

Understanding and engaging 21st century volunteers

Capacity Building for the Environmental Volunteering Sector meeting
Webinar

7 April 2014

Who am I?

- Worked in volunteering movement for 20 years
- Formerly Director of Development & Innovation at Volunteering England
- Active volunteer for the last 26 years
- Co-author of The Complete Volunteer Management Handbook (DSC, 2012)
- The “Voice of Volunteering” blogger for Third Sector Online



This session

- What we know about the volunteering landscape
- A look at some social trends that are / have the potential to affect volunteering
- Considering what this means for us
- Action planning



The volunteering landscape

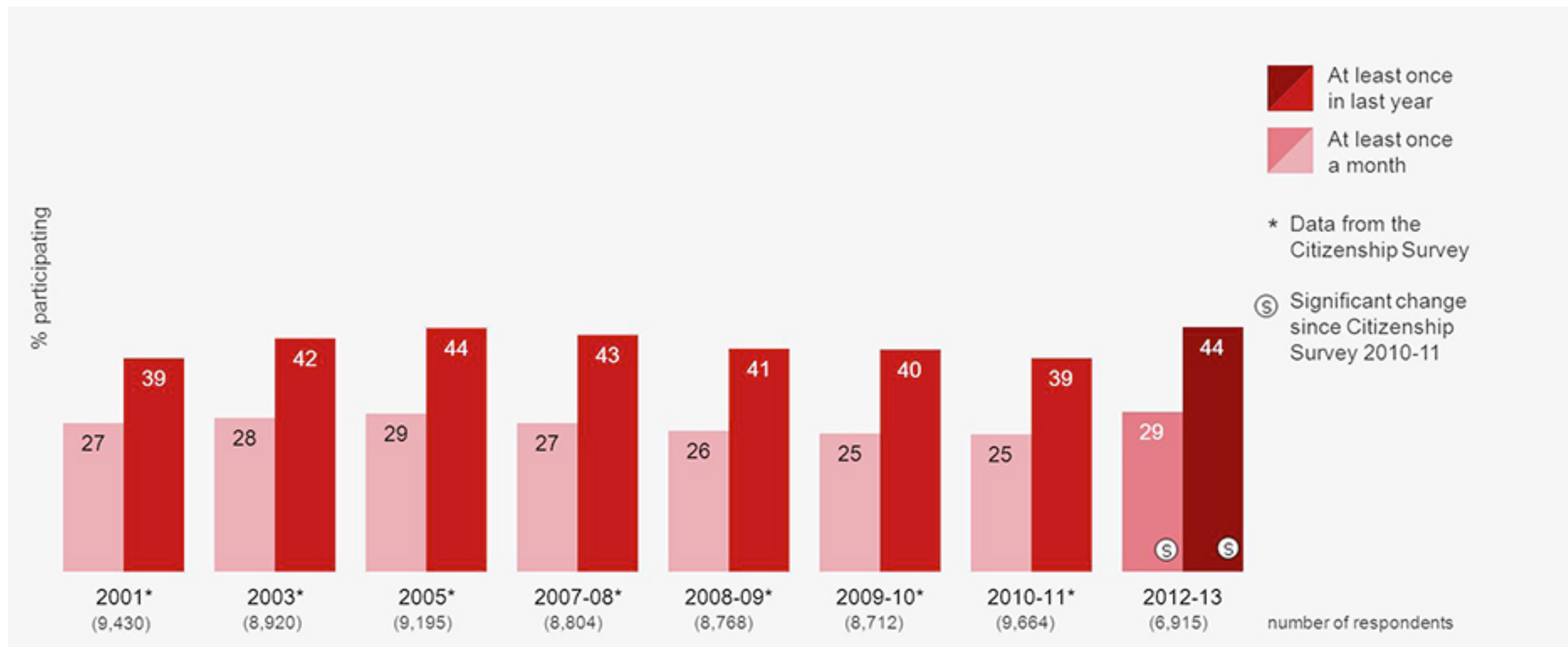
What we know already

A few words about volunteer statistics

- Formal vs informal volunteering
- Do you see yourself as a volunteer?
- What's the agenda behind the stats?
- Levels of volunteering vary massively as a result



Levels of volunteering are static

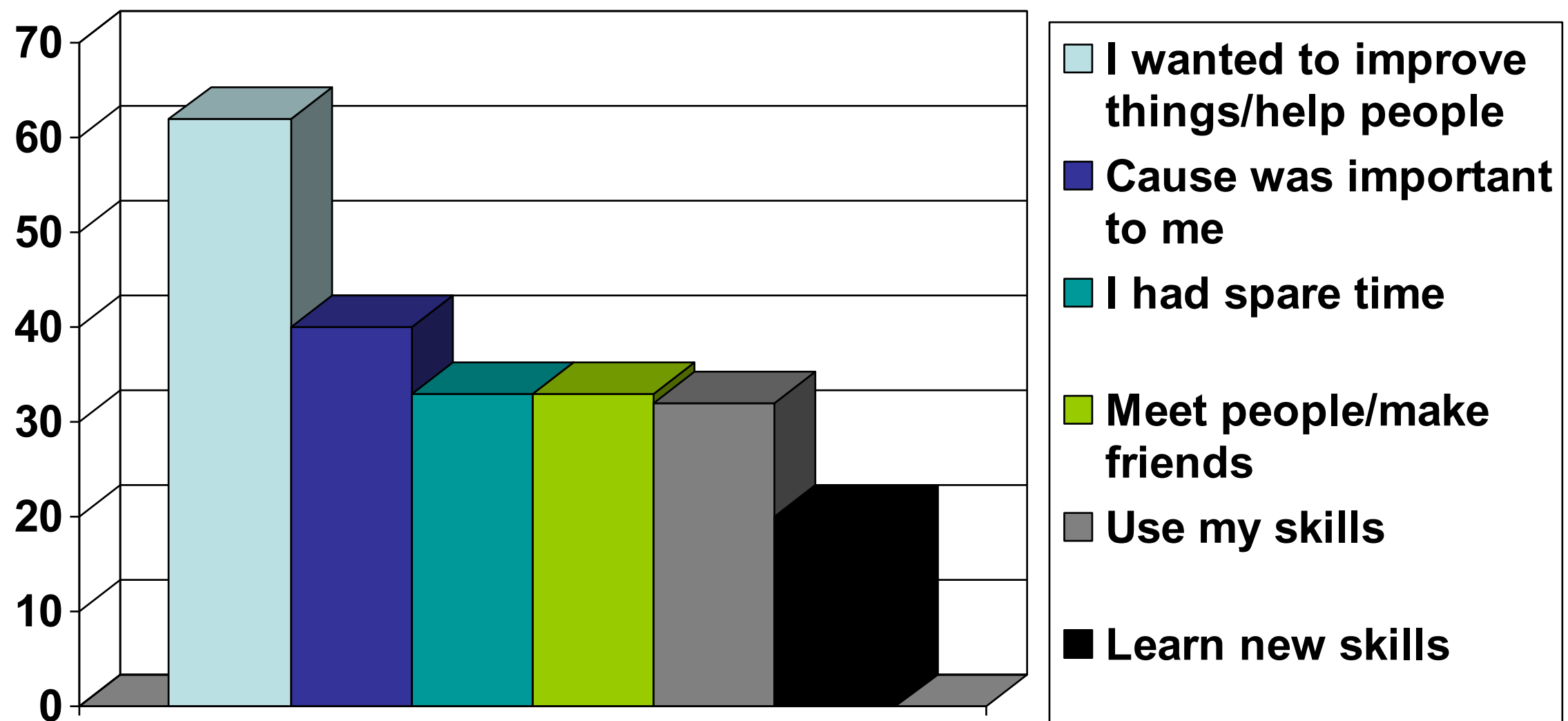


Source - Community Life survey, 2012-13

The amount of time given is decreasing

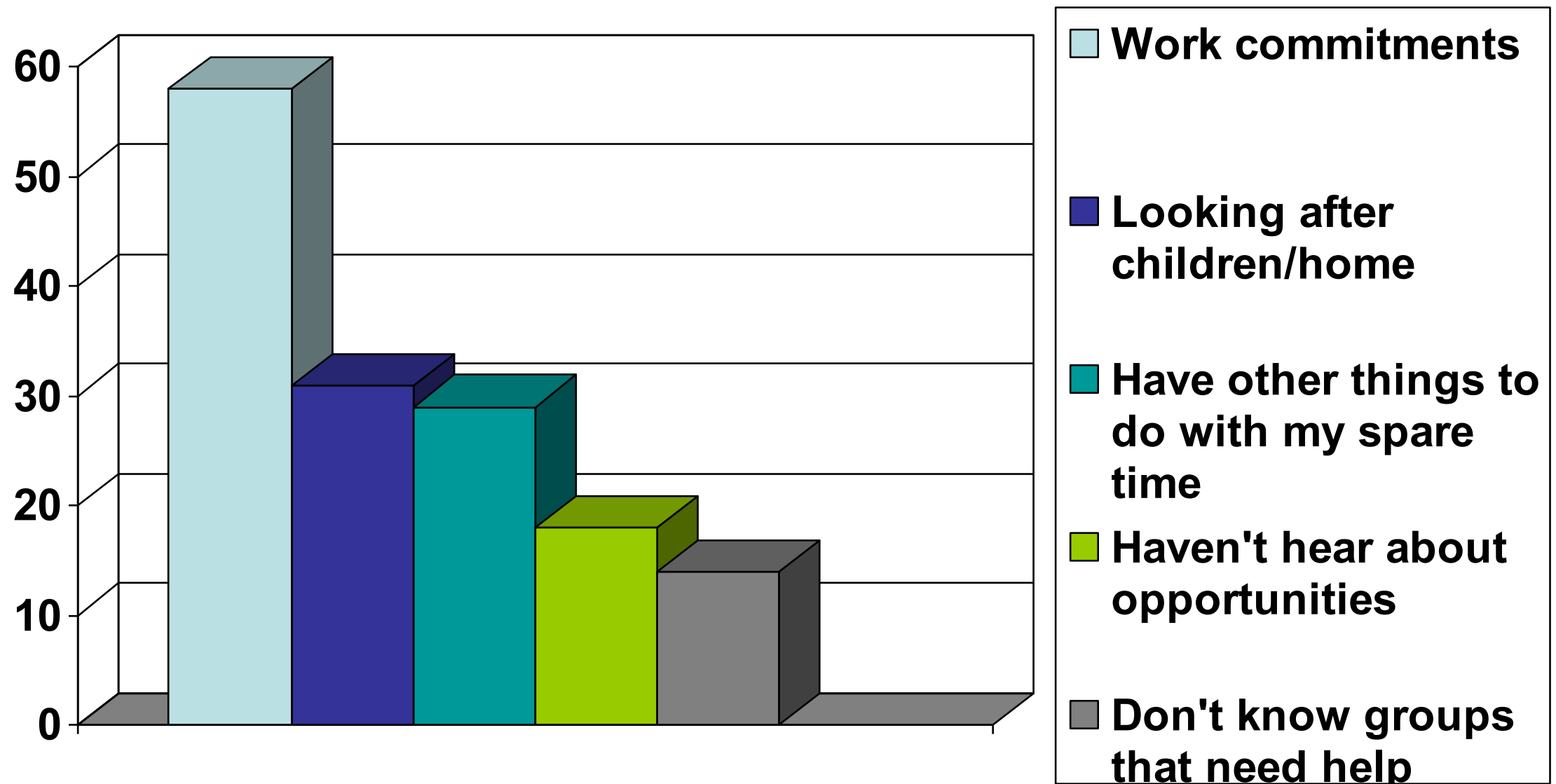
- The average amount of time given by volunteers is decreasing
 - 2.7 hours per week in 1991
 - 4.05 hours per week in 1997
 - 3 hours per week in 2008/9

Why do people volunteer?



Source - citizenship survey

What stops people volunteering?



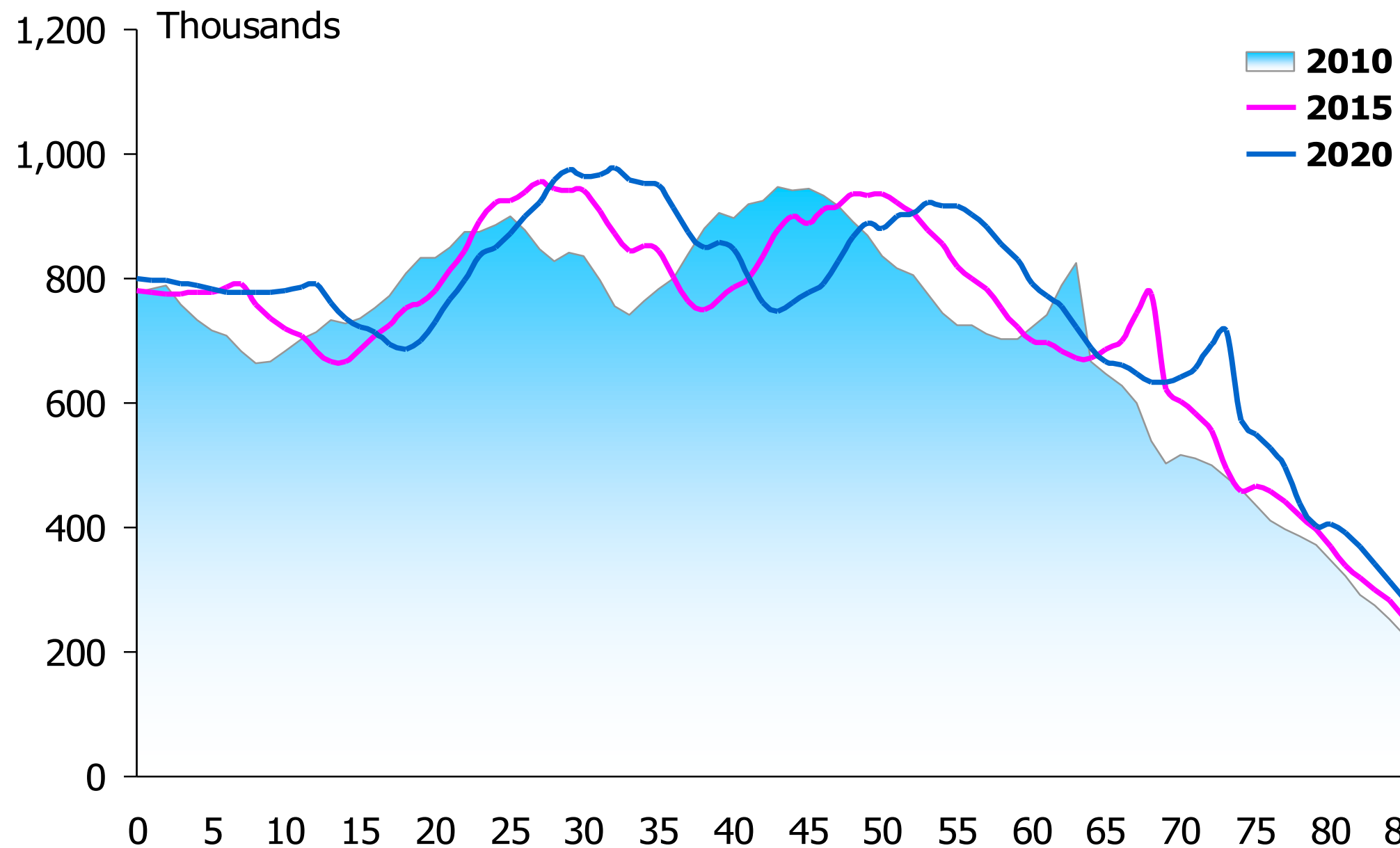
Source - citizenship survey



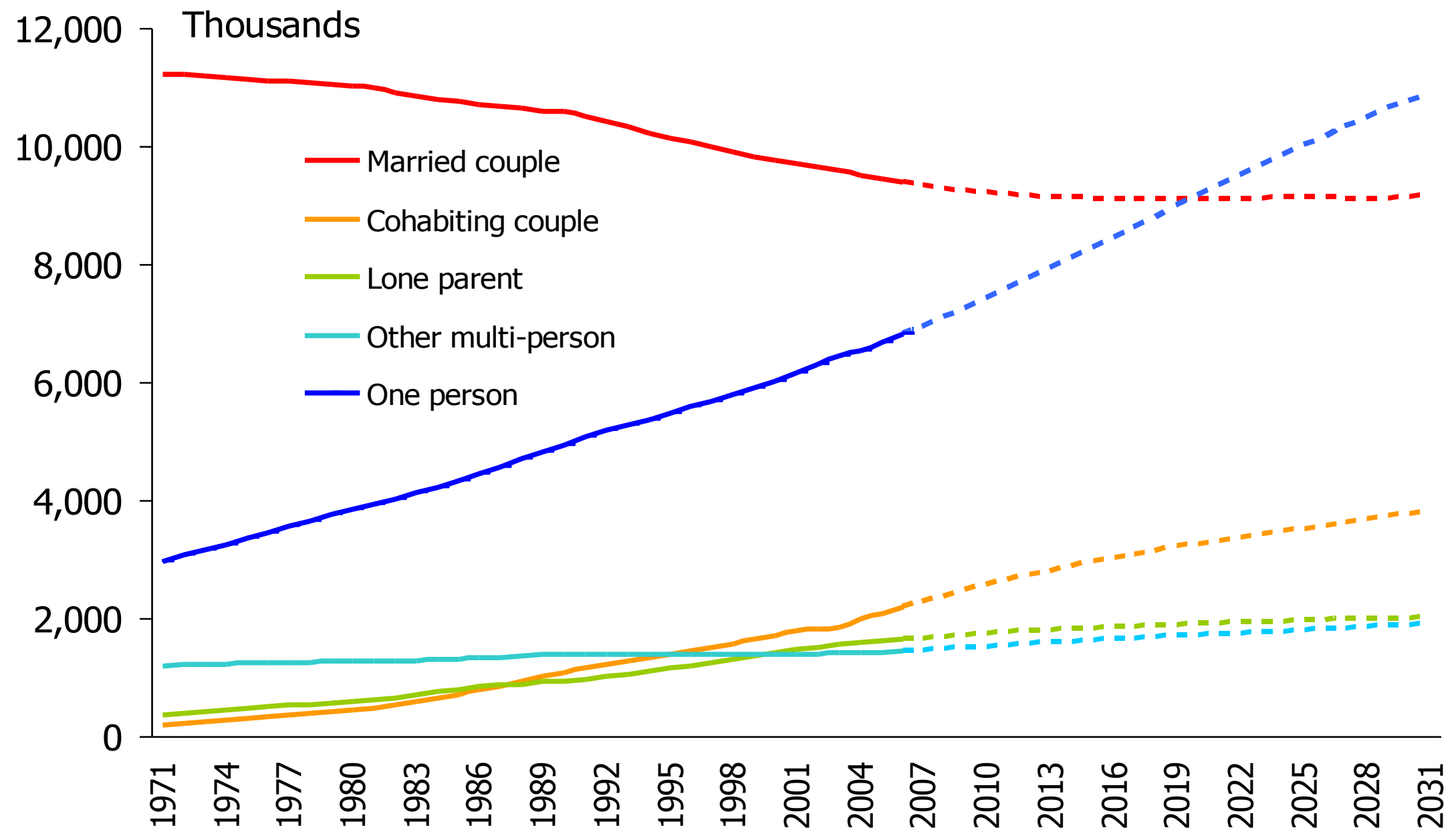
Some key social trends

What might they mean for volunteering?

Population and generation profiles



The kinds of houses we live in

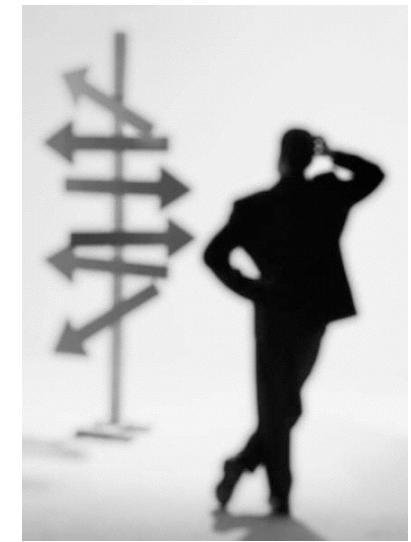




Choice



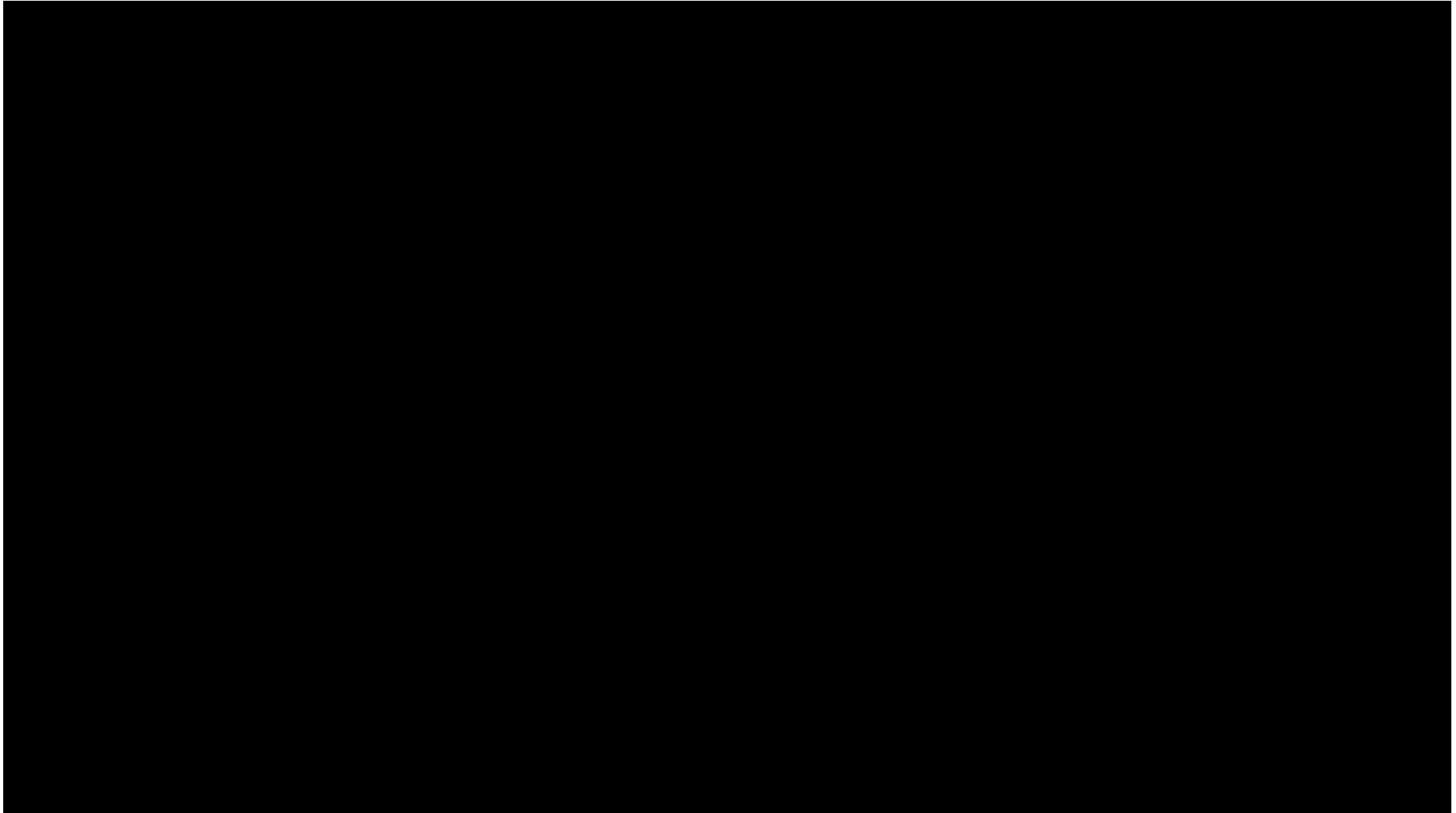
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The social media revolution



To summarise

- The world has changed significantly in the last few years
- It will continue to do even more in future, but...
 - Levels of volunteering haven't changed
 - People are (on average) giving less time when they volunteer
 - The ways organisations involve volunteers haven't changed much other than becoming more process driven



The challenge we face

- A disconnect (growing?) between what people want from volunteering and what organisations offer
- A need to embrace different approaches to getting and keeping volunteers
- Competing against anything else that tries to attract people's spare time



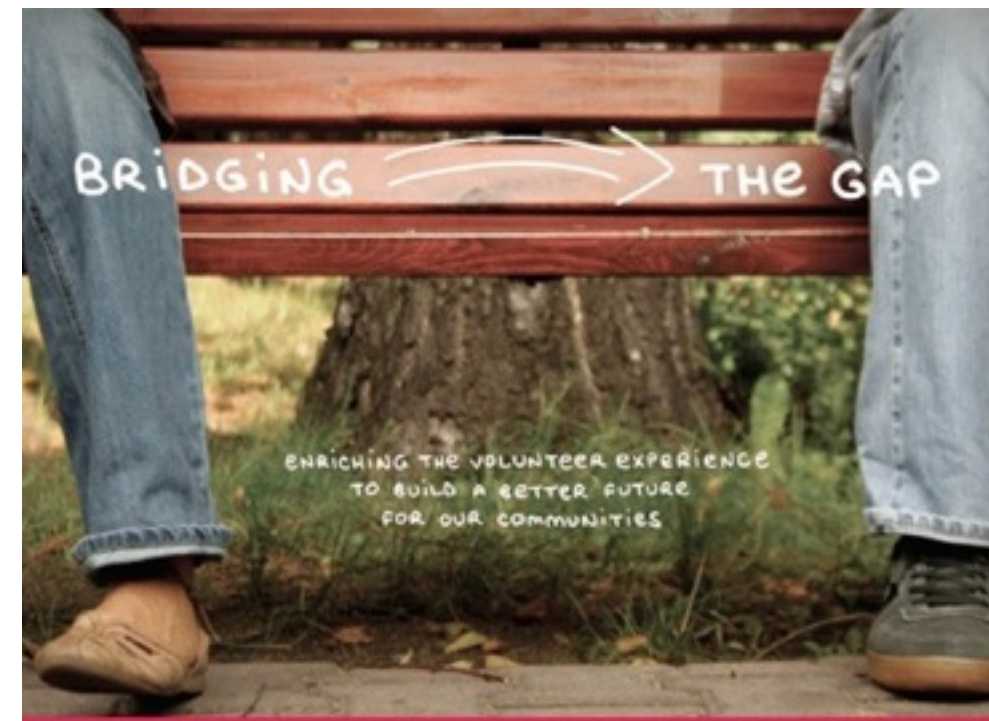


Bridging The Gap

So what can we do to change?

Bridging The Gap

- What do people want from volunteering?
- What are organisations offering?
- What are the gaps and why?
- What can we do about it?
- Boomers, Families, Young People, Employee Volunteers



V O L U N T E E R
B É N É V O L E S
C A N A D A

Our focus



- The issue of the uber-volunteers
- The potential of previous volunteers
- The gaps and why they exist
- How we can respond

The issue of the uber-volunteers

- 31% of the adult population provide almost 90% of the donated time
- 8% of the adult population provide almost half the volunteer hours



The potential of previous volunteers

- 20% of people had been volunteers but weren't now
- Why?
 - Changes in personal circumstances
 - Health problems / old age
 - Not relevant anymore
- 54% of non-volunteers would like to give their time



The gaps



Volunteering changes lives.

- Learn new skills.
- Help to save lives.
- Be part of a great team.

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Why do these gaps exist?

- Motivations, availabilities and interests change during our lives
- Organisations haven't changed their approach to engaging people in line with the change in society
- People today:
 - Are more mobile
 - Are tech savvy
 - Have multiple interests and roles
 - Lead complex and busy lives
 - Want two-way relationships
 - Accept change and choice
 - Like to use skills and learn new ones

How can we respond?

- Reconsider who does what in pursuit of our mission
- Be more concerned with what gets done then when and how it is done
- Embrace flexibility, choice and a bit more chaos
- Be well organised not bureaucratic
- Find ways for people to engage online
- Focus on people before process

“Improving participation opportunities requires **starting where people are and taking account of their concerns and interests, providing a range of opportunities and levels of involvement** so people can feel comfortable with taking part and using the **personal approach** to invite and welcome people in.”

Pathways Through Participation



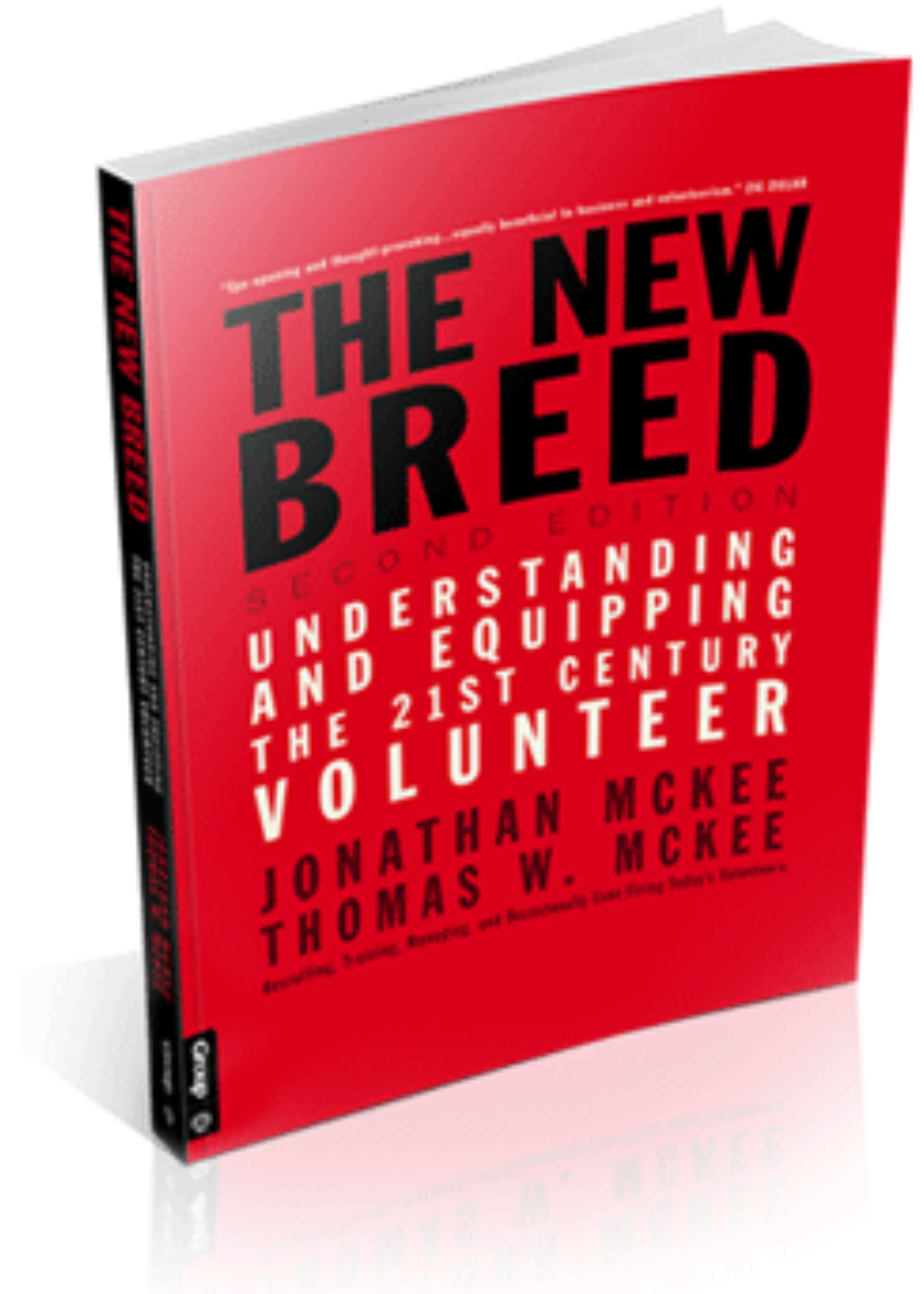
Action planning

- Take your action capture sheet
- Prioritise
- Estimate time
- Re-order
 - high priority & quick
 - low priority & slow



Useful resources

- nfpSynergy - The 21st Century Volunteer
- NCVO - Participation: trends, facts and figures
- IVR - Helping Out: National Survey of Volunteering and Charitable Giving (2007)
- www.volunteerpowers.com



Getting in touch

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