

# Understanding and engaging 21st century volunteers

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Capacity Building for the Environmental Volunteering Sector event  
Coin Street Neighbourhood Centre  
28 October 2013

# So who am I?

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- Worked in volunteering movement since 1994 and been a volunteer since 1988
- Former Director of Development and Innovation at Volunteering England
- School governor, IoF Standards Committee and Convention Board, UKVPMs
- Co-author of The Complete Volunteer Management Handbook (DSC, 2012)
- Third Sector Online's "Voice of Volunteering"
- Fellow of the Royal Society of Arts, Manufacturing and Commerce

# This session

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- 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
- Group discussion and action planning



# The volunteering landscape

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What we know already

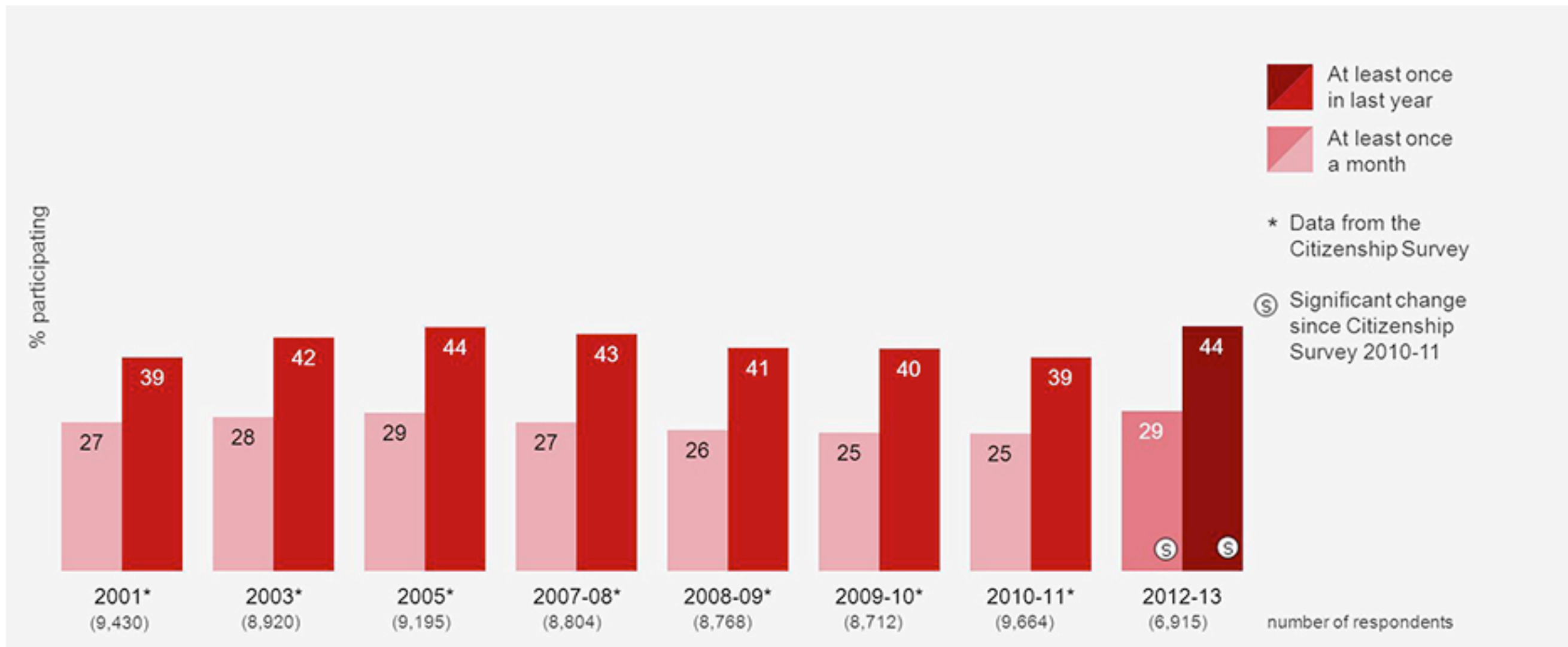
# A few words about volunteer statistics

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- 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



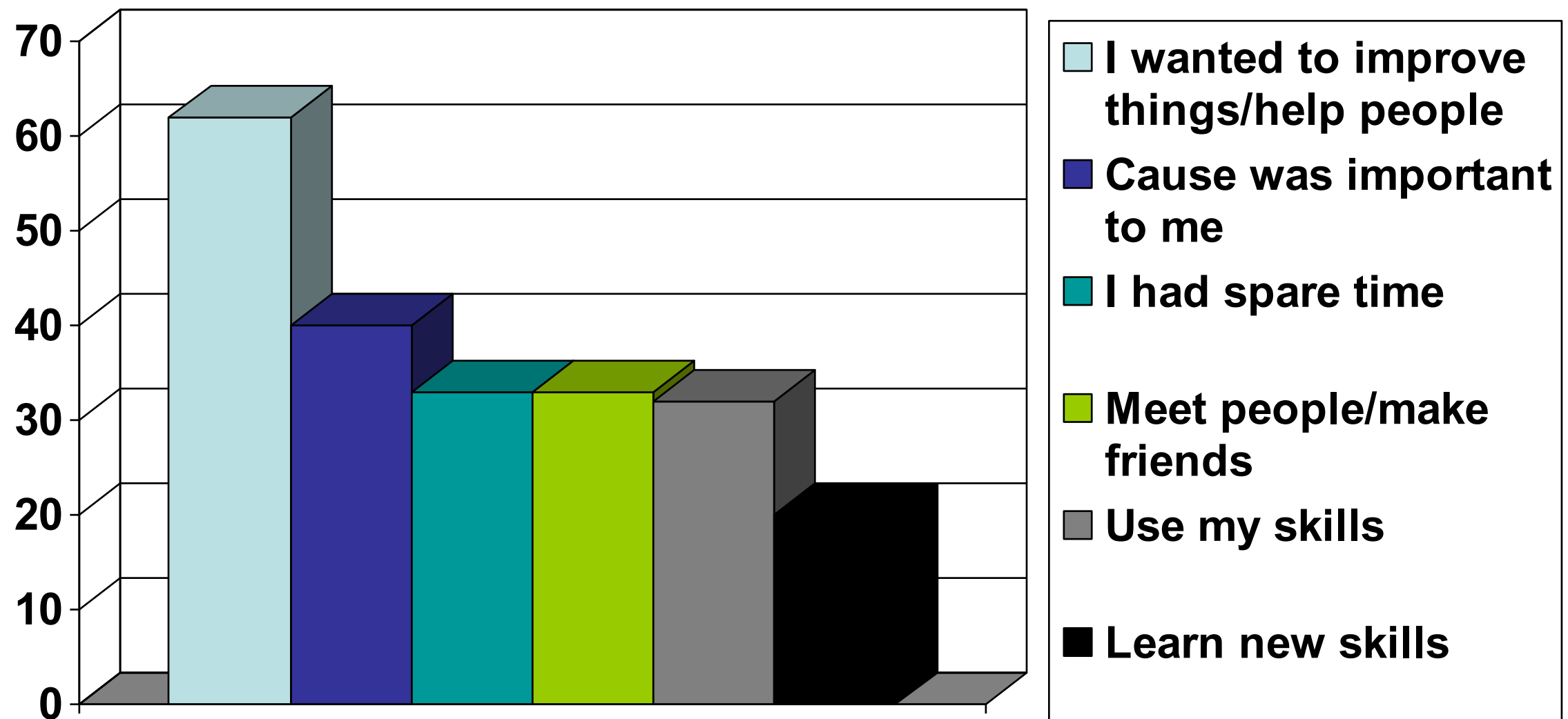
# The amount of time given is decreasing

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- 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?

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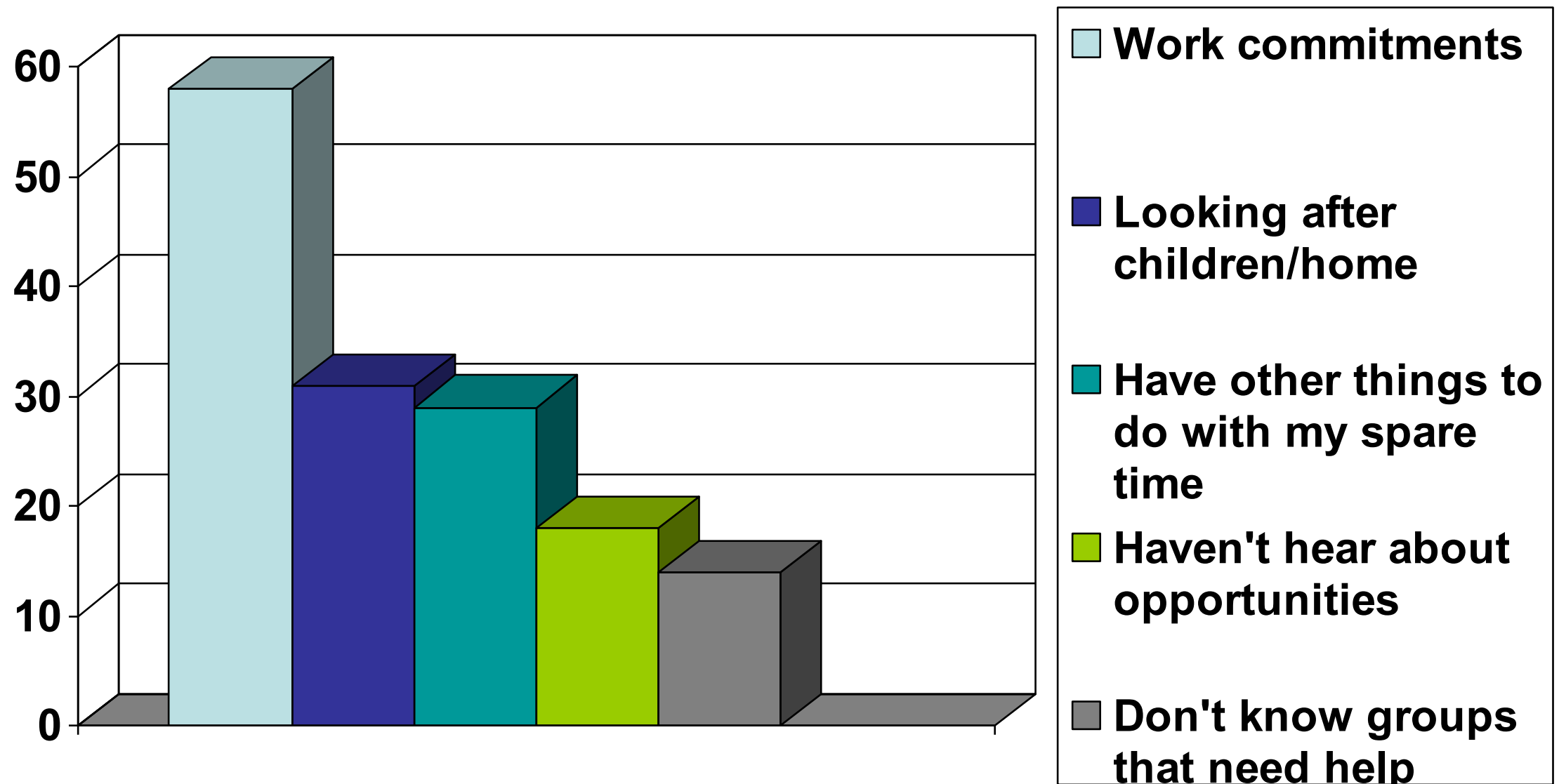


Source - citizenship survey



# What stops people volunteering?

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What do volunteers do?





Raising and handling money





Sport and exercise





Education





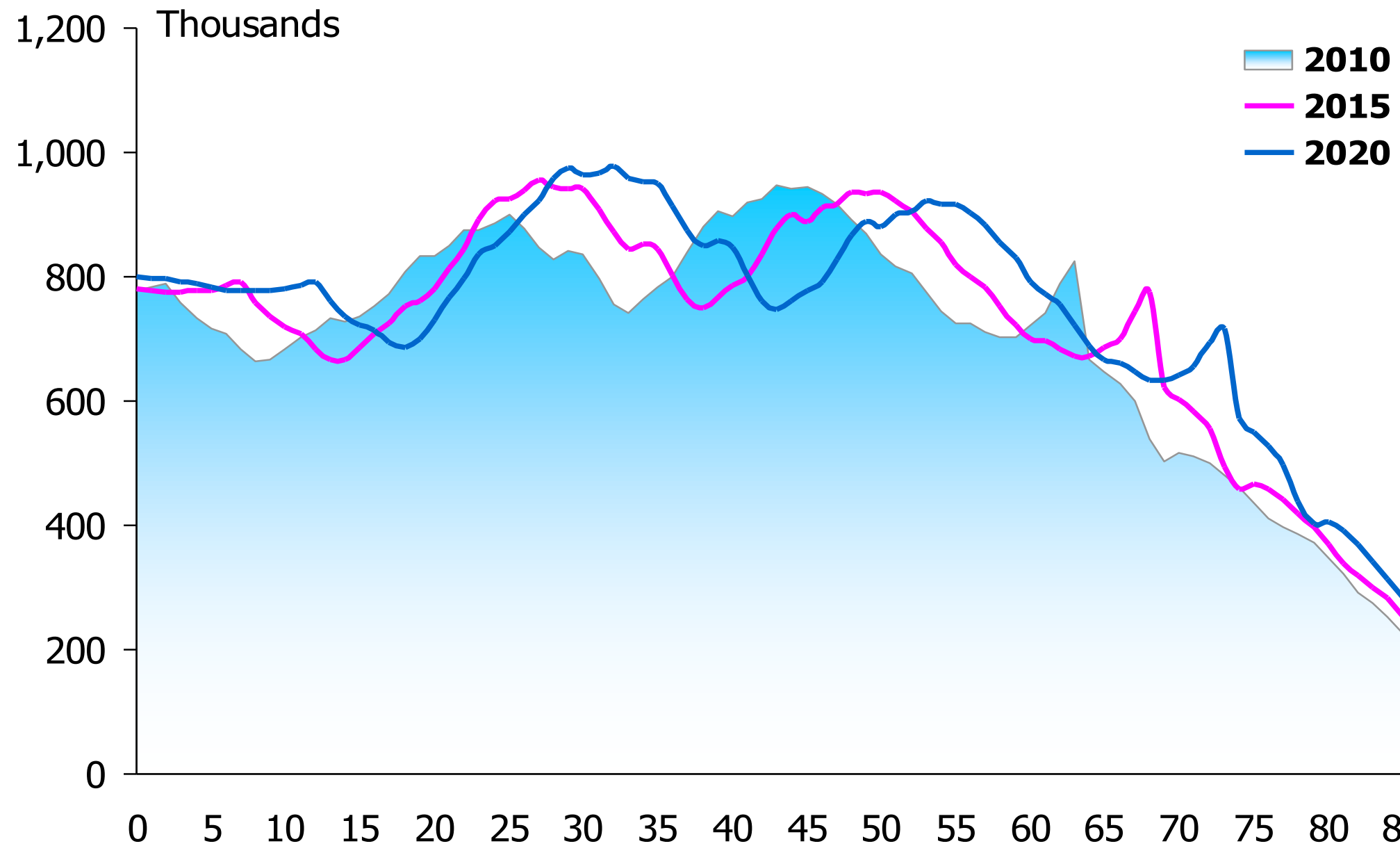
Religion

# Some key social trends

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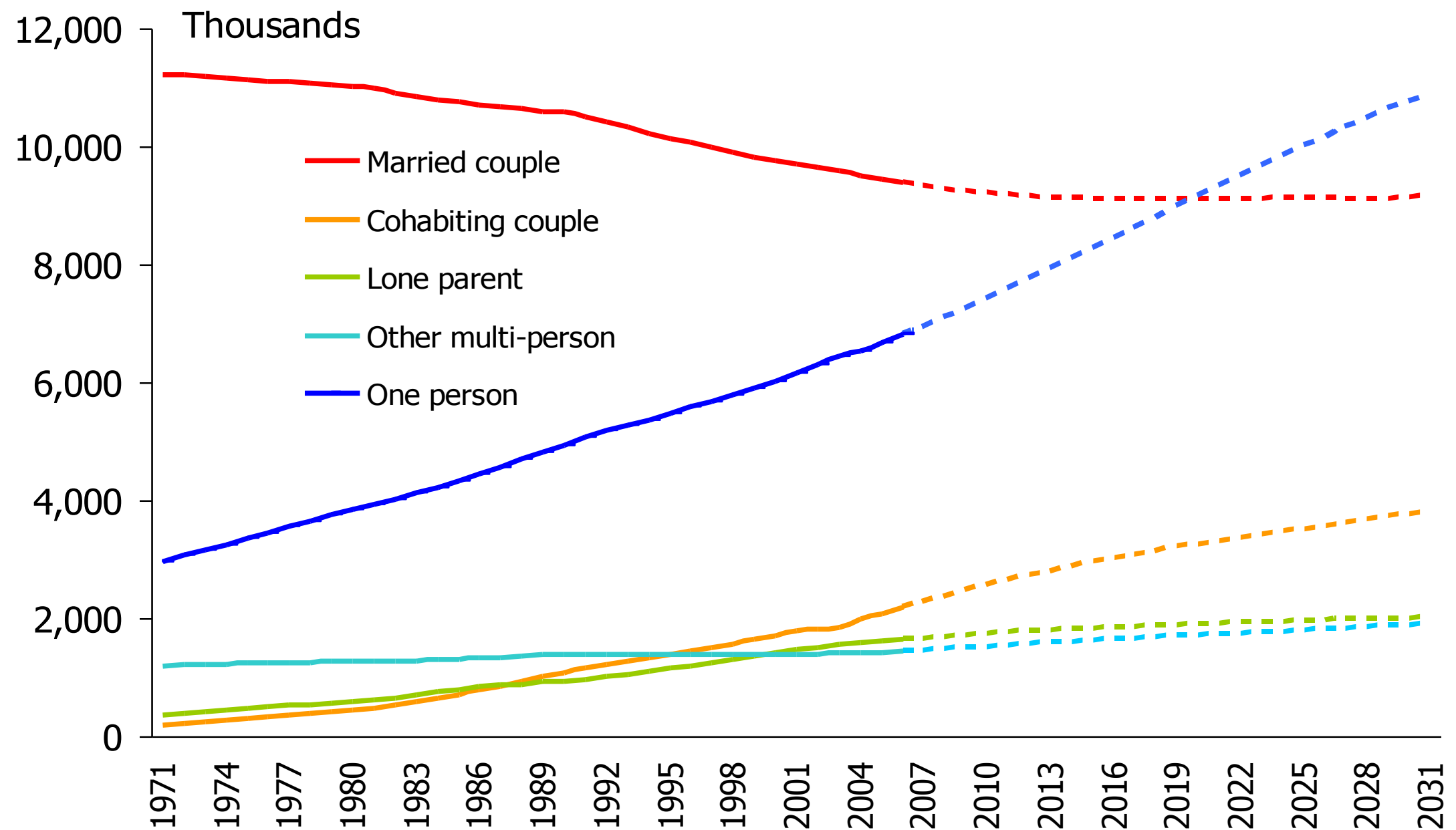
What might they mean for volunteering?

# Population and generation profiles





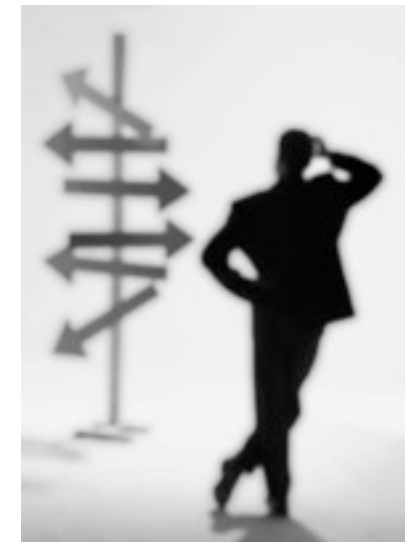
# The kinds of houses we live in





Choice





TV channels



Drinks

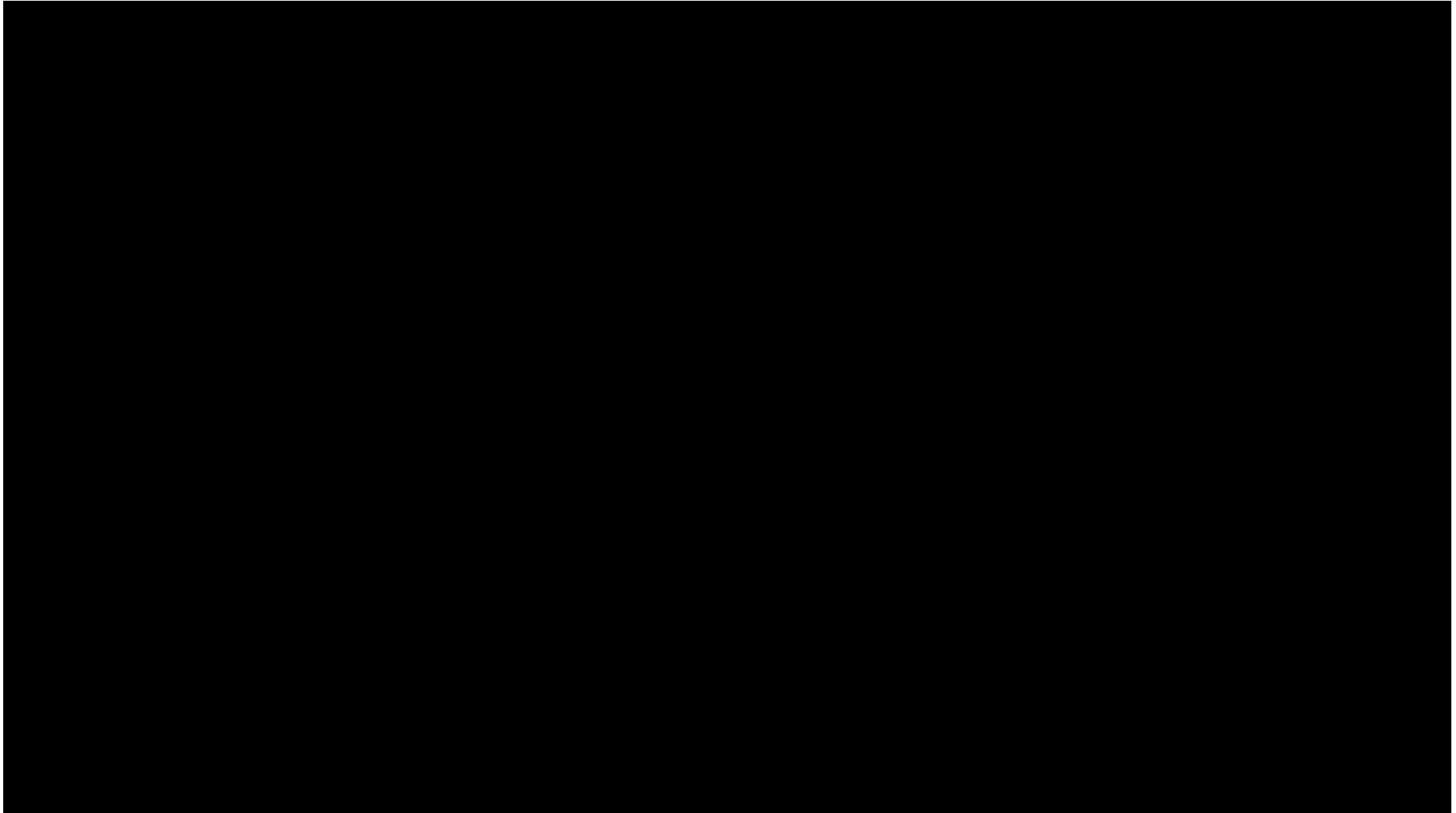


COME IN FOR ONE OF OUR  
**87,000 DRINK  
COMBINATIONS**  
— ALL MADE WITH —  
**100% RESPONSIBLY  
GROWN, ETHICALLY  
TRADED ESPRESSO.**



# The social media revolution

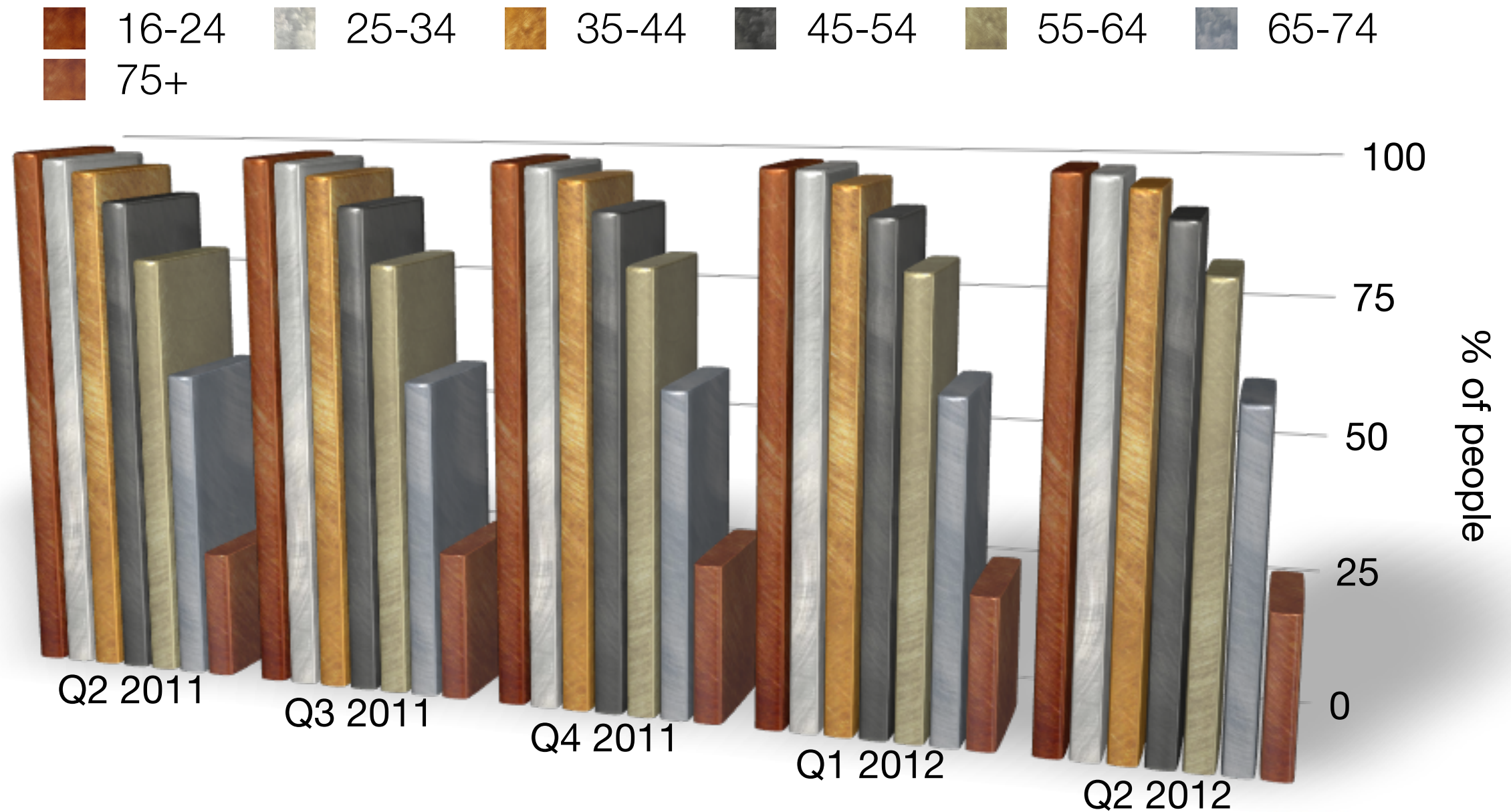
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# UK internet use

Internet use by people aged 16+ in the UK



# To summarise

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- 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

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- 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

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So what can we do to change?

# Bridging The Gap

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- 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

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- 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

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- 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

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- 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

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# Volunteering changes lives.

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

Find out how volunteering  
with us could help you.

Pop in and see us,  
visit [bhf.org.uk/shops](http://bhf.org.uk/shops)  
or give us a call  
0844 412 5000\*



\*Call cost by your provider from a BT landline.  
Charges from other providers and mobiles may vary.

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#riotcleanup

# Why do these gaps exist?

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- 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?

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- 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*



# Discuss

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- What has struck you most and why?
- How do you see these trends and issues impacting
  - The environmental sector?
  - Your organisation?
- What actions could you start to take to bridge the gap?
- What support might you need to do this?

# Action planning

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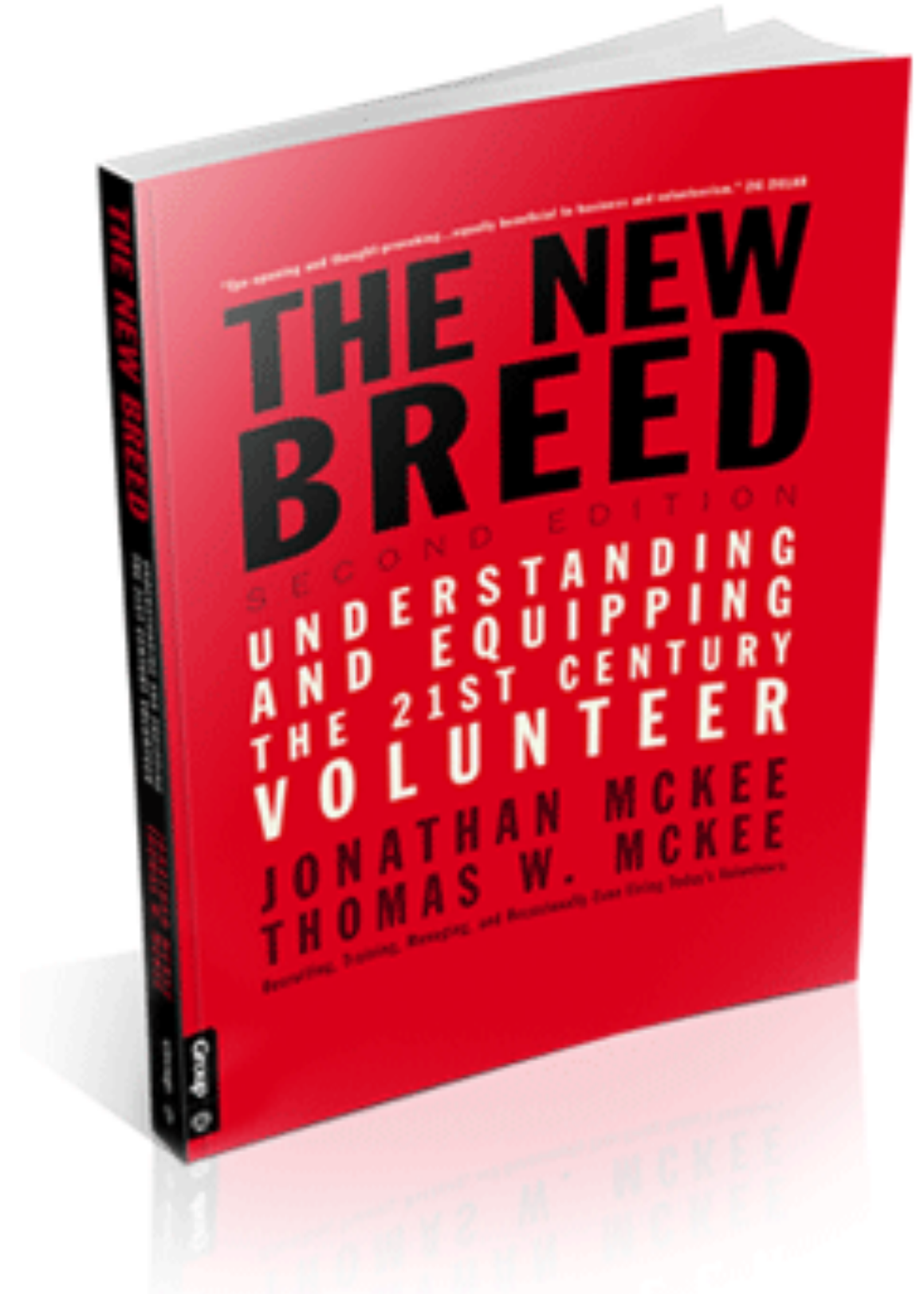
- Take your action capture sheet
- Prioritise
- Estimate time
- Re-order
  - high priority & quick
  - low priority & slow



# Useful resources

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- 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](http://www.volunteerpowers.com)





# Contact us

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