



# Police Support Volunteer Business Plan for England and Wales 2009 - 2013





# Forewords

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Police Support Volunteers (PSVs) represent a significant opportunity to increase the capacity and capability of the police service and to increase the confidence of the public in its police service. This business plan has been developed, following widespread consultation, to help the service to take full advantage of that opportunity. The implementation of the business plan will be overseen by the PSV Programme board and the ACPO regional leads.

The PSV Programme Board was established in 2007 to provide support and guidance. Since then a national conference has been held with the second now taking place in September 2009, two questionnaires have been completed, a website and role matrix have been established and we have participated in Government consultations on volunteers. We have a working party and a task force 2012 (examining how PSV could be utilised in the Olympics).



Significant progress has been made and we are now at a stage in our development where a formal PSV business plan is necessary to provide the basis of Programme Board activity for the next four years and provide guidance to forces and government departments. You will see that the vision is ambitious as it anticipates that all forces will have an active programme by 2013, that volunteers will be more accepted as part of the police culture and that they will be playing an active part in improving public confidence in the police.

The vision cannot obviously be achieved without the continuing support of all forces and we look forward to working with you in the future. I would like to acknowledge Terry Wilkins (PSV Programme Manager) and the PSV Programme Board, NPIA, and Volunteering England, for their support in developing the business plan.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Chris Lee'.

**Chris Lee,**  
DCC Dorset, PSV ACPO Lead

# Forewords

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The NPIA is supportive of the use of Police Support Volunteers within the police service and is heavily involved in the ongoing work of the PSV Programme Board. This Board looks to assist in the development within forces of effective strategies in relation to the use of Police Support Volunteers, which complements and supports the roles performed by police officers and staff. The successful development of consistent policies in these areas will be vital in ensuring that police forces are able to make best use of the ready market for volunteering that exists.



Although the concept of police forces utilising the services of non-uniformed, non-attested volunteers to support the delivery of an effective policing service is relatively new, it has flourished in recent years with overall numbers of volunteers in forces having risen significantly and forecasts indicate that this trend is likely to continue. This business plan now looks to take work in this area a step further by setting out a clear vision by which the police service can take advantage of the appetite that exists within individuals and communities as a whole for providing such support to police forces. This is a realistic and highly commendable approach with many potential benefits for both police forces and local communities. Accordingly, the NPIA is pleased to acknowledge and support the concepts and aims outlined and will continue to work in partnership with the Programme Board, ACPO regional leads and key policing stakeholders to achieve the goals set out in this plan.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Peter Neyroud'. The signature is stylized and includes a long horizontal line extending to the right.

**Chief Constable Peter Neyroud QPM**

Chief Executive, National Policing Improvement Agency

# Introduction

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This plan covers police forces of England and Wales and is designed to promote and increase the use of Police Support Volunteers within the police service in order to improve public confidence and ensure that the support opportunities offered by PSVs are realised.

Police Support Volunteers are drawn from all parts of the community. They are not members of staff, do not wear uniforms and are not warranted. They perform their agreed voluntary roles alongside police staff and officers and are vetted to a level commensurate with the roles they are asked to fulfill.



# Outline

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## Volunteering in general

Volunteering can be described in many ways, and the word itself engenders many different reactions. Throughout these documents 'volunteering' is used to describe the act of a person giving their time for no financial reward; of their own volition for the good of others, society or the environment; and in so doing encompasses all such activity, however it is described by the individuals or organisations involved in the process<sup>1</sup>. The Home Office states that a volunteer is someone 'who commits time and energy for the benefit of society, the community, environment and/or individuals, undertaking this freely and by choice, without concern for financial gain'.

In 2003 it was estimated that volunteering was worth over £40 billion in England and Wales. This is the equivalent contribution to the economy based on the national average wage<sup>2</sup>.

In July 2009 a Citizen Survey found that:

- in 2008-09, 41 per cent of adults in England and Wales volunteered formally at least once during the 12 month period considered, and 62 per cent volunteered informally
- over the same period more women formally volunteered at least once than men. 42 per cent of women volunteered compared to 39 per cent of men
- levels of formal volunteering at least once a month have not changed since 2007-08 (27 per cent), but have fallen since 2003 (28 per cent) and 2005 (29 per cent)
- an earlier survey stated that 43 per cent of people from groups at risk of social exclusion participate in volunteering activities once per month<sup>3</sup>.

## Why do members of the community volunteer?

There are many reasons why people volunteer:

- Some wish to make a positive contribution to their community, some to gain skills or experience, some to put spare time to good use, and others because they have valuable skills and experiences themselves that they wish to benefit others. Some volunteers want to meet people and make new friends<sup>4</sup>.
- People volunteer for many reasons, sometimes altruism, sometimes personal, but always for a purpose<sup>5</sup>.
- Volunteering empowers people. It is rewarding for individuals. It cuts across divides of age, race and gender which isolate and alienate people. It strengthens the bonds between individuals which are the bedrock of a strong civil society, and in doing so it helps to create a sense of citizenship that is often missing from so many of our communities today<sup>6</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> Taken from Volunteering England's 'Building on Success Strategy for Volunteer Infrastructure in England 2004 - 2014'

<sup>2</sup> 2003, Home Office Citizenship Survey

<sup>3</sup> The first three bullet point statistics are taken from the April 2008 - March 2009 Citizenship Survey, the final statistic is from the first quarter April 2007 - June 2007 Citizenship Survey

<sup>4</sup> Volunteering, Lancashire

<sup>5</sup> Volunteering, Lancashire

<sup>6</sup> David Blunkett

# History

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## Volunteering within the police service

Warranted volunteers have been used within the police service since 1835 when the concept of a voluntary special constable was enshrined in law. In 2008 special constables numbered 14,000. The use of Police Support Volunteers is much more recent and the first known programme was in 1992 in Kent. Today PSVs are widely utilised across many of the 43 forces of England and Wales.

**NOTE:** Volunteering within the police service is not the exclusive domain of the UK. For instance, members of the community are used as volunteers in the USA (Volunteers in Policing) and also in Australia (Volunteers in Policing).

Members of the community become PSVs for many and varied reasons but the most prominent are:

- to support an important community body
- to be reassured that the police are doing good work
- to take positive messages back to their community<sup>7</sup>
- to help reduce the fear of crime in their community.

The development of force PSV programmes has mainly depended upon the enthusiasm and ability of each individual force to overcome any institutional and cultural obstacles that have existed. Where they have existed or in some forces still exist they can be summarised as:

- The resistance by some staff associations to support the use of volunteers.
- The feeling in some quarters that volunteers are cheap labour.
- The resistance of some civilian and police staff to embrace the concept, either through lack of understanding or because they fear that volunteers could replace them.
- The inertia of some forces to examine the concept seriously.
- The reluctance of some forces to invest in the management needed to run the programme.

Consequently, the level of involvement and sophistication of PSVs varies considerably from force to force. However, with a participation level of 75 per cent of all forces (32 from a total of 43) it is clear that volunteering within the police service has momentum<sup>8</sup>.

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<sup>7</sup> PSV National Questionnaire 2008

<sup>8</sup> PSV National Questionnaire 2008

# Current situation

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## Statistical overview of PSV within the police service at the end of 2008<sup>9</sup>

- 32 of the 43 forces in England and Wales are involved in a volunteer programme at some level.
- 6,250 volunteers are involved with predictions that this figure could reach 10,000 by 2010.
- The largest volunteer organisation has over 1,000, and the smallest has two volunteers.
- Over 100 roles are performed by volunteers.
- There are 23 forces who have paid volunteer co-ordinators.

**NOTE:** Given that the '2007 Citizenship Survey for England and Wales' showed that there has been no statistically significant increase in volunteering numbers since 2001, it is interesting to note that the growth of PSVs during that period was over 50 per cent.

## What has created the momentum for forces to establish a PSV Programme

From research data available, it is clear that the momentum arose from a combination of one or more of the following factors:

- The acknowledgement that volunteers are more reflective of the community and can improve public confidence and become advocates for the police service.
- The acknowledgement that volunteers improve links to the community and that the police service can provide volunteer opportunities to a diverse range of communities and improve links to socially excluded groups.
- The acceptance that volunteers can enhance and add value to core tasks undertaken by the force by providing support to the organisation and staff.
- The enthusiasm and skill of individual volunteers to drive the programme within a force.
- The acceptance that volunteers can bring enthusiasm and skills to provide added value support.
- The recognition that PSV organisations offer the facility for potential recruits into the regular force to sample the organisation before committing themselves.
- The acknowledgement that a volunteer organisation can be cost effective.
- Latterly, the desire of the government to embed a volunteering culture into people's lives and the appointment of a pro tem volunteer champion, Baroness Neuberger D.B.E.

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<sup>9</sup> PSV National Questionnaire 2007/2008

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## Criterion for using volunteers and roles they perform

The criterion for using volunteers varies from force to force. Volunteers are used in many and varied roles depending upon the needs and constraints of each individual force. Volunteers can generally be classified as performing roles within the following generic descriptions:

**Administration, CCTV, chaplaincy, communications, community safety, coroners, counter services, crime reduction, domestic violence, drugs, alcohol, major incidents, mentoring, neighbourhood policing, strategic assistance, training, valeting/stores, witnesses, working with animals, working with children.**<sup>10</sup>

One aspect of approach does however remain consistent across all forces. The agreement that volunteers are not paid members of the force, are part of the extended police family and that they do not replace officers or staff.

Avon and Somerset typify the statements made by forces to emphasise this point:

*“Volunteers will be used in the workplace on a supernumerary basis and Avon and Somerset Constabulary will not introduce volunteers to replace employees. The underlying principle of the partnership is that volunteers complement and support employee roles and will not be used to reduce overall staff numbers. It provides a unique opportunity for individuals to use their skills, experience and local knowledge to make a positive contribution in their community by supporting the work of Avon and Somerset Constabulary”.*

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<sup>10</sup> More detailed information on volunteer roles can be found in role matrix at NPIA

# Current situation (continued)

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## Measuring the benefits of using volunteers

The use of volunteers is not free. Specific skills are needed to manage volunteers. Policies need to be developed, and integration of volunteers into an existing organisation takes time. However, the benefits can be considerable, though not always easily measurable. This is because the nature of volunteer activity and estimate of opportunity costs are not always quantifiable. The use of a Volunteer Investment and Value Audit (VIVA)<sup>11</sup> can help to quantify benefits and one such return completed in 2009 in Thames Valley Police (TVP) showed that for every £1 invested in a volunteer programme there was a return of £2.32. TVP have over 500 volunteers and have invested in volunteer management and co-ordinators. The VIVA can only measure the aspect of volunteering that is quantifiable and does not seek to put a value on all benefits of having volunteers. It does not for instance measure the value to the force of the unique qualities volunteers bring and thus the ability to extend its capacity, or the community benefits gained by volunteers becoming police advocates. Clearly any VIVA conducted will produce different ratios as all organisations will differ, but what the TVP study does show is that even without measurement of the intangible benefits the PSV programme is very cost effective.

The recent 2008 NPJA survey contained many significant quotations as to the benefits that have accrued in forces where the volunteer programme has been in existence for some time:

*“Volunteers undertake tasks which would otherwise not be completed, support staff, represent the police, involve the community, provide enthusiasm, raise ‘feel good’ factor in the work place but above all provide quality.”<sup>12</sup>*

*“Volunteers have helped to build trust with our communities.”<sup>13</sup>*

*“Volunteers improve the efficiency of our force and improve the professional and high quality of service we provide to the public.”<sup>14</sup>*

<sup>11</sup> VIVA details can be found on <http://www.ivr.org.uk/researchbulletins/bulletins.htm>

<sup>12</sup> North Yorkshire Police

<sup>13</sup> Avon and Somerset Constabulary

<sup>14</sup> Greater Manchester Police

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## Summary of current situation - End of 2008

The initiative of individual forces has driven the PSV programme to the level that it is today. PSVs are slowly becoming accepted as part of the police culture and in many forces are highly valued not only for the direct support they provide to staff but for the links they provide to the community. The establishment of a PSV Programme Board in 2007 under ACPO lead DCC Chris Lee has raised awareness, provided a central focus and has highlighted some critical issues which need to be overcome if the programme is to have a truly national base. Since the establishment of a PSV Programme Board, a national conference has been held in February 2008 and a NPIA PSV website has been developed allowing best practice to be shared, <http://www.npia.police.uk/psv.htm>. This focus has created more awareness of the PSV situation across England and Wales, but it is clear that if the full potential of PSVs is to be realised then a concerted business plan needs to be developed.



# Vision

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## Objective of the 2009 - 2013 Business Plan

The main objective of the business plan is to provide a defined focus, in order that the police service can obtain maximum benefit from the utilisation of police support volunteers in terms of direct support, helping to increase public confidence and improving levels of community engagement. For the business plan to be achievable it does need the support of all the forces and therefore it has to be intrinsically linked to force initiatives. Thus the plan takes account of any political or police directive that has emerged in the past few years, namely the 2008 Policing Green Paper, 2008 Flanagan report, the HMIC business plan and the police reform White Paper 2004, The Policing Pledge and the Home Office Public Service Agreement PSA 23 (see Appendix).

## Vision 2013

All 43 forces in England and Wales will have an active police support volunteer programme and will be integrating a number of volunteers into safer neighbourhood teams. Each force scheme will have firm volunteer polices in place and be managed by staff who have the necessary skills and expertise to understand the nuances of handling volunteers. Whilst PSV schemes will be at differing stages of development they will all have a similar strategic goal:

**To support the police in the achievement of their objectives and to improve public confidence in the police service by utilising members of the community and their skills to perform voluntary support roles alongside officers and staff.**

Each force volunteer organisation will act independently and be driven by the strategic imperatives of the force. There will be a formal and informal network where forces are able to discuss issues, access key information, access expertise and best practice for the benefit of their programme.

The volunteer organisation will be fully inclusive and have a high level of diversity. Volunteers will be drawn from all parts of society and will play an important role in bridging the gap between the police and the community. PSVs will have supported the Olympics and forces will be active in harnessing and retaining those recruited specifically for this purpose. Police support volunteers will be recognised more fully as being part of the police culture and as people who benefit the force as a whole, not only because of the support they offer but because they improve community relations and become advocates of the police service.

# Plan to achieve the vision

## Current position compared to the vision

The 2013 vision is challenging in that it assumes 100 per cent force participation and an acceptance that volunteers are being recognized more fully as being part of the police culture. The matrix below illustrates the gap that currently exists between the current situation and the vision and the action which needs to be taken to achieve the vision.

Vision	Current Position	Gap	Action
All 43 forces in England and Wales will have an active volunteer programme.	32 forces will have an active PSV programme by the end of 2008.	Six forces currently have no scheme.  Five other forces did not respond to the questionnaire and their status is not known.	Understand the situation at the 11 forces with no apparent emphasis and provide appropriate support.  Create a business case model for use by forces to justify investment.  Create focus team (2 - 3 people) with volunteering expertise who could help Forces create scheme or help with existing schemes.  Create 'website' organisation linking volunteer expert with NPIA to make the website 'dynamic' and relevant.  Develop yearly communication and promotional plan utilising NPIA budget for PSV.  Recommend that volunteer schemes are formally measured by HMIC and are subject to performance management by individual forces.
Volunteers will have been integrated into safer neighbourhood teams.	25 forces have integrated volunteers into safer neighbourhood teams.	Volunteers are only just being integrated into safer neighbourhood teams.	Involve NPIA field managers in promoting benefits of volunteers in neighbourhood policing.  Promote success stories.

# Plan to achieve the vision (continued)

Vision	Current Position	Gap	Action
<p>Each force will have firm volunteer policies in place and have competent management structure.</p>	<p>Formal processes and policies are not in place in all active forces.</p> <p>Staff fears still exist.</p> <p>Role creation a challenge.</p> <p>Funding an issue.</p> <p>Union opposition.</p>	<p>Lack of understanding in some forces of the value volunteers can bring.</p> <p>Justification for building a volunteer organisation still not proven in some cases. Union resistance may be stifling initiatives.</p>	<p>Develop, using best practice, a catalogue of training courses for volunteers, staff, volunteer management.</p> <p>Develop 'dynamic' role matrix for use by all forces.</p> <p>Encourage forces to broaden scope of the roles volunteers could perform. Vetting to reflect the role volunteers are being asked to perform.</p>
<p>Volunteers will improve public confidence and satisfaction.</p>	<p>Volunteers probably do increase public confidence currently but this is an assumption.</p>	<p>No direct measurement of volunteer impact in the community.</p>	<p>Widen publicity for volunteers across all police publications. Broaden external publicity. Examine ways that volunteer contribution to improving public confidence can be measured.</p> <p>Promote success stories.</p> <p>Position volunteers strategically within suitable police commitments (i.e. The Pledge).</p>
<p>Each force will have a recognised method of valuing volunteers and a formal programme for acknowledging individual volunteer contribution.</p>	<p>Forces are valuing volunteers in differing ways and there does not appear to be anything formal. Currently individual contribution is haphazard across forces.</p>	<p>No formal model exists by which volunteers can be valued.</p> <p>Individual volunteer contributions is only acknowledged currently by 30 per cent of participating schemes.</p>	<p>Develop a process for measuring the value of volunteers to the force and the community.</p> <p>Create best practice ideas for recognising volunteers contribution and measuring the volunteers experience.</p> <p>Create additional recognition for force 'Volunteer of the Year'.</p> <p>Consider national PSV award.</p> <p>Consider volunteers for 'Going the Extra Mile' award.</p>

Vision	Current Position	Gap	Action
PSV will be fully inclusive, have a high level of diversity.	<p>PSV diversity figures in 2008 are:</p> <p>Female volunteers 57 per cent. BME 7.3 per cent.</p> <p>1.5 per cent describe themselves as having a disability.</p>	<p>PSV numbers are an improvement on force overall figures.</p> <p>Forces actively encourage high levels of diversity.</p>	<p>Work with selected external agencies to promote PSV.</p> <p>Promote best practice.</p> <p>Involve SCOPE and other relevant charities or organisations.</p> <p>Promote success stories.</p> <p>Encourage 'Fit to Volunteer' policy which encourages greater inclusivity of people with impairments.</p>
There will be a formal and informal network and forces will be able to access expertise and best practice.	Regional PSV organisation facilitates formal communication. Forces will share best practice when asked.	There is little joint co-operation across forces as a matter of course.	Examine benefits of greater co-operation across forces on core volunteer processes.
PSV Volunteers will have supported the Olympics and forces will be active in harnessing and retaining those recruited specifically for this purpose.	PSVs Olympic interests are represented in a task force 2012.	The development of roles currently insufficient to accommodate additional volunteers.	Develop plans to retain those people who volunteered specifically for the Olympics.
PSV will be recognised more fully as being part of the police culture and as people who benefit the force as a whole, not only because of the support they offer but because they improve community relations and become advocates of the police service.	<p>The potential for volunteers to be advocates of the police is not developed.</p> <p>Whilst volunteers are an accepted part of some forces there is still resistance in others.</p> <p>Unison object to the use of PSVs although they have provided advice to members on the actions they should take to establish a programme.</p> <p>Government bodies struggle with the identity of PSV and often fail to mention PSVs in reports.</p>	<p>Currently volunteers are left to their own devices to pass on positive words about the force.</p> <p>Sensitivity still exists regarding the use of volunteers.</p> <p>Sensitivity still exists regarding the use of volunteers in many forces.</p> <p>Lack of a clear understanding minimises vales of PSV and affects morale at local level.</p>	<p>Provide case histories of how volunteers have improved public confidence/become advocates of the police service. Acknowledge that gaining recognition into police culture can only occur when acceptance is total.</p> <p>Provide evidence of the benefits of utilising volunteers based on force success stories.</p> <p>Continue to involve unions in programme board and encourage resolution of local issues. Ensure all institutions touching volunteers are appraised of actions.</p> <p>Target key stakeholders: Home Office, police authorities, ACPO to improve their knowledge.</p>

# Appendix

Influence	Area of Influence	How Police Support Volunteers can help
<b>2008 Policing Green Paper</b>	Improving the connection between the public and the police.	Volunteers are a direct connection between the police and the public and have the ability to be advocates of the police service thus helping to improve public confidence in the police.
	Reducing bureaucracy.	Volunteers bring a fresh approach and perspective to established working practices. They challenge the status quo and suggest alternative approaches. The roles volunteers are able to perform can directly impact bureaucracy.
	Improving performance in policing.	Volunteers can release staff for those tasks they were trained and paid specifically to do whilst they can also relieve officers of some of their peripheral functions. In providing their support volunteers are helping achievement of the Policing Pledge.
<b>Flanagan Report</b>	Improving the connection between the public and the police.	<p>As members of the community volunteers provide an excellent bridge to life inside and out of the police station.</p> <p>Increases the recruitment pool to police services as volunteers are often attracted to paid employment through their volunteering experiences.</p> <p>Volunteering increases the self confidence and confirms abilities to those out of work or considering returning to further education.</p>
	Reinforcing collaboration between forces.	Volunteer managers have an excellent network to share best practice. Managers from long standing PSV programmes offer guidance and best practice advice to newly developing PSV programmes.
	Reducing fear of crime.	Volunteers can assist crime prevention officers and take good messages back to the community. They see for themselves the hard work that is ongoing to bring criminals to justice/ support those effected directly by crime.
	Greater engagement with diverse communities.	Volunteers are drawn from all sectors of society and from the more disadvantaged and traditionally hard to reach communities. The pool of PSVs will be able to assist the Olympic endeavour.
<b>HMIC Business Plan 2008/09</b>	The embedding of neighbourhood policing.	Volunteers are drawn from all sectors of society and can play an important part in giving support and credibility to local initiatives.

# Appendix (continued)

Influence	Area of Influence	How Police Support Volunteers can help
<b>2004 Police Reform White Paper</b>	Spread of neighbourhood policing to every community with improved police responsiveness and customer service.	Volunteers are drawn from the community and are able to assist in improving customer service by supporting staff and officers and helping on front counters.
	Greater involvement of communities and citizens in determining how their communities are policed.	Volunteers are able to provide valuable input being from the local communities.
<b>Policing Pledge</b>	Pledge number 3,4,7 and 8.	Volunteers will actively support neighbourhood teams and help to improve public confidence.
<b>Public Service Agreement (PSA 23) Home Office</b>	Making communities safer	<p>Help deliver more professional service. Supporting reduction of crime and anti social behaviour by specific support activities.</p> <p>Help community cohesion. Participate in neighbourhood teams. Support diversity.</p>

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