?
  - a. What are they?
  - b. What is it about them that puts you off?

5. Are there things that make it difficult or impractical for you to volunteer? (3a)
  - a. As a girl/boy, what can make it difficult for you to volunteer?
  - b. Have you always felt you could volunteer if you wanted to? (3b)
  - c. Are there things in your neighbourhood that make it difficult to volunteer? If so, what are they and why do they make it difficult? E.g. crime, anti-social behaviour, opportunities.
  
6. Would you like to do more volunteering?
  - a. If yes, what stops you from doing more?
  - b. If no, why not? Are there things that would encourage you to do more?
  
7. What would make volunteering better for you?
  - a. How would you make volunteering more attractive to you?
  - b. Are there activities you would be interested in doing?
  
8. Is there anything else you think is important in relation to volunteering?

## **Interview guide for interviews with youth workers**

1. Could you start by describing your role at your organisation?
2. Describe the strategies your organisation has for involving young people in volunteering?
  - a. What do you consider the merits and shortcomings of your approach to be?
  - b. What kinds of activities do the young volunteers do?
  - c. Without this opportunity, what other opportunities would young people have to volunteer around here? Would young people be able to volunteer without the opportunity?
3. What values do you think young people develop through volunteering?
  - a. How do you think young people value volunteering?
  - b. Describe how the volunteering opportunities you are involved with relate to the Curriculum for Excellence.
4. What do you think young people gain from volunteering?
  - a. How do young people change over the course of their volunteering experiences?
5. In what ways do you think it is important for young people to volunteer?
  - a. How important is volunteering for young people's futures?
  - b. What do you think is the purpose of youth volunteering?
6. Some programmes accredit young people's volunteering experiences. What do you think about accreditation?
7. How do you think young people in deprived areas start volunteering?
  - a. Which people are important?
  - b. What places are important?
  - c. What do you think motivates them?

8. From your experience, what do you think the culture of volunteering is like in deprived areas?
  - a. What impact do you think this has on young people's volunteering?
9. What do you think makes it difficult for young people to volunteer in deprived areas?  
Both practically and in relation to attitudinal factors.
10. What do you think would make volunteering easier for young people in deprived areas to engage in?

## Appendix 4: Coding framework

Global theme	Organising themes	Basic themes
Understandings and attitudes	Definitions	Benefit to others Payment Free will Free time Organisational context Uncertainty
	A social activity	A way to make friends Enjoyable or fun Social
	Changed attitudes	Changed attitudes Doesn't feel like volunteering
	Altruism	Helping people Helping organisations
	Negative attitudes	Being poor Boring Community service Embarrassing Goody-goody Not important Not popular Outsider status Terminology Uncool Unpaid work
	Instrumental attitudes	Employment Skills development A way to develop skills or experiences

<b>Global theme</b>	<b>Organising themes</b>	<b>Basic themes</b>
Motivations and facilitating factors	Social networks	Being asked Family Friends
	Local organisations	Local opportunities Buildings or locations Travel Advert Youth workers Trust Welcoming Participant-to-volunteer Partnerships
	Instrumental motive	CV enhancement Experience in desired career Leading to opportunities Qualification or certificate University or college Work experience
	Personal motive	Confidence Learning Enjoyable or fun Getting out of class New experiences Nothing else to do Personal connection Emulating older volunteers
	Provision of aid	Helping Local Making an impact

<b>Global theme</b>	<b>Organising themes</b>	<b>Basic themes</b>	
Benefits of volunteering	Nothing else to do	At home	
		No clubs	
		On the streets	
		Crime	
		Police	
		Judgements	
		Safety	
		-----	
		Alternative forms of socialising	Meeting people
		Getting away	
Difficult lives			
-----			
Relationships	Relationships	Beyond employment	
		Fear of missing out	
		Friendships	
		Relationships with service users	
		Relationships with staff	
		Relationships with volunteers	
		Safe space	
		Social aspect	
		-----	
		Pleasure or satisfaction	Pleasure or satisfaction
Good feeling			
Helping others			
Learning			
New experiences (not transitions)			
Rewards			
Role model			
Self-expression			
-----			
Personal attributes	Personal attributes	Communication skills	
		Confidence	
		Independence	
		Leading	
		Life skills	
		Motivation	
		Personal development	
		Pride	
		Responsibility	
		Skills or feelings other activities don't	
		Social skills	
		CV enhancement	
		Employability	

<b>Global theme</b>	<b>Organising themes</b>	<b>Basic themes</b>
Barriers	Organisational barriers	Complex needs
		Funding
		Limited spaces
		Organisations not valuing volunteering
	Schools	Teachers
		Secondary school
		Primary school
	Lack of information	Lack of support
		Lack of encouragement
		Lack of information
		Lack of knowledge
		Lack of opportunities
		No community
	Spatial barriers	Staying local
		Territorialism
		Travel
		No local opportunities
		Safety
		Crime
	Peer networks	Family not volunteering
		Friends not volunteering
		Attitudes of others
		Getting 'slagged'
		Peer pressure

## Appendix 5: Participant profiles

Name	Age	Gender	Status <sup>51</sup>	Organisation	Profile
Abbie	15	F	V	Youth Charity 2	Abbie volunteered to facilitate play-orientated activities for children and young people. She found out about the organisation through her mum and Amy, her cousin. She was undertaking the Duke of Edinburgh programme through the charity.
Akash	16	M	NV	Sports Charity 3	Akash was attending a sports-orientated holiday camp where he played football with other children and young people. He was currently at school. He had no experience of volunteering and knew little about it.
Alex	18	M	NV	College	Alex was undertaking a construction course at a college offering a range of vocational courses. Alex reported none of his friends had volunteered and this was why he had never considered it.
Amy	15	F	V	Youth Charity 2	Amy volunteered to facilitate play-orientated activities for children and young people. She found out about the organisation through family connections. Amy had a difficult relationship with school. She was undertaking the Duke of Edinburgh programme through the charity.
Andy	12	M	V	School 1	Andy volunteered at coffee morning for pensioners facilitated by his school. He was involved in lots of extra-curricular clubs and activities in school. He experienced

<sup>51</sup> V denotes 'volunteer'; NV denotes 'non-volunteer'; EV denotes 'ex-volunteer'.

					volunteering as a social and pleasurable activity.
Anne	17	F	V	Youth Charity 5	Anne volunteered at a youth café where she helped facilitate and supervise activities for children and young people. She had attended the youth café for about a year and had found out about it through another youth club she attended.
Becky	16	F	V	Youth Charity 5	Becky volunteered at a youth café where she helped facilitate and supervise activities for children and young people. She had attended the organisation for roughly eight years.
Ben	12	M	V	School 1	Ben volunteered at coffee morning for pensioners facilitated by his school. He was involved in a range of extra-curricular activities in school.
Beth	-	F	-	Local Gov. Org	Beth was a youth volunteer advisor in a local government organisation. Part of her role entailed delivering employability-orientated volunteering programmes for young people in deprived areas.
Brad	18	M	NV	College	Brad was undertaking a construction course at a college offering a range of vocational courses. He indicated the fieldwork was the first time he had ever discussed or considered volunteering.
Brooke	13	F	V	Youth Charity 4	Brooke volunteered to help facilitate play-orientated activities for children and young people. She found out about the organisation due to its proximity to a local shopping precinct in her neighbourhood. Brooke said she had attended the organisation since she was five years old.
Caitlin	13	F	V	Youth Charity 4	Caitlin volunteered to help facilitate play-orientated activities for children and young

					people. She said he had attended the organisation for roughly 10 years.
Callum	15	M	EV	Community Org.	Callum was undertaking a school organised work experience placement. He had volunteered at a local community garden when he was younger but had fallen away from it as there was no one his age and he felt he was missing out on socialising with his friends.
Cheryl	16	F	V	Youth Charity 5	Cheryl volunteered at a youth café where she helped facilitate and supervise activities for children and young people. She felt she had become more confident through volunteering and that her school did little to facilitate involvement in volunteering.
Clare	-	F	-	Local Gov. Org	Clare was a youth volunteer development coordinator in a local government organisation. She was in charge of overseeing the promotion and administration of the Saltire Awards.
Connor	17	M	V	School 3	Connor volunteered at reading group in school to help younger pupils develop their reading skills. He was doing so as part of a personal development programme. Other than that, he was unaware of opportunities to volunteer.
Daniela	16	F	V	Youth Charity 5	Daniela volunteered at a youth café where she helped facilitate and supervise activities for children and young people. She stated she had 'always known' about the youth café and had started volunteering after being encouraged by a youth worker.
Darren	17	M	EV	School 3	Darren had previously taken part in a football coaching volunteering activity as part of a course he was undertaking. He wanted to do football studies at college and had been informed that volunteering would help him achieve this.

Demi	18	F	V	Youth Charity 4	Demi volunteered at a youth café where she helped facilitate and supervise activities for children and young people. As well as volunteering at the organisation she was also employed by them as a sessional worker. With support from the organisation Demi had also volunteered at other organisations.
Donna	14	F	V	Sports Charity 2	Donna volunteered at a sports charity that delivered sporting activities for children in deprived areas. She also volunteered at her local football academy. She found out about the opportunity at Sports Charity 2 through one of her coaches.
Dylan	15	M	NV	Community Org.	Dylan was undertaking a school organised work experience placement. Dylan had no prior experience of volunteering and knew little about it. He felt there was little to do in his local area and that where amenities were available, such as parks, they were vandalised to the point that they were unusable.
Ellie	15	F	V	School 1	Ellie was undertaking the Duke of Edinburgh award through her school. For her placement she was volunteering at a nursery.
Emma	14	F	V	Sports Charity 2	Emma volunteered at a sports charity that delivered sporting activities for children in deprived areas. She also volunteered at a children's adventure playground. Emma found out about Sports Charity 2 through Donna, her friend.
Ewan	17	M	EV	School 3	Ewan had previously taken part in a football coaching volunteering activity and had volunteered at his local Boys' Brigade group. He found out about the Boys' Brigade group through a talk at school. Ewan said he stopped volunteering with the Boys' Brigade once he had completed the awards the organisation offered.

Faye	16	F	V	Sports Charity 2	Faye volunteered at a sports charity that delivered sporting activities for children in deprived areas. She also volunteered at another sports charity. Faye started volunteering at Sports Charity 2 after one of her coaches organised for her to go.
Fiona	15	F	V	School 1	Fiona was undertaking the Duke of Edinburgh award through her school.
Fraser	16	M	NV	School 2	Fraser couldn't recall any experiences of volunteering and felt his school did little to provide information about it. He stated he would not like to be seen volunteering due to the stigma associated with it.
Gabby	14	F	V	Sports Charity 2	Gabby volunteered at a sports charity that delivered sporting activities for children in deprived areas and at her local football academy. She found out about the opportunity at Sports Charity 2 through one of her coaches.
George	16	M	NV	School 2	George couldn't recall any experiences of volunteering and felt his school did little to provide information about it.
Grace	15	F	V	School 1	Grace was undertaking the Duke of Edinburgh award through her school. For her placement she was volunteering in a primary school.
Hannah	15	F	V	School 1	Hannah was undertaking the Duke of Edinburgh award through her school. For her placement she was volunteering in a primary school.
Harry	16	M	EV	School 2	Harry had previously volunteered as a boxing coach for about two years after he finished boxing himself but had not wanted to leave the sport altogether. Other than this, he was not aware of any opportunities to volunteer.
Iain	15	M	V	Sports Charity 2	Iain volunteered at a sports charity that delivered sporting activities for children in

					deprived areas. He also volunteered at his local football pitch. He found out about the opportunity at Sports Charity 2 through a teacher at school where he was undertaking a football qualification.
Ian	17	M	NV	School 2	Ian expressed little interest in volunteering. He had to leave the focus group early due to another school-based commitment.
Isla	16	F	V	Sports Charity 3	Isla was undertaking the youth volunteer programme at Sports Charity 3 which entailed helping facilitate sporting activities for other children and young people. She was encouraged to volunteer by the dance coach at the charity.
Izzy	15	F	V	School 1	Izzy was undertaking the Duke of Edinburgh award through her school.
Jade	12	F	V	Sports Charity 3	Jade had volunteered at a nursery where she helped out with events, such as fetes. She was too young to take part in Sports Charity 3's volunteering programme but expressed interested in joining it when she reached the required age. Her dad encouraged her to take part in youth clubs where she sometimes helped out.
Jessica	15	F	V	School 1	Jessica was undertaking the Duke of Edinburgh award through her school.
Jordan	17	M	NV	School 2	Jordan had not volunteered. He did not contribute much to the focus group, however he expressed some interest in the prospect of sports-based volunteering.
Katie	14	F	V	Sports Charity 3	Katie had volunteered at school to help with assemblies and had volunteered at a youth club where she helped facilitate various events.
Kelly	-	F	-	Sports Charity 1	Kelly was the volunteer coordinator for a sports organisation that delivered sports-based activities for children and young people across the city.

Kieran	15	M	V	Youth Charity 5	Kieran volunteered at a youth café where he supervised activities and helped out with drama classes. Kieran had attended the organisation since he was in primary school. He had started volunteering following an employability event at his secondary school where one of the organisation's staff had encouraged him to volunteer to gain work experience.
Lauren	-	F	-	Youth Charity 1	Lauren was the volunteer coordinator for a youth charity that delivered street-play sessions for children and young people in deprived areas of the city.
Lucy	13	F	NV	Sports Charity 3	Lucy had not volunteered. She expressed interest in the volunteering programme at Sports Charity 3 but was too young to take part in it.
Matt	15	M	V	Youth Charity 1	Matt was undertaking a volunteering programme at an organisation that facilitated street-play sessions for children and young people. His mum and dad had volunteered at the organisation and he had attended it for a number of years as a participant prior to volunteering.
Megan	13	F	V	Youth Charity 1	Megan was undertaking a volunteering programme at an organisation that facilitated street-play sessions for children and young people. She had attended the organisation since she was five years old.
Mia	13	F	NV	Sports Charity 3	Mia had not volunteered. She expressed interest in the prospect of volunteering with children and young people and dance-orientated roles.
Molly	15	F	NV	College	Molly was undertaking a hairdressing course at a college offering a range of vocational courses. She had no experience of volunteering and stated she knew little about it.

Nathan	14	M	V	Youth Charity 1	Nathan was undertaking a volunteering programme at an organisation that facilitated street-play sessions for children and young people. His mum, sister and brother had volunteered at the organisation prior to him.
Niamh	14	F	V	Youth Charity 1	Niamh was undertaking a volunteering programme at an organisation that facilitated street-play sessions for children and young people. Her older cousin was involved in the organisation and Niamh had been involved in the organisation since she was five and felt it provided an important alternative to socialising on the streets and a way of tackling anti-social behaviour.
Nicky	-	F	-	Youth Charity 3	Nicky was the project manager of a youth charity. Prior to this she had been the volunteer coordinator for the charity. At the time of the fieldwork, the charity did not have a dedicated volunteer coordinator.
Olivia	17	F	V	School 3	Olivia was a prefect at her school, she also volunteered at her local Girls' Brigade group. Olivia was planning on attending a summer school to help her get into university later that year.
Orla	16	F	V	Scout Group	Orla volunteered at her local Scouts group which she had attended for a number of years, she had also volunteered at a Girls' Brigade group. She wanted to go to college to study child care to help her enter into this type of work.
Owen	15	M	NV	Sports Charity 3	Owen was attending a sports-orientated holiday camp where he played football with other children and young people. He had no experience of volunteering.
Paige	18	F	V	School 3	Paige was a prefect at her school, she also volunteered to help compile her yearbook.

					Paige wanted to go to university to study art and saw volunteering as a useful addition to her application and CV.
Paul	16	M	NV	Sports Charity 3	Paul was attending a sports-orientated holiday camp where he played football with other children and young people. He couldn't recall any experience of volunteering.
Rachel	17	F	V	School 3	Rachel volunteered at a reading group for younger pupils to help develop their literacy skills. She was also volunteering at a hospital as part of a personal development programme. She was hoping to attend university later that year.
Robyn	15	F	NV	College	Robyn was undertaking a hairdressing course at a college offering a range of vocational courses. She saw volunteering as detrimental to her reputation.
Ross	12	M	NV	Sports Charity 3	Ross was attending a sports-orientated holiday camp where he played football with other children and young people. He had no experience of volunteering.
Ryan	16	M	V	Scout Group	Ryan volunteered at his local Scouts group. He wanted to go to university to study computer programming.
Sahib	15	M	NV	Sports Charity 3	Sahib was attending a sports-orientated holiday camp where he played football with other children and young people. He had no experience of volunteering.
Sarah	15	F	NV	College	Sarah was undertaking a hairdressing course at a college offering a range of vocational courses.
Scott	15	M	V	Police Youth Vols.	Scott volunteered with a police youth volunteer organisation. His volunteering included activities such as marshalling at events. He wanted to become a police officer and saw volunteering as a helpful step in this direction.

Sean	15	M	V	Police Youth Vols.	Sean volunteered with a police youth volunteer organisation. His volunteering included activities such as marshalling at events. He had been bullied and had a difficult relationship with school. Volunteering provide a respite from these challenging experiences.
Sophie	17	F	V	School 3	Sophie volunteered at a reading group for younger pupils to help develop their literacy skills. She also volunteered at a primary school as part of a personal development programme. She was hoping to attend university later that year.
Stu	17	M	NV	College	Stu was undertaking a construction course at a college offering a range of vocational courses. He indicated the fieldwork was the first time he had ever discussed or considered volunteering.
Taylor	16	F	NV	College	Taylor was undertaking a hairdressing course at a college offering a range of vocational courses. She stated she had been aware of volunteering opportunities at school but that she had not wanted to get involved due to the anticipation of informal sanctions.
Thomas	17	M	EX	Youth Charity 3	Thomas was undertaking a placement at Youth Charity 3 for his college course. He had previously volunteered with them to facilitate play-based activities for other children and young people.
Tracey	-	-	-	Youth Charity 2	Tracey was the volunteer coordinator for a youth charity that provided play-orientated activities and workshops for children and young people. At the time of the fieldwork, she was uncertain whether her position would be extended into the

					following year due to funding constraints.
Vic	15	M	NV	Sports Charity 3	Vic was attending a sports-orientated holiday camp where he played football with other children and young people. He had no experience of volunteering.
Vikki	18	F	V	Youth Charity 5	Vikki volunteered at a community organisation where she helped deliver play-based activities for children and young people. She had frequented the organisation since she was a child and had been asked to start volunteering by a member of staff.
Will	18	M	NV	College	Will was undertaking a construction course at a college offering a range of vocational courses. He indicated the fieldwork was the first time he had ever discussed or considered volunteering.
Zoe	16	F	NV	College	Zoe was undertaking a hairdressing course at a college offering a range of vocational courses. She saw volunteering as an affront to her reputation.