

RSVP UK OLDER VOLUNTEERS



THE UK EXPERIENCE

A MAJOR COMMUNITY RESOURCE



June 2008

CSV's Retired & Senior Volunteer Programme



- Started in Kent in 1988 inspired by a visit to England by Arthur Garson
- Incorporated into CSV (Community Service Volunteers) an NGO charity in 1998 RSVP becomes UK wide
- "Volunteer led and managed" ethos promoted



2007



- RSVP UK covers England, Scotland & Wales
- 13,000 volunteers
- 500 volunteers who are organisers'
- 28.5 full-time equivalents (36 staff - 15 part-time)
- Annual turnover £2.2m



RSVP UK volunteers who are they?



- Over 50 - no upper age limit
contribution of volunteers aged 80-100
especially promoted
- Non rejection policy - all welcome
"everyone has something to give"
- Spread across all types of geographic
area - suburban, isolated rural, inner
city, county towns, villages and off
shore islands .
- Of the 450 organisers' 90% have
professional/managerial backgrounds
(survey 2006)



Who pays for RSVP UK?



- 1/3 central & regional count
- 1/3 trusts and foundations
- Other - Lottery, individuals & companies etc. -an increasingly important source

RSVP UK Volunteers

What Do They Do?



Intergenerational Projects

- Help in schools -after school clubs - cooking/skills clubs -music- government initiatives on numeracy and literacy

Health Service Projects

- Transport scheme to assist disabled people to health appointments - transport for rural areas - support to patients at health centres - activities for long term in-patients-support to carers

Social Care Projects

- Befriending - teleconference book clubs - day centres - escorting - gardening -DIY schemes

Environmental Projects

- Walking / audit groups - clearing footpaths - developing wild flower sites - promotion of activities to reduce carbon footprint (climate change project)

Heritage Projects

- Cathedral guides - creating historical memorials - archaeological digs- reminiscence projects

One off Innovations

- Bicycle recycling - cell phone recycling for seniors -support to victims of violence- Residents on Patrol-"Strongbow" safer city project

Knitting

- Trauma teddies - toys - clothes - blankets -quilts-for UK and international recipients



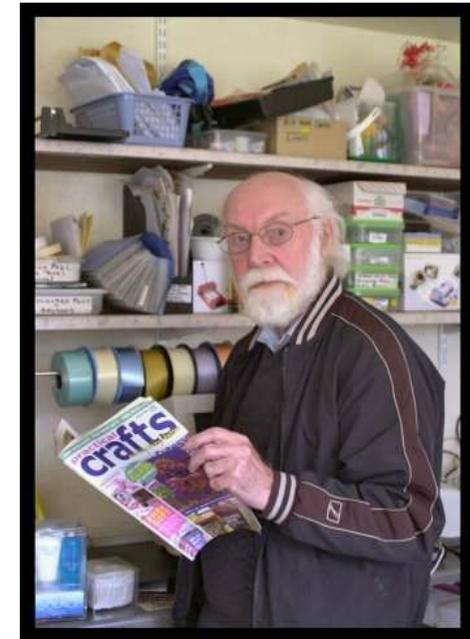
Who Organises RSVP UK Volunteers?.....



..... *The Volunteers*

- The RSVP network is managed by volunteers whose skill & interest is in management

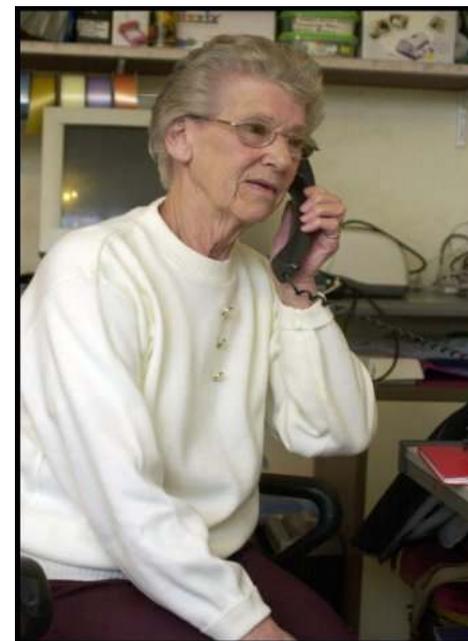
- Very attractive to baby boomers
 - the volunteer is at the creative heart of the project
 - planning the activity to suit local needs
 - retaining skills
 - developing opportunities to learn
 - developing new friendships
 - using community networks



How Does The Volunteer Organiser Network Operate?



- Organiser recruited
- Induction by staff or experienced volunteer organiser
- Organisers' manual
- Organisers' directory - encourages new recruits to visit others
- Expenses paid by RSVP HQ - plus help given to develop local funds
- Resources CD
- Local bank account set up - in local control
- Regular staff support visits
- Quarterly national forum meeting's
- Monthly in-house newsletter
- Bi-annual Gathering



Types of Organisers

Project Organisers

- Project manuals for Schools, Environment, Health & Social Care
- National support to knitting organisers

Area Organisers

- For a town, group of villages, London borough

Regional Organisers

- e.g. Yorkshire, Devon, W. Country, Highlands, North Wales
- Encouraged to have office & management group
- Assisted in local fundraising



RSVP UK

National role for volunteers



RSVP Policy Group

- 10 volunteers + 5 staff
- Make all policy decisions for RSVP—from organisers' expenses rules to developing strategic plan
- Meets every 6 weeks



HQ Support Volunteer roles



- Publications are written edited and photographs sourced
- Events- high profile receptions - national Gatherings-seminars-workshops organised
- IT support of volunteer organisers' network provided
- Fundraising support and training developed
- Policy/strategy/impact research/ development & monthly policy update



The Bridge Project



30 RSVP groups across the UK
looking for volunteer exchange
partners

- 10 in London
- 6 in Scotland
- 5 in Wales
- Yorkshire
- West of England
- West Midlands
- Devon
- 2 in North East
- Dorset
- Cornwall
- Hertfordshire & Bedfordshire



Exchange and Learn



- Recruiting & supporting volunteers as organisers'
- Attracting baby boomers - volunteers setting the agenda
- Older volunteers scoping an area and developing new projects
- Community fundraising
- Partnership working