

Young People Matter:

A report and survey of
youth volunteering by
the Evangelical Alliance



By Susannah Clark
and Justin Thacker

evangelical alliance
uniting to change society



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About the Evangelical Alliance

The Evangelical Alliance was founded in 1846 and is the oldest alliance of evangelical Christians in the world.

The Alliance is the largest body serving evangelical Christians in the UK, and has a membership including denominations, churches, organisations and individuals.

As part of a movement 'uniting to change society' the Alliance promotes unity and truth, acts as an evangelical voice to the state, society and the wider church, and works collaboratively with Alliance members and other evangelicals, to present Christ credibly as good news for spiritual and social transformation.

The Alliance speaks on behalf of its members and represents evangelical concerns to Government, the National Assemblies, the media and key decision-makers. In resourcing its members and encouraging Christians to fully engage in their communities as responsible citizens, the Alliance strives to make evangelical truths publicly accessible.

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Foreword by His Royal Highness, The Prince of Wales

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CLARENCE HOUSE

I am delighted to introduce this report, which highlights the magnificent contribution that young people make through volunteering. Too often, it appears that the only stories that one reads about young people are negative ones, but this report demonstrates the good work in which so many young people are engaged. I am deeply impressed by their efforts and these deserve to be recognized more widely.

It is remarkable what can be achieved when young people acquire self-confidence. I believe that people need inspiration to contribute to their communities, which is why my Prince's Trust has been working for thirty-three years to help provide over 600,000 young people with self-esteem and motivation. It is important that young people understand the obligations on us all to foster our communities and to contribute to our common national life.

What is striking, as the report highlights, is the way in which personal faith and religious organizations encourage young people to volunteer. While differences between us should be celebrated, faith groups are frequently united in their diversity through common values such as self-sacrifice, giving and assisting others. These values can and should be recognized as vitally important in encouraging young people to contribute to society.

I sincerely hope that young people themselves will be inspired by the findings of this report and that they will recognize the wonderful contribution they are making and can make in the future. I hope too that schools, the Government and faith groups - including the Christian churches - can work together to continue to enthuse our country's young people about the difference that they can make and what they can achieve.

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to be 'Charles', followed by a long, sweeping horizontal flourish.

Executive Summary

- From September–December 2008, the Evangelical Alliance surveyed over 700 young people aged 14-18, investigating their involvement with volunteering.
- Overall, 45% of young people aged 14-18 regularly volunteer. The percentage volunteering rose slightly through the school years, as did the length of time that the young people were likely to spend volunteering, showing an encouraging trend of increasing engagement with voluntary work amongst young people.
- Young people who volunteer spend an average of 3.57 hours a month volunteering. When projected across England, we can estimate that young people provide just over 5 million hours of voluntary time every month to their communities. This is the equivalent of 33,000 full-time workers and at minimum wage has an estimated economic value of £210 million per annum.
- The more active one is as a Christian, the more likely one is to volunteer. Of those who attend Christian meetings almost every week, the rate of volunteering was 69% compared to 29% of those who described themselves as Christians but who attend Christian meetings less than once a month. The rate of volunteering for atheists was 30% .
- Almost 40% of all voluntary work carried out by young people takes place through churches or other religious organisations. 10% of volunteering by non-religious young people takes place through churches or religious organisations.
- For those young people who are religious, especially Christians, faith and belief is a more significant factor to them volunteering than religious organisations encouraging it. 48% of very active Christians cited their faith as motivating them to volunteer, while only 21% said it was because their Church encouraged it.
- The most common reasons for being motivated to volunteer were enjoying helping people (52%) and wanting to contribute to society (43%).
- By far the most significant hindering factors to volunteering were lack of time and too much school work. Overall, 52% said too much school work hindered them from volunteering and 54% said lack of time hindered them.
- The most popular factors young people said would encourage them to volunteer were a recognised qualification (41%) and being able to volunteer with friends (43%).
- 80% of young people donate some money to charity, 53% choose fair trade products when possible and 85% take steps to reduce their carbon foot print.
- If extrapolated to the whole of England, young people donate approximately £110 million to charity every year. Combined with the economic value of their volunteering, English 14-18 year olds contribute £300 million each year to the economy.

- Young people who are actively religious showed slightly greater awareness of fair-trade than those who are not. 68% of very active Christians bought fair trade products compared with 58% of less active Christians, 45% of Agnostics and 50% of atheists.

Chapter One

Introduction and Background to the Project

The contribution of young people to civil society through volunteering is extensive, but often insufficiently recognised. While volunteering provides a valuable service to the community, it also directly benefits the young people involved through the acquisition of new skills and consequent growth in confidence. For these reasons, over the last few years, the UK government has invested heavily in promoting youth volunteering.

In 2005, the *The Russell Commission* was launched, investing £50 million in encouraging young people to volunteer. In 2008, England's biggest ever youth action scheme, *v inspired*, was set up to continue the work of *The Russell Commission*, funding 158 projects and 107 teams to support young volunteers.¹ In May 2008, the government confirmed that they would be spending a further £117 million on youth volunteering through *v inspired*. Its mission is to inspire 1 million more young people to volunteer.²

A number of recent reports have also highlighted the significant impact of religion on society. The *2005 Citizenship Survey*³ showed that people who practice a religion give more time to volunteering, and also give more money to charity. *Gweini: Faith in Wales*⁴, *The Glasgow Churches Social Action Report*⁵ and *Faith in England's Northwest: Economic Impact Assessment*⁶ have all drawn attention to the enormous contribution that faith organisations make through community action.

However, there appears to have been little research regarding the role of religion and faith as a motivator and facilitator for youth volunteering specifically. This report, based on a survey of more than 700 young people aged 14-18 from across England, addresses these issues. In particular, we explore the way in which religious practice and faith make a difference to levels of participation in youth volunteering. It also investigates the level of concern that young people demonstrate towards the environment and ethical trading.

In 2008, a Barnardos survey⁷ revealed that 49% of adults think children pose an increasing danger to society and that 54% say young people are beginning to "behave like animals." The research also found that adults think that young people commit up to half of all crimes, when in fact it is only 12%. These perceptions clearly need to be challenged and we hope that by highlighting the large amount of good that young people do, this report will help to redress many of the negative stereotypes that are prevalent today.

¹House of Commons Hansard, 7th May 2008, column 689, <http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200708/cmhansrd/cm080507/debtext/80507-0001.htm>,

² House of Commons Hansard, 7th May 2008, column 689, <http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200708/cmhansrd/cm080507/debtext/80507-0002.htm>

³ http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/third_sector/Research_and_statistics/Key_statistics.aspx

⁴ http://www.gweini.org.uk/en/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=96&Itemid=65

⁵ <http://www.glasgowchurchesaction.org.uk/local/pages/sites/ca/files/report.pdf>

⁶ <http://www.chorley.gov.uk/CHttpHandler.ashx?id=1500&tp=0>

⁷ http://www.barnardos.org.uk/news_and_events/media_centre/press_releases.htm?ref=42088

Chapter Two

Methodology, Approach to the Analysis and Basic Demographics

2.1 Methodology

The aim at the start of the project was to survey 500-1,000 young people of ages 14-18 years. We contacted a wide variety of head teachers, teachers and schools workers to establish whether their school might be interested in taking part in this research. 1,350 surveys were posted to interested schools, of which 728 were returned and analysed (58%), representing 22 schools from across England. Each school chose one or more classes to administer the survey, and then the whole of that class completed the survey.

We ensured that the surveys were completed in a range of schools with appropriate age, school year, geographical, social and economic distribution. All the surveys were completed in classes, rather than specialist school clubs. In particular, we rejected any surveys that had been administered to Christian clubs or groups only. The schools involved were not exclusively faith schools, but represented a typical mix of faith and non-faith schools as is found across England.

The survey was undertaken between September – December 2008 and a copy of the questionnaire can be found as an appendix at the end of this report.

Clearly, this survey is relatively limited in scope and the methodology outlined above is not ideal. There is, for instance, the possibility that those schools that chose to take part in the survey were those that knew their young people were committed to volunteering. However, our intention was not so much to produce a definitive work on volunteering among young people, but rather to conduct an initial evaluation that may in due course be followed by more robust and substantive work.

2.2 Basic demographics

Age

The research surveyed a range of young people aged 14-18 as detailed in the table below. Due to the fact that the research was completed during the Autumn term of 2008, rather than later on in the academic year, fewer young people aged 18 were surveyed, but as is detailed in the school year table subsequently, a reasonable proportion of year 13 pupils were surveyed, which represents the 17-18 age bracket.

Table 1: Age of those involved

14 years	37%
15 years	26%
16 years	16%
17 years	19%
18 years	2%

School Year

Again, due to the fact that the research was carried out in the autumn term of 2008, few year 9 pupils are represented in the results, as at this stage in the school year most year 9 pupils were still 13 years old. Overall, GCSE years (school years 10 and 11) represent 60% of the results, while 6th form years (school years 12 and 13) are represented by 35% of the results.

Table 2: School year of those involved

School year 9	5%
School year 10	39%
School year 11	21%
School year 12	17%
School year 13	18%

Area

The research aimed to survey pupils from across England, and the table below shows the proportion of young people surveyed from different areas in the country.

Table 3: Geographical distribution of those involved

London	10%
South West	20%
South East	17%
Midlands	29%
North	24%

Free School Meals

In 2004, the percentage of children eligible for free school meals in primary and secondary schools was 26%. Of those schools for which we had data, the average percentage eligible for free school meals was 18% (range 0.8% to 62%), broadly in line with the national picture.

Chapter Three

Introductory Information about Young People's Volunteering

3.1 How many young people carry out voluntary work?

The table below shows the percentage of young people that participate in some form of volunteering, by school year.

Table 4: Do you participate in any kind of voluntary work at least once a month?

	Yes	No
Overall	45 %	55 %
Year 9	36%	64%
Year 10	40%	60%
Year 11	47%	53%
Year 12	59%	41%
Year 13	44%	56%

It is encouraging that almost half of young people are engaged in voluntary work. Moreover, with the exception of year 13, it would seem that the proportion participating in volunteering increases year on year. The most likely explanation for the decrease in year 13 is the increased school workload due to the A level exams in that year.

According to the *2005 Citizenship Survey*,⁸ half of adults volunteer formally or informally at least once a month, indicating that young people's volunteering is comparable with volunteering carried out by adults. The *2005 Citizenship Survey* defined formal volunteering to include activities such as taking part in a sponsored event, helping to organize a charity event, giving unpaid help as part of groups, clubs or organisations to benefit others or the environment. Informal volunteering includes activities like giving advice and transporting someone. Both of these types of activity were included in our survey.

A 2001 survey carried out on young people aged 16-34, *Young People Speak Out on Volunteering*⁹ in preparation for the launch of *The Russell Commission* discovered that 40% of those surveyed had been involved in formal volunteering, and 73% in informal volunteering. The most common type of activity was helping to organise and run an event, followed by raising money, then offering practical help and giving advice/information. Whilst the results presented in this report have not been separated into formal and informal volunteering, it is encouraging that our results show that more than 40% of young people participate in regular voluntary work.

⁸ http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/third_sector/Research_and_statistics/Key_statistics.aspx

⁹ <http://www.ivr.org.uk/researchbulletins/bulletins/generation-v-young-people-speak-out-on-volunteering-.htm>

As a further comparison, *Helping Out: A national survey of volunteering and charitable giving* (2007)¹⁰ found that 57% of 16–24 year olds had formally volunteered in some way over the previous year. However, this volunteering was not necessarily carried out on a regular basis, and again this survey included young people older than the ones surveyed in our research.

Finally, a 2008 Ofsted report, *TellUs3 National Report*, asked year 8 and 10 pupils whether or not in the last year they had given time to help a charity, a local voluntary group, a neighbour or someone else in the local area. 61% said yes, 27% said no and 11% said don't know.¹¹ Given that their specification was rather broad and that the question only referred to the last year rather than volunteering on a regular basis, this again suggests that our results are comparable with previous surveys.

3.2 What kinds of volunteering do young people do?

The table below details the percentage of young people involved in different kinds of voluntary work.

Table 5: If you volunteer regularly, please indicate what sort of volunteering you do.

Type of Voluntary Work	Overall
Children's work	15%
Youth Work	13%
Helping the Elderly	7%
Fundraising	11%
Community Project	5%
Sponsored events	9%
Befriending / mentoring	7%
Giving information / advice	4%
Campaigning	3%
Other	8%

The table shows that participation in children's work and youth work were the most popular forms of volunteering, with campaigning and giving information or advice being the least popular.

The 2001 survey *Young People Speak Out on Volunteering*¹² discovered that the most common type of activity young people participated in was helping to organise and run an event, followed by raising money, then offering practical help and giving advice/information. Our results are slightly differently to this, with a much higher

¹⁰ http://www.ivr.org.uk/NR/rdonlyres/35546F68-CD79-4E0C-AD9A-3E08AFD5B9D6/0/young_people.pdf

¹¹ Ofsted Report September 2008, TellUs3 National Report, www.ofsted.gov.uk/content/download/7828/79182/file/Tellus3%20National%20Report.pdf

¹² <http://www.ivr.org.uk/researchbulletins/bulletins/generation-v-young-people-speak-out-on-volunteering-.htm>

percentage volunteering for children or youth work. This difference is probably due to the younger age group in our survey, 14-18 years, compared to *Young People Speak Out*, 16-24 years.

It is perhaps surprising that more young people were not involved in campaigning, given the number of organisations and charities attempting to engage people on issues such as world poverty, human trafficking and environmental concerns. Hence there could be scope for charities and organisations to look at ways of getting more young people involved in these sorts of activities.

3.3 How frequently do young people volunteer?

The table below gives details of the amount of voluntary work that is undertaken by those who said they participate in voluntary work at least once per month.

Table 6: In an average month, how many hours do you spend volunteering?

	Average per month
Overall	3.57 hours
School year 10	3.35 hours
School year 11	3.24 hours
School year 12	3.74 hours
School year 13	4.43 hours

Overall, the average time spent volunteering was 3.57 hours per month. This is broadly comparable to the 1997 National Survey of Volunteering which revealed that between 1991 and 1997 the amount of time young people (aged 18-24) spent volunteering had declined, from an average of 2.7 hours a week to 0.7 hours a week¹³.

We also found, though, that the amount of time spent volunteering increased with age from an average of 3.35 hours per month for year 10 pupils to 4.43 hours per month for year 13 pupils. It would seem then that even though slightly fewer young people in year 13 volunteer compared to year 12, those that do are especially committed and if anything increase the number of hours they spend volunteering.

3.4 What is the economic value of young people's volunteering?

Of the young people we surveyed, the average amount of time spent volunteering each month was 3.57 hours for those that do volunteer. Given that just under half of all young people volunteer, and that there are approximately 3 million young people aged 14-18 in England, this means that we can project that English young people provide just over 5 million hours of voluntary time every month to their communities. This is the equivalent of 33,000 full-time workers and at minimum wage has an estimated economic value of £210 million per annum.

¹³ <http://www.ivr.org.uk/researchbulletins/bulletins/1997-national-survey-of-volunteering-in-the-uk.htm>

Previous research has also drawn attention to the economic value of the hours that adults spend volunteering. For example, the *Faith in England's Northwest*¹⁴ Report published in 2005, which surveyed 45,667 volunteers from faith based communities in England's northwest, estimated that these volunteers generate between £60.6 and £64.4 million per annum through 8.1 million volunteer hours, the equivalent of 4,815 full time jobs. Looking at the situation for the whole of the UK, *Volunteering Merseyside*¹⁵ estimated that 23 million people volunteer each year in the UK, the equivalent of 180,000 full time workers. They estimated that the economic value of this is £40 billion per year, 7.9% of the GDP. Finally, the *Gweini Report*,¹⁶ published in 2008, gave an overall conservative estimate of around £102m for the economic contribution of faith communities to society in Wales.

3.5 Conclusion

Given the negative perceptions that often surround young people in the media, it is encouraging to be able to report that almost half of young people, aged 14–18 years, participate regularly in volunteering, and that with the understandable exception of year 13 pupils, the extent of volunteering increases with age. However, for those in year 13 who do continue to volunteer, the amount of time spent volunteering actually increases. All of this activity contributes over £200 million to the English economy, and we have no reason to think that the situation in the rest of the United Kingdom would be any different.

The significance of these results should not be underestimated and they deserve to be widely recognised by schools, government and the media. Furthermore, young people themselves need to be made aware that this is the impact that their volunteering is having. Often, young people may not feel that their contribution is particularly significant, but when placed in the context of the volunteering that is taking place across the country, the impact is immense. Young people should be told about this as we believe that when they are they will be inspired and encouraged to participate even more in volunteering, or begin to volunteer if they are not already. In this sense, we hope that these statistics could serve as a form of positive peer pressure to encourage more young people to volunteer. Finally, we believe that these results add weight to the argument that there is a positive message about young people to be told. If this positive story could begin to characterise our media rather than the relentlessly negative stories that predominate this may also have the effect of encouraging further volunteering among young people.

¹⁴ http://www.faithnorthwest.org.uk/assets/files/documents/dec_07/faith_1196946056_economicimpa ctassessment2005.pdf

¹⁵ http://www.volunteeringmerseyside.org.uk/hub/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=169&Itemid=59

¹⁶ http://www.gweini.org.uk/en/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=96&Itemid=65

Chapter 4

Impact of Religion

This research wanted to examine the affect that religion, faith and belief has on young people's volunteering and attitudes to volunteering. To date, although research has examined the role of religion in adults volunteering practices, there has been very little research examining the impact of faith and religion on young people's volunteering.

4.1 Religious faith among young people

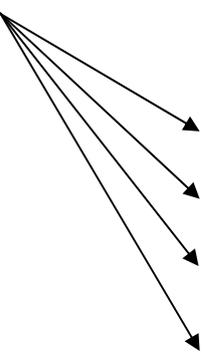
The table below details the religious beliefs of the young people that we surveyed.

Table 7: Would you consider yourself Christian, Muslim, Jew etc?

Christian	52%
Muslim	5%
Jew	7.5%
Sikh	0.5%
Hindu	2%
Buddhist	0.7%
Agnostic	12.5%
Atheist	15%
Other	4.5%

If you consider yourself a Christian, how frequently do you go to church or a Christian youth group?

18%	Attend every week or almost every week
3%	Twice a month
4%	Once a month
25%	Less than once a month



According to the 2001 Census,¹⁷ 71% of the UK population identified themselves as Christian, 2.8% Muslim, 1% Hindu, 0.6% Sikh, 0.5% Jewish. 15% of the population listed themselves as having no religion. Our results indicate that less young people define themselves as Christian than adults did at the time of the 2001 census, with a higher percentage identifying as atheist, agnostic or other. Our survey also has a slightly higher percentage of young people identifying as Jewish or Muslim than was evident in the 2001 Census. Broadly speaking, however, our results are in line with other surveys to date.

Of those who took part in this research, 25% self identified as Christians and indicated that they attended church at least once a month with 18% going almost every week. *Church Going in the UK*,¹⁸ published by *Tearfund* in 2007, identified that 9.1% of the UK population said they go to church every week, and 15.1% said they go to church at least once a month. Our figures are slightly higher than this, but this may be because we included attendance at a Christian youth group as well as Church attendance and

¹⁷ <http://www.statistics.gov.uk/cci/nugget.asp?id=954>

¹⁸ http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/shared/bsp/hi/pdfs/03_04_07_tearfundchurch.pdf

many young people who may not attend church regularly may still go to a Christian youth group.

A research report conducted for the Church of Scotland, *Young People's attitude to the Church and Religion*, which surveyed 2,221 young people aged 11-18, reported that 10% had been to church in the last week, 33% had attended a service in the last year and 28% said they had never attended a church service.¹⁹ Our results indicate a higher percentage attending church every week, but also a much higher percentage who said they never went to church.

From these results we are able to delineate three groups of Christians that are relevant to this research. We define *very active Christians* as those who self-identify as Christian and attend church or Christian youth groups every week or nearly every week. We define *active Christians* as those who self-identify as Christian and attend once or twice a month. Those who self-identify as Christians and attend less than once a month we refer to simply as *Christians*. This distinction proves valuable in later sections of this report.

4.2 Does religion play a role in encouraging young people to volunteer?

Our research hoped to identify whether or not religious involvement and belief plays a role in encouraging young people to volunteer, and whether religious organisations are significant in providing volunteering opportunities for young people. Whilst the *2005 Citizenship Survey*²⁰ showed that participation in volunteering was higher amongst those practicing a religion, there has been little research to date to demonstrate whether the same is also true among young people.

Table 8, below, shows the percentage of those that carry out voluntary work by religious affiliation.

Table 8: Do you participate in any kind of voluntary work at least once a month?

	Yes	No
Overall	45 %	55%
Christian	47%	53%
Other religions	52%	48%
Agnostic	52%	48%
Atheist	30%	70%

	Yes	No
All Christian	47%	53%
Christian	29%	71%
Active Christian	58%	42%
Very Active Christian	69%	31%

Young People's attitudes to the Church and religion,

²⁰ http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/third_sector/Research_and_statistics/Key_statistics.aspx

As already noted, we found that just under half of all young people participate in some kind of regular volunteering. Among Christians, those of other religions, and agnostics, the percentage was higher than the overall picture. Among atheists it was significantly lower.

The *Helping Out* survey reported that 41% of Christians and 30% of 'no religion' took part in regular formal volunteering.²¹ These figures are very similar to our own suggesting that the higher incidence of volunteering among Christians adults is replicated among Christian young people.

Among very active Christians, those who attend Christian meetings almost every week, the rate of volunteering was 69%. This contrasts with just 29% of those who call themselves Christians but who attend Christian meetings less than once a month. This figure of 29% for less active Christians was comparable with the rate of volunteering amongst atheists at 30%. Our survey indicates that the more active one is as a Christian the more likely one is to volunteer.

This result was also paralleled by the *Helping Out* survey which revealed that among adults, those who were active in their religion were much more likely to volunteer than those who were not, 52% versus 34%.²²

4.3 The role of religious organisations in facilitating volunteering

There are at least two possible reasons why those who are actively religious participate more in volunteering. The first is that those who are religiously active have a very strong internal faith that motivates them both to volunteer and to attend religious services frequently – an internal faith driver. Alternatively, it may be the case that attendance at religious services provides the opportunity for those with a religious faith to link up with volunteering opportunities more easily – an external religious facilitator.

In relation to the latter possibility, several recent reports, for example the *Gweini*²³ report, have highlighted the opportunities that religious organisations provide both in giving services to their community and also in offering volunteering opportunities for people. To date there is very little research which has examined whether religious organisations play a significant role in providing volunteering opportunities for young people as well as adults.

²¹http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/media/cabinetoffice/third_sector/assets/helping_out_national_survey_2007.pdf

²²http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/media/cabinetoffice/third_sector/assets/helping_out_national_survey_2007.pdf

²³ http://www.gweini.org.uk/en/?option=com_content&view=article&id=52&Itemid=65

Table 9 below demonstrates the extent to which volunteering took place through religious organisations.

Table 9: Does your volunteering take place through a Church or other religious organisation?

	Yes	No
Overall	39%	61%
Christian	50%	50%
Other religions	57%	43%
Atheist	9%	91%
Agnostic	13%	87%

This table indicates that for those who do carry out voluntary work, religious organisations play a key role in providing volunteering opportunities. Overall, almost 40% of all voluntary work amongst young people takes place through churches or religious organisations. Among Christians, this figure rises to 50%, and, perhaps surprisingly, around 10% of volunteering by atheists still takes place through religious organisations.

The *Helping Out* Survey found that of those surveyed, 25% volunteered through religious organisations.²⁴ Given that this survey included adults, it is possible that the higher figure of 40% for young people indicates the way in which religious organisations are particularly adept at providing young people with opportunities to volunteer, perhaps through the youth groups and clubs that they run.

²⁴ http://www.ivr.org.uk/NR/rdonlyres/35546F68-CD79-4E0C-AD9A-3E08AFD5B9D6/0/young_people.pdf

4.4 What motivates young people to volunteer?

In order to tease out the relative significance of faith as an internal driver and participation in religious organisations as an external religious facilitator, we asked the young people what motivated them to volunteer.

Table 10, below, shows the results according to religious affiliation.

Table 10: What motivates you to volunteer? Tick as many that apply.

	Contribute to society	Work experience	Looks good on CV	Award scheme	Faith and religious belief	Church or religious group encourages it	Like Helping people	Spare time	Friends	Other
Overall	43%	37%	49%	18%	20%	12%	52%	21%	19%	6%
Christian	42%	31%	37%	16%	28%	15%	54%	23%	19%	5%
Active Christian	41%	33%	35%	15%	41%	22%	59%	24%	22%	5%
Very active Christian	41%	30%	30%	9%	48%	21%	59%	23%	19%	3%
Muslim	9%	36%	36%	9%	54%	36%	54%	36%	27%	0%
Jew	47%	47%	82%	13%	21%	21%	47%	16%	32%	0%
Agnostic	55%	51%	64%	22%	0%	0%	55%	7%	13%	7%
Atheist	35%	39%	58%	26%	6%	0%	26%	26%	6%	16%

Encouragingly, the most common reason young people gave for wanting to volunteer was because they wanted to help people (52%) with a significant number (43%) saying that they wanted to contribute something to society. This result is very similar to that found by the *Helping Out*²⁵ Survey which reported that 56% said they started volunteering because they wanted to improve things and help people. The next most common reasons for wanting to volunteer were because it looks good on the young person's CV (49%) and because it is useful work experience (37%), which is very understandable and a very valid reason for schools to be encouraging young people to volunteer. A recent report from the *Queens Award for Voluntary Service* recorded that 42% of 18-24 year olds and more than a half of students use voluntary work as an opportunity to develop skills,²⁶ a similar result to our findings. A relatively low number said that they were motivated to volunteer by an award scheme, 18%, while 19% were motivated to volunteer because their friends were also volunteering.

²⁵ http://www.ivr.org.uk/NR/rdonlyres/35546F68-CD79-4E0C-AD9A-3E08AFD5B9D6/0/young_people.pdf

²⁶ <http://www.queensawardvoluntary.gov.uk/pr12.html>

One other significant finding was that the importance of religious faith as a motivation seemed to grow the more active the young person was as a Christian. While only 28% of Christians who rarely went to church cited faith as a motivator, just under half of very active Christians cited their religious faith as a motivation.

In contrast, even among very active Christians, only 21% cited their church encouraging it as a motivation for their volunteering. A similar pattern was found among Muslims, in that faith as a motivator was much more significant than the encouragement of their mosque (54% v 36%). This difference did not extend, though, to Jews. For both Christians and Muslims, then, faith and personal belief appeared as a much more relevant motivating factor than encouragement to volunteer from their respective religious organisations. This strongly suggests that it is not simply involvement in these institutions themselves that prompts volunteering, but rather the young person's internal beliefs.

Chris Baker and Hannah Skinner in their report, *Faith in Action: The dynamic connection between spiritual and religious capital*,²⁷ draw a distinction between spiritual capital and religious capital. Spiritual capital refers to the motivating basis of faith, belief and values that shapes the actions of faith communities, the 'why' factor. Religious capital refers to the concrete actions and resources that faith communities contribute as a direct result of their spiritual capital, the 'what' factor. This distinction is important as it reflects what we earlier described as an 'internal faith driver' and an 'external religious facilitator'.

Our results seem to suggest that the most significant reason why young people of faith participate to such a great extent in volunteering is more to do with such internal faith factors, what Baker and Skinner call 'spiritual capital', than with external religious factors, the so-called 'religious capital'. If this is correct, and clearly further research is required to confirm this finding, then in encouraging volunteering among young people, civil society, including government and schools, need to pay much greater attention to such values and beliefs. More significantly, it cannot ask such young people to leave their faith at the door as they seek to volunteer, for to do so is to remove that which is motivating them in the first place. In previous research, this distinction has rarely, if ever, been noted, yet the difference between the proportion of young people citing personal belief rather than church or religious organisation as that which motivates their volunteering is significant.

The *Helping Out*²⁸ Survey reported that 21% of all young people said they got involved in volunteering because of their religious belief, which is very similar to our overall result of 20%, while for 10% it was because of their "philosophy of life." However, that survey did not draw out the distinction between the internal factors of personal belief versus the external factor of the religious organization. Furthermore, the *Helping Out* survey did not look at the significance of active involvement in religion. Our research suggests that the more actively involved the young person is, the more likely they are to cite beliefs and faith as a motivator to volunteering.

²⁷ <http://www.wtf.org.uk/documents/faith-in-action.pdf>

²⁸ http://www.ivr.org.uk/NR/rdonlyres/35546F68-CD79-4E0C-AD9A-3E08AFD5B9D6/0/young_people.pdf

It is perhaps concerning that so few young people cite an award scheme as a motivating factor for volunteering, with only 18% giving this as a reason. This may be because there are not enough sufficiently recognised award schemes for young people to work towards when volunteering. Although the *Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme* is widely noted by employers and universities, many schools simply do not have the staff, time or facilities to offer this scheme to young people, limiting how accessible it is as a way of gaining recognition for voluntary work. Furthermore, the *Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme* is not just restricted to volunteering, meaning that if pupils want recognition for their volunteering through this, they also have to carry out numerous other activities in order to qualify.

This is a problem the government has noted. The House of Commons Hansard on 7th May, 2008 acknowledged the importance of qualifications to accredit and recognise young people's volunteering stating, "We wish to find a way of building in the ability to accredit young people's contribution to the community and recognise that through volunteering and the certificate employers and universities can see the contribution that they have made to the community in which they live." They go on to state, "V (the government's youth volunteering charity) is developing a system to bring on board the best experiences from the *Duke of Edinburgh Award* and other schemes that give out certificates that recognise the contribution made by young people."²⁹ We are hopeful that such a system will indeed be developed for if such formal recognition were better established, it is likely that more young people would be motivated to volunteer as a result. At the same time, it would provide helpful recognition for employers and universities about a young person's participation in volunteering.

In 1998, The *Institute for Volunteering Research* carried out some research looking at what young people want from volunteering³⁰. This was in response to the sharp decline in levels of participation in volunteering from young people reported in the 1997 *National Survey of Volunteering*³¹. Whilst this research is 10 years old, it appears that many of the factors identified are still relevant today. The results of the research were summarised with the acronym "Flexivol," standing for Flexibility, Legitimacy, Ease of access, Xperience, Incentives, Variety, Organisation, Laughs. Of particular significance here are legitimacy and incentives, both of which would be met if more formal and well recognised awards, qualifications or certificates were offered for volunteering.

4.5 Conclusion

It is clear that religion and belief does have an impact on young people's volunteering. Particularly notable is the fact that the more frequently a young person attends church, the more likely they are to volunteer. Our data on motivating factors, however, indicates that it is not so much that active religious participation facilitates volunteering, but rather that those who have a strong faith are driven both to attend religious services frequently and to volunteer more actively.

²⁹ House of Commons Hansard, 7th May 2008, column 693

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200708/cmhansrd/cm080507/debtext/80507-0002.htm>

³⁰ <http://www.ivr.org.uk/researchbulletins/bulletins/what-young-people-want-from-volunteering-htm>

³¹ <http://www.ivr.org.uk/researchbulletins/bulletins/1997-national-survey-of-volunteering-in-the-uk.htm>

Having said this, the significance of churches and religious organisations in providing volunteering opportunities for young people should not be underestimated. Nearly 40% of those who volunteer do so through a church or religious organisation. There is a great opportunity here for schools, churches and other religious organisations to work together in even closer partnership. For example, churches could let their local school know what opportunities they have available and what projects they need help with, and the school could in turn put their pupils in touch with these opportunities. It is likely that there are places where schools and churches are already working in close partnership, but it would be beneficial if such examples of effective practice could be implemented more widely. Furthermore, given that our research showed that even some atheists and agnostics volunteer through religious organisations, young people need to be made aware that they do not have to be religious themselves in order to make use of the opportunities provided.

Chapter Five

Hindrances and Encouragements to Volunteering

One of the aims of this research was to try and establish what hinders young people from volunteering, and to identify what would encourage them to participate further in volunteering. Some research has been carried out in this area previously, but our results consider whether the same factors are still an issue for young people, or whether progress has been made in addressing them, and if not, what further steps could be taken.

5.1 What hinders young people from volunteering?

Table 11, below, considers the factors that hinder young people from participation in volunteering. The first two rows of the table are overall for those that do not volunteer, and for those who do. We then consider hindrances by school year.

Table 11: Is there anything that you think hinders you from carrying out more voluntary work? Tick as many that apply.

	Lack of time	Transport problems	Too much bureaucracy	Not enough training	Not interesting	Parents aren't keen	Too much school work	Other
Overall no*	45%	12%	3%	5%	24%	5%	40%	4%
Overall yes*	66%	18%	4%	9%	19%	2%	69%	4%
Overall	54%	15%	4%	7%	21%	4%	52%	4%
School Yr 9**	25%	8%	3%	3%	3%	0%	25%	3%
10	43%	12%	3%	6%	23%	4%	44%	5%
11	57%	16%	3%	11%	27%	5%	57%	3%
12	68%	18%	6%	5%	21%	3%	61%	9%
13	68%	19%	5%	5%	17%	4%	66%	1%

* ie. no to regular volunteering, yes to regular volunteering

** school year is for all, those who volunteer and those who don't.

The above table indicates that overall the most common reason for not volunteering was lack of time, closely followed by too much school work. Lack of time became an increasing problem in school years 12-13 (A Level years), which is perhaps not surprising as work pressures increase. Not surprisingly, too much school work also correlated with lack of time to an increasing extent in the higher school years. One possible solution to this problem might be to make volunteering part of the school time table or curriculum. This could for example, take place through citizenship lessons. The curriculum for citizenship states that pupils at key stage 3 should be able to understand, "The needs of the local community and how these are met through

public services and the voluntary sector."³² At both key stages 3 and 4, the curriculum states that pupils should be offered the opportunity to "participate in both school-based and community based citizenship activities."³³ Clearly volunteering as part of the curriculum would meet these criteria.

Another common reason, cited by 1 in 5 young people, was that there were not enough interesting volunteering projects to get involved in. This could well be because the young people simply do not have enough information about the range of volunteering opportunities that exist.

We were encouraged to discover that only 4% said that their parents or guardians were not keen for them to volunteer, and similarly only 4% said that bureaucracy hindered them from volunteering. Interestingly, the House of Commons Hansard on 7th May 2008 recorded concerns about too much bureaucracy hindering young people from volunteering. In particular, it was suggested that confusion about regulations meant that some young people were receiving criminal records bureau checks unnecessarily. In response, the government stated that clearer guidance would be produced to ensure that this was not a factor discouraging youth participation in volunteering³⁴. Our survey would suggest that such bureaucracy was one of the less significant reasons impacting youth volunteering and we would encourage the government to ensure that it does not become a greater issue in the future in light of any new regulations.

Overall, our results on this issue reflect similar surveys to date suggesting that little progress has been made in overcoming these obstacles to youth volunteering. *Children and Young People Now*³⁵ reported in a survey of 143 young people aged 12-21 that 75% said lack of time prevented them from volunteering. The *Helping Out*³⁶ survey reported 93% as citing lack of spare time as a reason for not volunteering. *Young people speak out on volunteering*³⁷ reported that barriers to volunteering included not being aware of the benefits, lack of time, negative peer pressure, lack of confidence and difficulty finding out information about volunteering. Again, in this research, time was one of the biggest barriers to volunteering.

5.2 What would encourage young people to volunteer more?

Table 12, below, details the factors that young people reported would encourage them to carry out more voluntary work.

³² <http://curriculum.qca.org.uk/key-stages-3-and-4/subjects/citizenship/keystage3/index.aspx?return=/key-stages-3-and-4/subjects/citizenship/index.aspx>

³³ <http://curriculum.qca.org.uk/key-stages-3-and-4/subjects/citizenship/keystage3/index.aspx?return=/key-stages-3-and-4/subjects/citizenship/index.aspx>

³⁴ House of Commons Hansard, 7th May 2008, column 693
<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200708/cmhansrd/cm080507/debtext/80507-0002.htm>

³⁵ <http://www.cypnow.co.uk/News/EmailIt/831755/Young-people-busy-volunteer/5766C835104D16B2C60C6DA1B9248F76/>

³⁶ http://www.ivr.org.uk/NR/rdonlyres/35546F68-CD79-4E0C-AD9A-3E08AFD5B9D6/0/young_people.pdf

³⁷ <http://www.ivr.org.uk/researchbulletins/bulletins/generation-v-young-people-speak-out-on-volunteering-.htm>

Table 12: Would any of the following encourage you to participate in more voluntary work? Tick as many that apply

Transport provided	Recognised qualification	Training provided	More information about volunteering	Flexible times to volunteer	Expenses covered	Volunteering with friends	Other
24%	41%	25%	18%	27%	26%	43%	1%

Overall, the two factors that young people said were most likely to encourage them further were carrying out voluntary work with friends and a recognised qualification from their volunteering. Both of these factors came significantly ahead of any others. The desire for a recognised qualification coheres with the point made in the previous chapter that few people said they were motivated to volunteer because of an already existing award scheme. This also reflects the findings of the 1998 *National Survey of Volunteering*³⁸ which reported that, when volunteering, young people want: Flexivol: Flexibility, Legitimacy, Ease of access, Xperience, Incentives, Variety, Organisation, Laughs. Incentives and legitimacy could both be addressed by a more widely recognised award system for volunteering. The concern that young people showed in this 1998 research for 'laughs' could well reflect our results that indicate that 43% are encouraged to volunteer when they can volunteer with their friends. This demonstrates the understandable importance for young people of being able to have fun whilst volunteering.

This last point is one that could be addressed by providing voluntary opportunities not just to individuals, but to groups. In this way, positive peer pressure and the desire for fun might encourage even more volunteering among young people. No doubt this is already happening in some areas, but it might be helpful if more formal channels were made available whereby a small group of friends could let their school (or religious organisation) know they would like to volunteer together, and the school, mosque or church could in turn help them to find suitable placements. *Young People Speak out on Volunteering*³⁹ reported negative peer pressure as a factor hindering young people from volunteering, and this would be counteracted by such group volunteering.

1 in 4 young people said that they would be encouraged to volunteer if expenses were covered, transport was easier, times to volunteer could be more flexible and some sort of training could be provided. We acknowledge that the ability to make improvements in all of these areas will depend on the individual situations of the organisations looking for volunteers, and indeed the needs of the volunteer. For example, we appreciate that organisations may not have a sufficient budget to cover all volunteers' expenses, and that they may not have the staff, resources or finances to offer any training. However, we suggest that where possible organisations are encouraged to try and make volunteering for young people as easy as possible, recognising where there may be hindrances and trying to overcome them where possible. It might be helpful if before the young person starts volunteering, or indeed when they are considering it, if they can be honest with the organisation about what their needs or hindrances might

³⁸ <http://www.ivr.org.uk/researchbulletins/bulletins/what-young-people-want-from-volunteering-.htm>

³⁹ <http://www.ivr.org.uk/researchbulletins/bulletins/generation-v-young-people-speak-out-on-volunteering-.htm>

be. Often we suspect those overseeing volunteers are not actually aware of the problems their volunteers may be experiencing. Again, greater communication and links between schools and volunteering placements might help to overcome some of these problems.

5.3 Conclusions

It is very encouraging that 52% of those surveyed said that they volunteer because they want to help people and that 43% said they wanted to contribute something to society. This suggests that many young people have a significant sense of social responsibility, and given that the media often portrays young people negatively, these results confirm the positive story that can be told about young people in society.

Lack of time has repeatedly been reported as a hindrance to volunteering and it appears that this has not changed as the primary reason why young people do not volunteer, or do not volunteer more. Not surprisingly, this is linked with too much school work, which is an increasing concern in the higher school years. As a result, we would recommend that schools make volunteering part of the curriculum, as suggested, through the citizenship curriculum. This is justified not just because of the positive contribution that young people will be making, but also because volunteering provides an excellent opportunity for young people to develop new skills and build confidence.

We were, though, encouraged to note that a very low percentage of young people reported too much bureaucracy as a hindrance to volunteering, especially as this has been a concern in the past and one that the government has sought to address.

In terms of encouraging young people to volunteer, the two most frequently cited factors were the opportunity to volunteer with friends and a recognised qualification or award for volunteering. As a result, we suggest that, where possible, opportunities are provided for young people to volunteer together. It might be helpful if places looking for volunteers could let schools and churches know when they have such opportunities so that groups of friends can then offer to volunteer together. Alternatively, schools could encourage pupils to let them know if they would like to volunteer as a group and then help them find a suitable placement together.

In a recent survey from the *Queen's Award for Voluntary Service*, more than half of the people in the UK believed that voluntary groups do not receive enough public recognition for the work that they do, claiming greater acknowledgement is needed.⁴⁰ Given this, and the fact that young people themselves tell us that the lack of a suitable award scheme hinders them from volunteering there is clearly a need for a new, widely recognised national award or certificate specifically focussed on youth volunteering. We are aware that *V Inspired* offers an award for those who volunteer for 50 or 100 hours, but so far the evidence of this research suggests young people are not sufficiently aware of it.

⁴⁰ <http://www.queensawardvoluntary.gov.uk/pr12.html>

Chapter Six

Social, Ethical and Environmental Concerns

Encouragingly, our research shows that young people demonstrate a significant amount of concern for charitable giving, buying fair trade products and reducing their impact on the environment. Table 13, below, indicates that this is the case whether or not young people are involved in voluntary work. 80% of young people donate some money to charity each month and an average of 85% take steps to reduce their carbon footprint, which included the following: recycling, walking, cycling or using public transport, keeping flights to a minimum, turning off electrical equipment and turning down central heating. Concern amongst young people for fair trade was not as high as concern for the environment, but nevertheless just over half still said that when buying food or clothing, they tried to purchase fair trade products where available. Given that most of those surveyed are unlikely to be involved in carrying out a weekly food shop, this is still a very good result.

Table 13 indicates the overall results for giving money to charity, buying fair trade and concern to reduce carbon footprint.

Table 13: Do you ever donate money to charity? Do you try to purchase fair trade products where available? Do you take steps to reduce your carbon footprint and / or environmental impact?

	% giving any money	% buying fair trade	% attempting to reduce carbon
Voluntary work yes*	81%	56%	88%
Voluntary work no*	80%	50%	82%

*those that do regular voluntary work, and those who do not

6.1 How much do young people give to charity?

Our research then considered whether there was a correlation between religion and charitable giving as shown in the table below.

Table 14: How much approximately do you donate a month?

	% giving any money	Average amount given per month
Overall	81%	£3.90
Christian	80%	£3.20
Active Christian	81%	£4
V. Active Christian	79%	£4
Other religions	83%	£3.20
Agnostic	85%	£3.20
Atheist	75%	£2.30

Our survey indicates that agnostics were the most likely group to donate money to charity, while atheists were the least likely to donate money. Nevertheless, charitable giving still remains very high across all the young people surveyed. The average amount given was just short of £4 per month with active and very active Christians

giving the most at £4 a month and atheists giving the least at £2.20 per month. Once again, we see the pattern that the more active Christians are in their faith, the greater contribution that they seem willing to make.

The *2005 Citizenship Survey*⁴¹ reported that 78%, or about four in five, of the population gave money to charity in the previous four weeks, giving on average £15. Our results indicate that the same proportion of young people as adults give to charity, but given their smaller incomes they give significantly less. The *2005 Citizenship Survey* also reported that those who were Christians were most likely to have given to charity in the previous 4 weeks, and that they gave more to charity than other groups.

According to a report from the Charities Aid Foundation, *Growing into Giving: young people's engagement with charity*⁴², published in 2002, over the last 20 years there has been a decline in younger people's participation in volunteering and donating money to charity. Their research found that young people give an average of £6.94 a month, which is slightly higher than our results and may reflect the fact that young people's giving has continued to decline.

The *Helping Out*⁴³ survey reported that 74% of young people aged 16-24 who answered the question about charitable giving gave money to charity. *Helping Out* also found that they gave an average of £16.93 in the four weeks prior to completing the survey. No doubt the much higher amount given reflects the higher age group of this survey. This report also considered the effect of religion on charitable donations across all age groups surveyed. In the four weeks prior to the survey, 74% of those who said they had no religion had donated money to charity, whilst 83% of those who said they were Christian had donated. Active engagement in religion proved to be important, with 87% of those actively involved in a religion donating to charity, compared with 80% of those who described themselves as religious but not active.⁴⁴ This mirrors the findings in our survey.

Previous research has already drawn attention to the economic value of adult's charitable donations. According to the *2005 Citizenship Survey*,⁴⁵ it was estimated that the UK adult population donated a total of £8.9 billion to charity in 2005/06, which was almost 1% of GDP. If our figures are extrapolated to the whole of England, then this suggests that English young people donate approximately £110 million to charity every year. If we combine this with the economic value of their volunteering, then English 14-18 year olds contribute over £300 million each year to the economy. The significance of this amount deserves to be recognised, and further adds weight to the point made in the previous chapter that society needs to recognise the enormous contribution that young people make.

⁴¹ http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/third_sector/Research_and_statistics/Key_statistics.aspx

⁴² Walker and Fisher, *Growing into Giving: Young People's engagement with charity*, CAF: Kent, 2002.

⁴³ http://www.ivr.org.uk/NR/rdonlyres/35546F68-CD79-4E0C-AD9A-3E08AFD5B9D6/0/young_people.pdf

⁴⁴ http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/media/cabinetoffice/third_sector/assets/helping_out_national_survey_2007.pdf

⁴⁵ http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/third_sector/Research_and_statistics/Key_statistics.aspx

6.2 How concerned are young people about fair trade?

As already indicated, 53% of the young people surveyed said that when buying food or clothing they tried to purchase fair trade products where available. The table below considers how this concern is impacted by religious belief and involvement.

Table 15: Do you try to purchase fair trade products where available?

	% buying fair trade
Christian	58%
Active Christian	64%
Very Active Christian	68%
Other religions	48%
Agnostics	45%
Atheist	50%

It is evident that the more frequently a young person attends church, the more they demonstrate a concern for fair trade. Almost seven out of 10 who attend church every week or nearly every week indicated a concern for fair trade, compared with 58% of those who stated that they attended church less than once a month. There was no significant difference in the amount of concern shown between agnostics, atheists and those of other faiths, all at about 50%.

In comparison, the *Ethical Consumerism* report of 2005 showed that in 2004, 62% of the UK population chose a particular product or service on the basis of the company's reputation for social and environmental responsibility. It is not possible to directly compare this statistic with our results for young people's concern for fair trade, given that 'social and environmental responsibility' is not necessarily the same as fair trade, but nevertheless, we could infer that this indicates a similar number of young people as adults are aware of social and environmental responsibility. Furthermore, given that many fair trade products are slightly more expensive than non-fairtrade products, young people aged 14-18 years old may not necessarily be able to afford the more expensive products. It is also possible that many products that are fairtrade, such as tea, coffee and bananas, are not bought regularly by young people if it is their parents that do the food shopping. Therefore, young people may not have quite the same opportunities as adults to purchase fair trade goods. Nevertheless, 53% showing concern and awareness for fair trade products at this young age is still a very encouraging proportion.

6.3 What do young people do to care for the environment?

We also asked the young people what measures they took to reduce their impact on the environment and we analysed this according to religion.

Table 16: Do you take steps to reduce your carbon footprint and / or environment impact?

	% reducing carbon footprint
Christian	89%
Active Christian	93%
Very Active Christian	92%
Other religions	73%
Agnostics	91%
Atheist	84%

It is encouraging just how high concern for the environment is across all faiths and none, with an overall result of 85% showing concern for the environment and taking steps to reduce their impact. Once again, the more active Christians showed greater concern than less active ones.

6.4 Conclusion

The findings detailed in this chapter are very positive and indicate that young people have a very high awareness of and engagement with charitable giving, fair trade and the environment. Their concern for these issues is comparable with many surveys looking at adults. Furthermore, it would appear to counteract the perceptions of some that young people are apathetic.

It is very encouraging that such a high percentage of young people already give money to charity to some extent, as it is likely that if they develop habits of donating from a young age that they will continue with this into adult life. Given that young people are willing to give, it might make sense for more charities to specifically recognise young givers so that a relationship is formed at an early age that may continue for life.

Awareness and engagement with fair trade was not as high as the proportion giving to charity or demonstrating concern for the environment. However, two factors are likely to affect this. The first is that many young people simply may not ever buy goods that are frequently fair trade such as tea, coffee and bananas. Secondly, fair trade goods are usually more expensive than non-fair trade goods and young people may not have the money to afford them at this stage. Schools could encourage the purchase of fair trade goods by selling them in their canteens or tuck shops where possible. Many schools already do this and it is a simple way of raising awareness of the issue.

We are extremely encouraged by young people's awareness of the environment, and the active steps they reported they were taking to reduce their environmental impact. As with donating to charity and purchasing fair-trade, if this kind of awareness can be fostered from early on in life then young people are likely to continue to engage with these issues as they grow older.

Chapter Seven

Conclusions and Recommendations

7.1 Conclusions

By any possible measure, an economic contribution of £300 million is significant. The fact that this benefit is made every year by our 14–18 year olds makes it even more startling. No longer can we justifiably claim that our young people are 'animals'. In contrast, our survey results repeatedly point to their giving time and money and demonstrating huge concern for their communities. This is hardly 'animal' like behaviour.

Just like adults, young people are susceptible to peer pressure and the power of social norms. Hence, if the message they hear is that young people are nothing but destructive and/or lazy who contribute little to society, then it is no wonder that some of them fulfil that expectation. If, in contrast, the message they hear is that young people volunteer in droves, give money generously, care about social responsibility, and overall contribute over £300 million to the economy then we can surely expect to see a different outcome.

Our purpose in this report has been to highlight in a very modest way some of the good in which young people are engaged, and thereby help to dispel the myth of youth anti-sociality.

In addition, we have drawn attention to the way in which faith and religious belief impacts such youth volunteering and social responsibility. Our study has shown that Christian young people who go to church frequently are more likely to volunteer, give greater amounts to charity, and are more likely to show a concern for the environment and fair trade than other groups. In particular, they are more likely to do this than those young people who describe themselves as Christians but rarely attend church or Christian youth groups. This finding is in line with other reports concerning adults, but we are not aware of other reports that have demonstrated this in relation to young people specifically.

Perhaps most interesting is the fact that in terms of youth volunteering it is not so much that the religious organisation facilitates easy access to volunteering opportunities, but that those who attend Christian meetings regularly have a strong internal faith driver that leads them to both attend church and give of their time and money. This matters as it means that if the government wish to work with faith communities to encourage volunteering – and 40% of all youth volunteering takes place through such communities – then it will be counter productive to insist that Christian young people leave their faith behind, for it is their faith that is driving their activity.

To put that point in a wider context, it indicates the extreme importance of civil society having some way in which it can create space for a narrative of ethics, values and indeed beliefs. To suggest, as some have done, that these matters should be purely private would prevent society from benefiting from the huge contribution that faith communities in general, and the Christian community in particular, are wanting to

make. Moreover, if this is true for adults then it is even more the case for our young people who precisely because they do matter deserve the opportunity of both articulating and expressing their faith commitment in the public sphere. Even more so, it demonstrates the need to teach young people not just about values, but rather to seek to instil those values in the young people themselves. We should not be afraid to say that some ways of being are better than others, some things are wrong and some are right. And perhaps the best people to do this are the young people who are already engaged in youth volunteering for they more than anyone have demonstrated that young people matter.

7.2 Recommendations

- Schools, government, the media and religious organisations should find ways to praise young people for, and tell young people about, the national impact that their volunteering is having.
- Schools and churches should work together in facilitating volunteering for young people.
- The government should implement a new national award or accreditation scheme specifically for youth volunteering.
- Christian young people should not be required to 'leave their faith at the door' when they participate in volunteering.
- Schools should explore ways to make volunteering part of the national curriculum in the same way that work placements currently are, potentially through citizenship lessons.
- Organisations that require volunteers should consider providing voluntary opportunities to groups of young people.
- Schools and / or religious organisations should facilitate links between groups of young volunteers and volunteering opportunities.

Volunteering by Young People

A Survey by the Evangelical Alliance



Many thanks for completing this survey, your help is much appreciated.

As a thank you for completing this survey, if you would like to be entered into a draw to win a £20 HMV voucher, please enter your email address here:

There are no right or wrong answers to any of the questions, please reply as honestly and as accurately as you can but if you are not sure please make an estimate – rough estimates are more useful than blank answers.

If you have any questions or require any help please contact Susannah Clark: s.clark@eauk.org

Data Protection

Individual answers are held in the strictest confidence.
Only the overall results of the survey will be published.
Your email address will not be made public and will only be used for the purpose of the £20 HMV prize.

About You

1) What age are you? 14 15 16 17 18

2) What school year are you in?

Year 9 Year 10 Year 11 Year 12 Year 13

3) What region of England do you live in?

London South West South East Midlands
North West North East

4) Would you consider yourself:

Christian Muslim Jew Sikh Hindu Buddhist
Agnostic Atheist Other (please specify)

5) If you consider yourself a Christian, how frequently do you go to Church or a Christian youth group?

Every week or almost every week Twice a month
Once a month Less than once a month

Volunteering

6) Do you participate in any kind of voluntary work (see list below) on a regular basis? (By regular, at least once a month) Yes No

If you volunteer regularly, please indicate what sort of volunteering you do. Tick as many that apply.

- Children's work
- Youth work
- Helping the elderly
- Fundraising
- Community projects eg. Painting, gardening other practical help
- Taking part in a sponsored event
- Befriending or mentoring people
- Giving information/ advice/ counselling
- Campaigning
- Other (please specify)

7) Does your volunteering take place through a Church or other religious organisation?

Yes No

8) In an average month, how many hours do you spend volunteering?

Less than an hour 1- 2 hours 2- 5 hours

5-10 hours Over 10 hours

9) Please indicate what motivates you to volunteer? Tick as many that apply.

- Want to contribute something to society
- It's useful work experience
- It looks good on my CV
- It's part of an award scheme eg. Duke of Edinburgh
- My faith and religious beliefs
- My Church/ Mosque/ Synagogue/Temple encourages it
- I just like helping people
- It's something to fill my spare time with
- I wanted to volunteer with my friend(s).
- Other, please specify.

10) Is there anything that you think hinders you from carrying out more voluntary work? Tick as many that apply.

- Lack of time
- Transport problems
- Too much bureaucracy
- Not enough training or support given
- Not enough interesting voluntary projects to get involved with
- Parents aren't keen for me to give up time to volunteer
- Too much schoolwork
- Other (please specify)

Please turn over

11) Would any of the following encourage you to participate in more voluntary work?

- Transport provided to take you to/from the place where you volunteer
- A recognised qualification at the end of your voluntary work
- Training provided that would enable you to develop your skills
- More information available about ways of volunteering
- Greater flexibility in the times you could volunteer
- Having your expenses covered eg. For transport/lunch
- Carrying out voluntary work with friends.
- Other (please specify)

Charitable Giving

12) Do you ever donate money to charity? Yes No

If yes, how much approximately do you donate a month?

Less than a pound £1- £2 £2 - £5 £5 - £10
£10 - £30 More than £30

Fairtrade

13) a) When you buy food or clothing, do you try to purchase fair trade products where available?

Yes No

b) If yes, what sort of fair trade products do you buy?

Clothing Bananas Chocolate Coffee Sugar
Other (Please specify)

Environment

14) a) Do you take steps to reduce your carbon foot print and/or environmental impact?

Yes No

b) If yes, what steps do you take? Tick as many that apply.

- Recycling
- Walking, cycling or using public transport whenever possible.
- Keeping flights to a minimum
- Turning off electrical equipment and/ or turning down the central heating
- Other (please specify)

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