



## Three years on – the impact of being a Host City Volunteer at the 2014 Commonwealth Games

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## **Acknowledgements**

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## **Glossary**

*Event volunteering* – opportunities created and managed by event organisers for individuals to apply for and undertake roles associated with the event

*Formal volunteering* – providing unpaid assistance in a designated role within an organisation

*Informal volunteering* – providing unpaid help to an individual who is not a relative

*Games* – the XX Commonwealth Games held in Glasgow in July and August 2014

*Host City Volunteer* - a role managed by Glasgow Life during the Games, which assisted across the city in helping visitors and residents to get to venues and navigate the city

*Legacy* – the longer-term impact of an event, both positive and negative

*One-off event* – a time limited event occurring in a location on a single occasion

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## Executive Summary

This research has examined the long-term impact or legacy of the Host City Volunteer (HCV) programme at the Glasgow 2014 Commonwealth Games (1.1). By engaging with a large group of the former HCVs, it has sought to identify the nature of change in levels of volunteering and social connectedness.

The evidence from the results presented in this report suggests continuity rather than change. The Games-time experience has not transformed the HCVs into repeat volunteers, having limited impact in altering their existing propensity to volunteer. It challenges the widely accepted view that increased volunteering should be a realistic aspiration from major events. On the other hand, the research found that there has been a small but measurable increase in levels of connectedness, especially amongst those were more socially isolated before being a HCV.

Taken as a whole, this research therefore suggests that a one-off intervention like the HCV programme is not sufficient, by itself, to have a long-term impact on the volunteering behaviours of participants. Further action is needed to translate enthusiasm about the Games-time volunteering experience into long-term tangible change in behaviour (7.0).

### Building the evidence base

Our starting assumption for this research has been that the longer-term impact of being a HCV was likely to have been limited. Previous studies have provided little evidence that volunteering opportunities associated with a one-off event have a lasting impact. In conducting this study, we have therefore framed our approach as one seeking to understand reasons for this absence of change, but also to examine further the reasons for any change which has occurred (1.2).

Specifically, we have attempted to assess two key measures of change:

- have HCVs engaged in any further volunteering since the Games?
- have HCVs increased their social connectedness since the Games?

The research consisted of a survey, completed by 333 HCVs, and 3 focus groups with a total of 15 HCVs. These explored volunteering histories and the levels of social connection of the HCVs.

### Volunteering

Volunteering rate amongst respondents decreased slightly from 90% pre-Games to 87% in 2017 (2.2). The majority of HCVs were already engaged with volunteering before they with HCVs, and they continued to volunteer over the last 3 years. Only a minority – 32 people (11%) – recorded change, with 12 now undertaking volunteering having not done so prior to being a HCV, and 20 no longer volunteering. The remaining respondents continued to volunteer (83%) or continued to have no volunteer role (6%).

### Connectedness

We assessed changes in levels of social connectedness via a range of measures. 67% of respondents (217 people) have been involved in social groups or clubs over the last 12

months. This is a 2% increase from the 65% who were involved in groups or clubs before the Games (3.1).

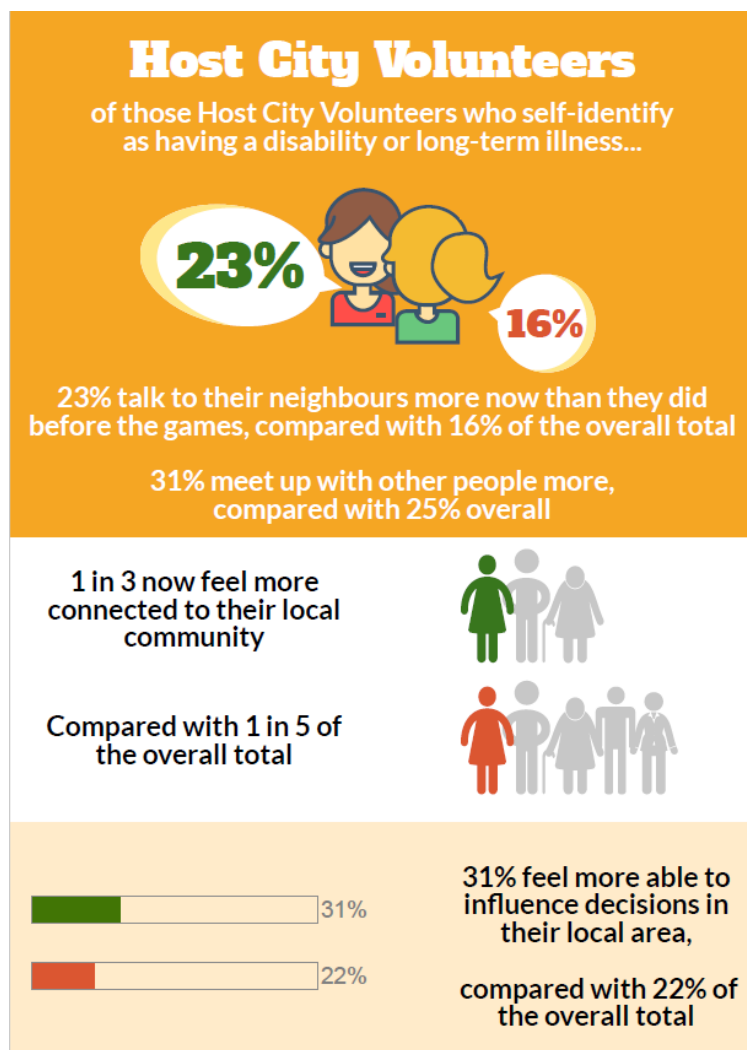
Although the majority of respondents indicated that their levels of connectedness had remained constant since the Games, but there were some small, but significant changes for some people:

- 20% (59 people) feel more connected to their local community.
- 22% (64 people) feel more able to influence decisions affecting their local area.
- 25% (75 people) meet up with other people more than they did before the Games.
- 16% (47 people) talk to their neighbours more than they did before the Games.

### Inclusion

For the 65 survey respondents who self-identified as having a disability or long-term illness, the data indicates that they have increased their connectedness more than our overall survey population by a number of key measures since the Games, with 31% (20) feeling more connected to their local community now (compared with 20% of all respondents) (See Figure 1) (4.3).

Figure 1: Infographic showing impact on inclusion



Amongst the survey respondents aged over 65, more than three quarters (88%) were involved in volunteering prior to the Games, but this has risen by 5% since 2014. (4.2).

There was no change in the levels of volunteering amongst the survey respondents who live in the 10% most deprived areas of Glasgow (4.1). However, 44% of those living in these areas feel proud of their local community, a much higher proportion than across all the HCV respondents (27%).

There were also measurable changes amongst the HCVs who indicated they had a disability or long-term illness; a group which has had been targeted by Glasgow Life to have opportunities to volunteer through the HCV programme.

### Intangibles

Beyond these measurable outcomes, respondents were asked to identify the overall impact that being a Host City Volunteer had had on their lives. Responses generally focused around a number of key themes (5.1):

- Confidence: e.g. *"I have gained more confidence in speaking and interacting with people, and feeling okay about being myself around others."*
- Getting involved: e.g. *"I have been inspired to do other things that I would not have done before."*
- Making friends: e.g. *"I have made lifelong friends that I keep in touch with regularly and we volunteer together at other events"*
- Increased awareness of the community: e.g. *"I can make a difference"*
- Increased interactions with those around them: e.g. *"I talk to people a bit more e.g. at the bus stop and say hello to people in the wider community"*
- Increased civic pride
- Improved psychological well-being: e.g. *"It has made my depression a bit easier than before"*
- Employability: e.g. *"Able to use information from the experience in job interviews"*

There was also a great deal of enthusiasm shown by HCVs to discuss the Games-time experience, and to reminisce about what was for the vast majority a positive time in their lives (5.2).

While these impacts are difficult to quantify, they are important and do suggest some evidence of a positive legacy from the Games.

### Exploring change and continuity

With its starting expectation that there would be limited impact from being a HCV, this research has provided an opportunity to explore some of the reasons why there has been limited change.

Amongst HCVs who had experienced a lack of change in both levels of volunteering and levels of connectedness since the Games, some viewed the Games as a one-off event which was unlikely to have any longer-term impact (6.1).

Key reasons for feeling more connected, as discussed in the focus groups, **(6.2)** included membership of or involvement in organisations, more confidence, meeting new people, greater awareness of opportunities and through volunteering. By contrast, some of the commonly identified factors in feeling less connected were health problems / getting older, change in employment circumstances, no longer or not attending groups and less trust.

Increased confidence and increased civic pride were factors which encouraged HCVs to increase their levels of volunteering **(6.3)**. Decreased levels of volunteering were commonly attributed to a lack of time. However, another frequently mentioned factor was a lack of awareness of volunteering opportunities. Overall there was a definite sense of a missed opportunity to utilise the volunteering experience of HCVs in the wake of the Games.

### Implications

The research in this report highlights that the delivery of the Host City Volunteer programme was an overwhelming success, with 82% of respondents considering their Games-time experience to have been a positive one, 3 years on from the Games **(8.2)**.

However, our findings also point to the difficulties in progressing from staging a one-off event to having a more permanent, longer-term impact on the volunteering of those involved **(8.1)**. To achieve this in the wake of future big events in the city, additional investment of resources post-event for volunteer-development agencies will be needed **(8.3)**.

## **1. Introduction**

During the Commonwealth Games held in Glasgow in July and August 2014, nearly 1100 people took part as Host City Volunteers (HCVs), offering advice and support to visitors and spectators across the city. The HCVs were selected, trained and supported by Glasgow Life on behalf of Glasgow City Council, and augmented the Clyde-sider volunteers managed by the Glasgow 2014 Organising Committee with roles at Games venues.

Research conducted with the HCVs before, during and immediately after the Games highlighted that the vast majority of the volunteers found the experience very positive and, for many, likely to inspire them to become more active citizens.<sup>1</sup>

This study has explored the extent to which such intentions have been followed through by the HCVs, and the character of the engagement which they have undertaken. The study was commissioned by Glasgow Life, with the research team from Glasgow Caledonian and Strathclyde Universities contacting all those Host City Volunteers who had previously indicated they were willing to be approached again.

The primary research was conducted by Fiona Reid and Raf Nicholson at Glasgow Caledonian University between September 2017 and December 2017. This report summarises the outcomes of this engagement with HCVs, as well as providing some recommendations emerging from the findings.

### **1.1 The Impact of Event Volunteering**

Previous studies looking at sporting event volunteers (see Appendix 1) have suggested that although there may be enthusiasm to continue with volunteering after the event, limited evidence exists of this actually happening. In part this may reflect the dearth of follow up studies with volunteers, but those undertaken suggest that participating in one-off events such as the Commonwealth Games has limited impact on people's future volunteering behaviour.<sup>2</sup> The starting point for the research here acknowledges this, and presumes that the long-term impact and legacy of being involved as a volunteer at the Games may therefore be limited.

This study's starting point also acknowledges that volunteering is only one expression of how being a Games-time volunteer might impact on people's attitudes and behaviour. Volunteering takes time and needs commitment, and it is a specific form of activity within a community or organisation. Being an event volunteer may also inspire people to change their behaviour and attitudes to others in different ways beyond volunteering especially within the groups in which they already engage. These include their family, their local community and organisations which they are part of. This study therefore also looked beyond volunteering when assessing the impact of being an HCV.

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<sup>1</sup> These studies were reported to Glasgow Life in 2014 – see Rogerson et al (2014a), and Rogerson et al (2014b).

<sup>2</sup> A. Doherty, 'The volunteer legacy of a major sport event', *Journal of Policy Research in Tourism, Leisure and Events*, 1:3 (2009); P. Downward and R. Ralston, 'The Sports Development Potential of Sports Event Volunteering: Insights from the XVII Manchester Commonwealth Games', *European Sport Management Quarterly*, 6:4 (2006).



Indeed, the HCV programme set out to maximise opportunities for local communities to feel connected with the 2014 Commonwealth Games, by providing a way for local people to get directly involved in supporting the delivery of the event; and enhance civic pride; while also trying to recruit a diverse volunteer base, with a particular focus on recruiting from under-represented groups including disabled people, people aged over 60 and those living in the most deprived areas of Glasgow.<sup>3</sup>

The programme was successfully delivered at Games time, with almost 1,100 HCVs assisting the public to find their way around the city centre and to sporting venues, as well as providing them with information about Glasgow.

In this report we consider whether there is evidence 3 years after being an HCV that the experience has had an impact on volunteers' lives – individually, through their connections and interactions with others in their community, and through volunteering.

## 1.2 Our Approach

In framing this study, we have taken a very different approach to all previous studies. Our hypothesis is that being an HCV has not significantly impacted on people's lives in ways which will increase their involvement within their community or within local organisations. Whilst most previous research has assumed that there is a positive impact and sought to reveal evidence of such change, we argue that all the (limited) evidence suggests that there is little justification to expect such change to occur – and indeed more evidence for the maintenance of the status quo.

Our starting assumption is that being an HCV was a positive experience for most of those involved,<sup>4</sup> but that being “an absolute once in a lifetime opportunity” (as one HCV described it), the longer-term impact of the experience is likely to have been limited. We have therefore framed our approach as one seeking to understand reasons for this absence of change, but also to examine further the reasons for any change which has occurred.

We have sought to assess two key measures of change:

1. Have HCVs engaged in any further volunteering since the Games?
2. Have HCVs increased their social connectedness since the Games?

Whilst most studies have emphasised future volunteering as a potential legacy from being involved in event volunteering, an increase in levels of connection to one's social milieu and the networks that result from such connections – termed “social connectedness”- has also been identified as a potential key measure of change in the literature on sport volunteering<sup>5</sup> (see Appendix 1).

Our approach to assessing these two forms of change has been through a general questionnaire survey, and a follow up set of focus groups which enabled the initial

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<sup>3</sup> Host City Volunteers Project Application submitted to Big Lottery Fund (Glasgow Life, 2013).

<sup>4</sup> Research conducted at the time of the Games suggested an 89% satisfaction rate amongst surveyed HCVs.

<sup>5</sup> T. Kay and S. Bradbury, ‘Youth sport volunteering: developing social capital?’, *Sport, Education and Society*, 14:1 (2009); R. Hoye, M. Nicholson and K. Brown, ‘Involvement in sport and social connectedness’, *International Review for the Sociology of Sport*, 50:1 (2015).

outcomes of the survey to be explored in more depth, and for other insights to be provided by participants.

We devised a survey which sought to measure quantitatively continuity and change since the Games (see Appendix 3). Nine hundred and ninety-three (993) HCVs had agreed to be contacted for follow-up research and they were invited to complete the survey online or on paper if no email address was available.

Three hundred and thirty-three (333) HCVs responded to this survey (a response rate of 34%). The profile of respondents was generally representative of the HCV population, though those from the younger age groups and from ethnic minority groups were slightly under-represented, while those who identified as having a disability or long-term illness were slightly over-represented (see Appendix 5).

The survey was designed specifically to offer opportunities for respondents to indicate the nature and extent to which they were currently (in October/November 2017) involved in volunteering and the extent of their connections with local communities. The survey also asked respondents to reflect on the change in these areas from their involvement pre-Games (i.e. before July 2014).

Drawing from the respondents to the survey who indicated their willingness to participate in small group discussions, we formed focus groups utilising a typology based on the survey data. The three groups represented those who had:

1. experienced no change in both social connectedness and levels of volunteering since the Games;
2. experienced a change in levels of volunteering but no change in their social connectedness since the Games; and
3. experienced a change in their social connectedness but no change in levels of volunteering since the Games.

The primary aim of each of the focus groups was to discuss the reasons for lack of change in an in-depth way with a smaller number of HCVs, as well as to identify any more intangible change which the survey may have been unable to capture. In total 15 people attended these groups (3 in the first group, 6 in the second group and 6 in the third group).

### **1.3 The backdrop to the analysis: a positive HCV experience**

The focus of this report is on the longer-term impact of being an HCV. Previous studies of event volunteering have underlined the importance of the 'event experience' on people's future intentions and actions. Bad experiences, either perceived or real, are likely to impact negatively on future actions, a situation which is widely recognized in event management with considerable attention given to ensure that volunteers are supported during the event itself.<sup>6</sup>

The evidence from the surveys for this research, and those conducted at Games time, suggest that for a large majority of the HCVs, their event experience was very positive.

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<sup>6</sup> J. Farrell, M. Johnston and G. Twynam, 'Volunteer Motivation, Satisfaction and Management at an Elite Sporting Competition', *Journal of Sport Management*, 12 (1998).

Research conducted with the HCVs during the Games and immediately following the event suggested that for the vast majority of the 1100 people involved, the experience was very positive, created a sense of belonging to the group and to the city, and inspired many of them to feel more confident and likely to engage in future volunteering roles. This positive experience meant that across all participants who responded to the questions, the majority signalled their desire to continue to volunteer in future events (83%) and in their community (66%) – Figure 2. More than three quarters of respondents felt that they were more confident having been an HCV (Figure 3).

Figure 2: Willingness to volunteer in future if asked<sup>7</sup>

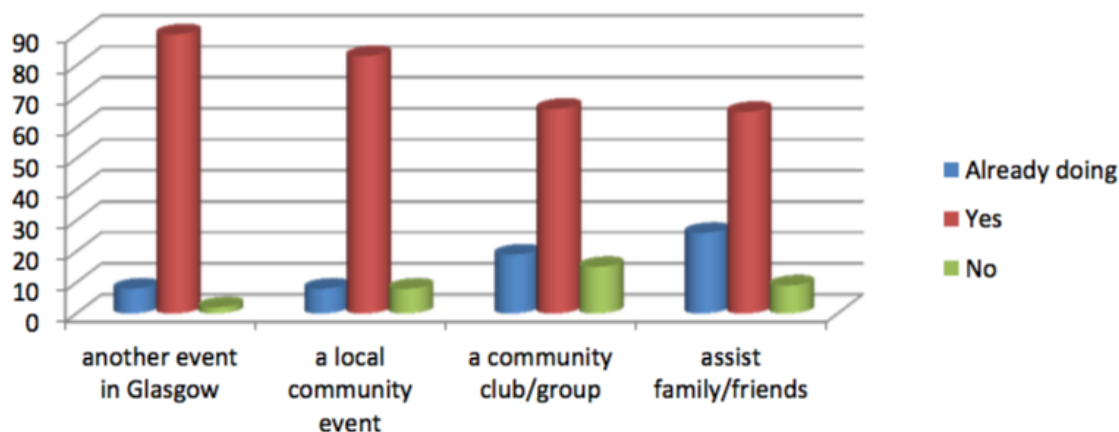
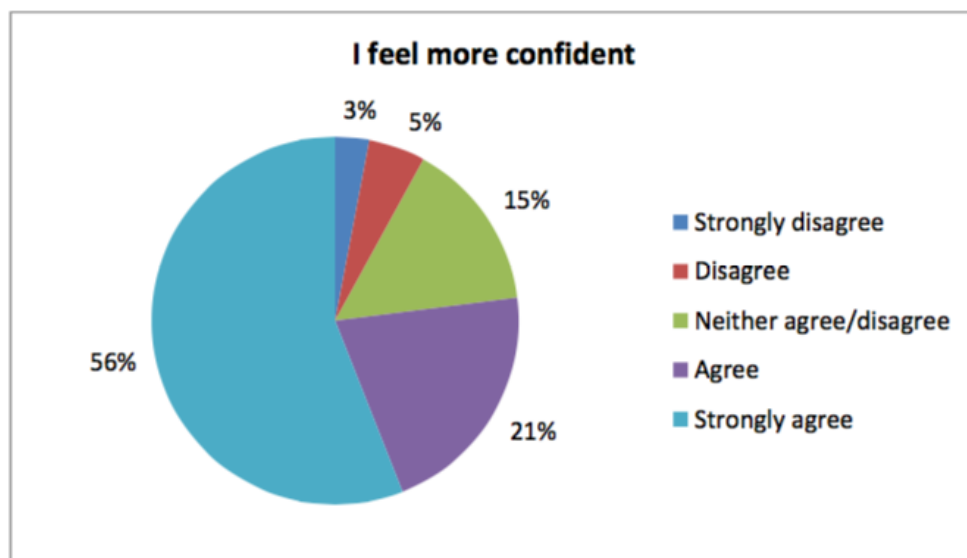


Figure 3: Increased confidence after being an HCV<sup>7</sup>



This feeling of positivity has continued over the intervening time period and has impacted positively on volunteers' lives. For this study, HCVs were asked to identify what impact being a HCV had had on their lives over the past 3 years. 82% (193 respondents of the 236 who answered this question) felt being an HCV had made a positive impact on their lives 3 years on from the Games. 17% (39 people) felt it had not changed their lives and

<sup>7</sup> Source: R. Rogerson et al, 'Participating as a Host City Volunteer: perspectives from those involved in the Glasgow Commonwealth Games' (2015)

only 2% (4 respondents) felt the experience had been negative. This negative effect was related to very specific issues with event management rather than any longer-term impact on their lives or their sense of social connectedness.

This assessment of being a HCV as a positive influence was reinforced throughout the focus groups. In each group there remained a strong recollection that being a HCV was positive and constructive. Comments included:

*“I had the best time ever”.*

*“I had my doubts about it but it was just absolutely fantastic”.*

*“I did City Host because I didn’t get Clyde-sider!...but actually, in hindsight, I enjoyed doing City Host – I think it was a better gig than some of the jobs that were given out in Clyde-sider.”*

*“from having [volunteered at] the London Olympics and the Commonwealth Games, I definitely actually preferred the Commonwealth aspect... there was aspects of [the Commonwealth Games] that were actually more inspirational [than the Olympics]”.*

*“I felt so proud. I felt 6ft tall, even though I’m only 5ft 7’. Just being involved in it.”*

Many of the positive responses also highlighted important aspects of the event itself, for example:

*“We were well looked after and I think that was the thing that boosted a lot of people. The fact that, you know, you had connections with the organisers. You didn’t feel isolated, you knew you had somebody to turn to if you had a problem.”*

It was clear across the respondents in this study that the overall aim of the HCV programme to deliver a positive one-off volunteering experience for those involved had been successfully achieved. This provided an important backdrop for the research, clearly indicating that the longer-term impact, if any, was not influenced by poor event experiences.

## **1.4 Report Structure**

What are the longer-term impacts of being an HCV in 2014?

In the rest of the report we utilise the data from the survey and focus groups to examine this impact. The report is organised first in terms of the specific aims of the HCV programme, seeking to introduce new people to volunteering (**section 2**); seeking to increase HCV engagement within their community and city (**section 3**); and as a means to encourage inclusion of under-represented groups in volunteering (**section 4**). Each of these three sections considers the level of success 3 years on from the Games. We also explore other, less anticipated changes which the Games may have wrought in the lives of HCVs (**section 5**).

A key focus of the study is change – or the absence of this – and in **Section 6** we examine the legacies of the HCV programme in greater detail, exploring the reasons for the continuity and change present in the survey data.

The report concludes with some key implications from our research, both with regard to the HCV programme specifically and the organisation of big events more generally **(sections 7 and 8)**.

## **2. Generating a volunteering legacy**

The HCV programme aimed to give local people an opportunity to support the delivery of the Games through volunteering, and to increase awareness of the benefits of volunteering. Additionally, one legacy which was anticipated for the Games in 2014 was to increase overall numbers of volunteers in Glasgow.<sup>8</sup>

Previous studies of event volunteering suggest that one possible legacy of a one-off volunteering experience, such as being an HCV or Clyde-sider, is that it creates a potential 'army' of volunteers who will continue to give their time after the event ends. Experience from previous Commonwealth Games, for example in Manchester and Melbourne, and at larger sporting events such as the winter and summer Olympics (in Sydney, and Vancouver), indicates that many volunteers are often willing to take part as event volunteers in future within the host city. Much less evidence exists of event volunteers participating in other forms of volunteering, beyond specific events.<sup>9</sup>

Indeed, in the absence of any longitudinal evidence to support such an impact on wider volunteering, we anticipated in conducting this research that being an HCV was unlikely to create any lasting change in volunteering behaviour.

### **2.1 Assessing volunteering**

Definitions of what is meant by volunteering vary, and in this study HCVs were being asked about differing forms of volunteering. Whilst their role as HCV was a form of one-off and time limited volunteering, the survey was asking about more routine forms of volunteering and help. In a desire to ensure that as many 'volunteering' opportunities as possible were included in the analysis, the surveys included questions which helped to make explicit the meanings.

In order to capture different types / definitions of volunteering and to explore as widely as possible whether there had been any change in people's volunteering behaviour, we asked all respondents several different questions about their volunteering. First, each was asked to self-define their role as volunteers, indicating whether they gave up any time to help as a volunteer, both now (Q2) and before the Commonwealth Games (Q8). Second, respondents were asked to identify whether they currently give any "unpaid help" to groups, clubs or organisations (formal volunteering) during the last 12 months (Q4) or prior to 2014 (Q9) and asked to indicate if before 2014 they had been involved with groups, clubs and organisations (Q7). Separately each person was asked whether they gave unpaid help of various types to someone who is not a relative (informal volunteering) (Q5) and again using the same list prior to the Commonwealth Games (Q10).

The survey differentiated these as distinct forms of volunteering but for the analysis here they were aggregated to indicate 'volunteering'. A respondent who indicated 'yes' to undertaking any of these forms is considered a volunteer even if they did not define

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<sup>8</sup> Glasgow 2014 Legacy Framework' (Glasgow City Council, 2009); 'People, Place, Passion: Glasgow 2014 Commonwealth Games Candidate City File, volume 1' (2009).

<sup>9</sup> P. Downward and R. Ralston, 'The Sports Development Potential of Sports Event Volunteering: Insights from the XVII Manchester Commonwealth Games, *European Sport Management Quarterly*, 6:4 (2006); T. Dickson, A. Benson, D. Blackman and A. Terwiel, 'It's all about the Games! 2010 Vancouver Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games Volunteers', *Event Management* 17:1 (2013).

themselves as such under Q2 and Q8. Whilst 124 HCVs suggested that they were not currently giving up time as volunteers (Q2), when asked 46 (37%) were offering unpaid help to others, 15 (12%) were helping clubs unpaid, and 23 (19%) were doing both.

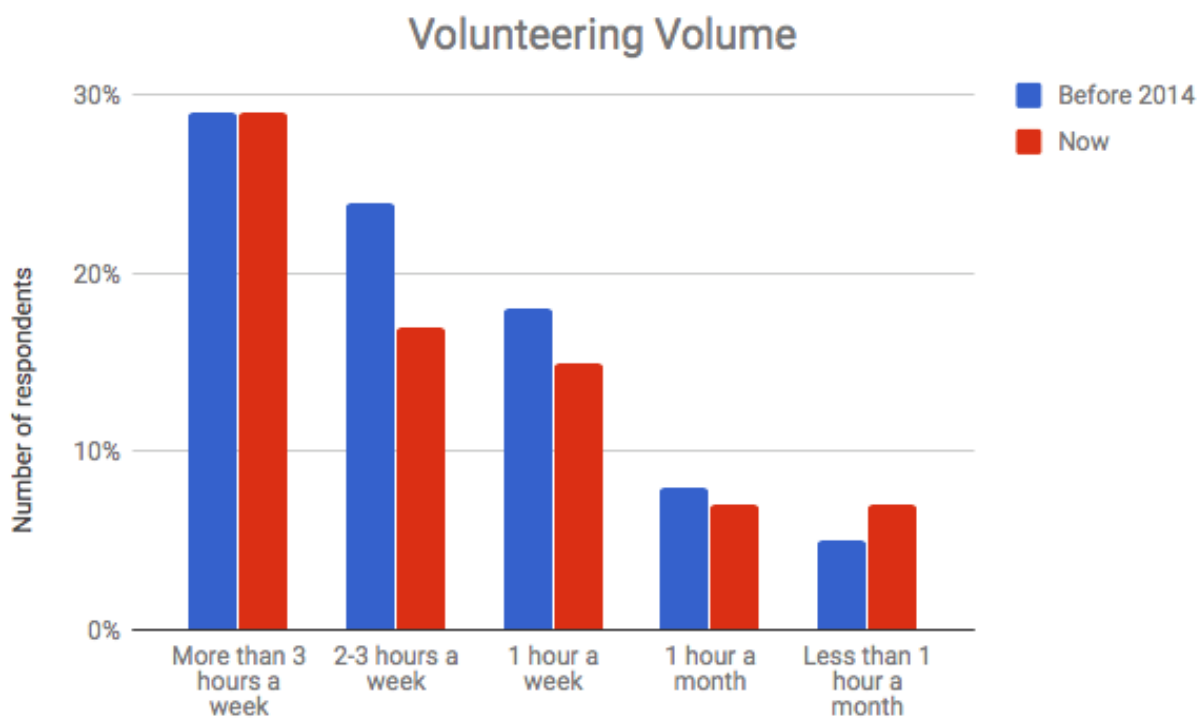
The volunteering picture which emerges from the survey is thus complex, with many people designating themselves as volunteers but others undertaking roles which (in the view of wider definitions) many would consider to constitute volunteering. In the analysis here, the breakdown is thus:

Those who NEITHER define themselves as volunteers NOR undertake unpaid roles are non-volunteers. Anyone else undertaking one or more roles or self-defining as a volunteer is considered to be a volunteer.

## 2.2 Volunteering levels since the Games

Overall 87% of respondents are volunteering in 2017 – a slight decrease from 90% volunteering pre-Games. This is against a backdrop of continuity. The majority of HCVs were already engaged with volunteering before the Games, and they have continued to volunteer over the last 3 years. Only a minority – 32 people (11%) – recorded change, with 12 now undertaking volunteering having not done so prior to being a HCV, and 20 no longer volunteering. The remaining respondents have continued to volunteer (83%) or continue to have no volunteer role (6%).

Figure 4: Volume of Volunteering by HCVs



However there has also been a decrease of 10% in the number of volunteers who give up 1 hour a week or more as a volunteer (Figure 4) from 71% of respondents (182 people) before the Games, to 61% (165 people) now.

### **2.3 Did the Games bring new people into volunteering?**

The HCV programme was devised to help draw in new volunteers, giving them a 'first' step to volunteering as a HCV. In reality, many of the HCV participants were also experienced volunteers. Data gathered by Glasgow Life at the induction of HCVs identified that 69% already had volunteering experience. From our research (see 2.2 above), just 10% of respondents had the potential to be new volunteers after the Games.

### **2.4 Reasons for stopping volunteering**

The pattern of volunteering is never static, as people's life circumstances and commitments change and as they move into and out of volunteering. For the vast majority of HCVs, they remain committed to volunteering. Only 12 respondents (4%) had stopped being involved in any form of volunteering, although the nature of such volunteering has changed for some others.

The survey did not ask respondents directly to identify reasons for stopping volunteering, but this group indicates they feel less connected to their local community than they did in 2014 - in contrast nobody who has started volunteering feels less connected to their local community since the Games.

It can be surmised that forming connections with others around you, and being involved in regular and structured volunteering, is likely to increase the chances of you continuing to volunteer.

### **2.5 Summary**

Overall, slightly fewer of the HCVs are volunteering now than before the Games. However, there is a complex picture where there are some individual changes, rather than a clear group-level change. This highlights the need to further investigate some of the reasons for giving up or starting volunteering in the focus group discussions (see **section 6**). It also suggests that we may need to look elsewhere to identify possible change in the lives of HCVs since the Games.



### **3. Social connectedness amongst HCVs**

Alongside targeting groups who may previously have encountered barriers to engaging in volunteering, the HCV programme sought to encourage HCVs both to enhance their own lives and those of their community. Supporting stronger social connections with families and communities formed a key longer-term objective for Glasgow Life.

As outlined above, in accordance with previous research on the subject, we have chosen to measure community engagement by assessing changes in levels of “social connectedness” before and since the Games. We asked respondents to elaborate on this through questions in the survey about formal and informal contacts and engagement within their local area. These included their involvement in organised social groups and clubs, the extent to which they talked to neighbours and met others, their sense of connection with their local place, and their perceived ability to influence decisions affecting their local area. These are all common indicators of connectedness utilised by the UK and Scottish governments.<sup>10</sup> For each topic, the respondents were asked to assess their current involvement or impact, compared with the situation prior to the Games in 2014.

In interpreting the patterns, it is important to underline that we have not attempted to explore whether being an HCV has directly contributed to being more or less socially connected. The HCV programme sought to be more of a catalyst for change than a direct pathway.

#### **3.1 Involvement in social groups or clubs**

Overall, 67% of respondents (217 people) have been involved in social groups or clubs over the last 12 months. This represents 2% increase from the 65% who were involved in groups or clubs before the Games.

We also sought to measure frequency of involvement in groups or clubs amongst HCVs. Generally, this has remained stable since the Games, although the number of respondents participating several times a week has decreased from 34% (66 people) before the Games to 26% (56 people) currently.

#### **3.2 Other measures of connectedness**

Taking the 4 key measures mentioned above - talking to neighbours, meeting up with others, feeling able to influence decisions affecting their local area, and feeling connected to their local community – there is a sizeable group who feel more connected now than before the Games (Figure 5):

47 people (16%) talk to their neighbours more since the Games;

75 people (25%) meet up with others more;

64 people (22%) feel more able to influence decisions affecting their local area; and

59 people (20%) feel more connected to their local community.

In addition, the majority of respondents feel that there has been no change in their connectedness in the past 3 years (Figure 5):

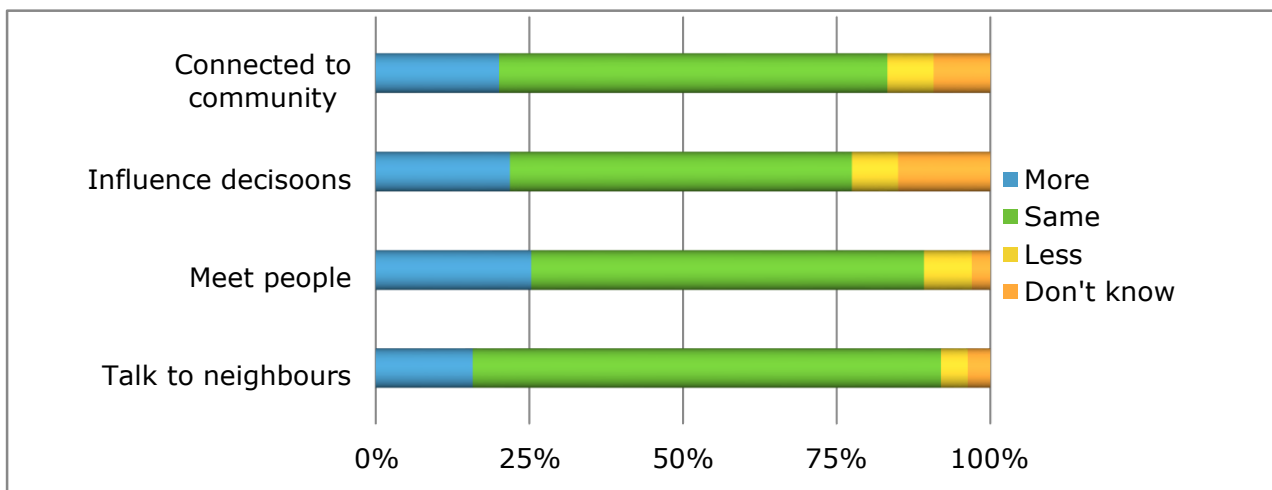
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<sup>10</sup> R. Harper and M. Kelly, ‘Measuring Social Capital in the UK’, *Office of National Statistics*, December 2003.

- 76% (226 people) talk to their neighbours the same amount as they did before the Games.
- 64% (190 people) meet up with other people the same amount as they did before the Games.
- 56% (163 people) feel equally able to influence decisions affecting their local area.
- 63% (184 people) feel equally connected to their local community.

There has, therefore, been a more notable increase in social connectedness than in volunteering levels since the Games. Overall, 19 respondents (6%) have increased their connectedness by all 4 of these measures. Their responses again highlight the close link between increased connectedness and levels of volunteering (17 are volunteers). By contrast, only 3 respondents (1%) have decreased their connectedness levels by all 4 of the key measures. Of these 3, none of them currently volunteer.

Figure 5: Measures of connectedness among HCVs



### 3.3 Summary

Overall, there has been a more notable increase in social connectedness than in volunteering levels for HCVs since the Games. However, while a sizeable group of HCVs do feel more connected to their communities and to other people since the Games, the majority have not experienced changes in their levels of social connectedness. There is a need to further investigate whether particular groups within the survey sample have increased or decreased their connectedness since the Games (see section 5).

## **4. Inclusion**

A third aim of the HCV programme was to support the participation of key demographic groups in Glasgow known to be under-represented in volunteering. Target groups included disabled people, people aged over 60, and those living in the most deprived areas of the city. The HCV programme itself also aimed to promote inclusive practice.

### **4.1 People living in deprived areas of Glasgow**

Based on the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation, 32 survey respondents live in the 10% most deprived areas of Glasgow. The levels of volunteering in this group have remained steady since before the Games at 91% – with just 3 respondents not volunteering.

Analysis of these respondents indicated that by some measures they are more connected than our overall survey population. For example, 25% (8 people) talk to their neighbours more than they did before the Games (compared with 16% of all respondents), and 44% (14 people) feel proud of their local community (against 27% of all respondents). 28% (9 people) indicated that they feel more connected to their local community than they did before the Games (as compared with just 20% of all survey respondents). Comments included:

*“The experience greatly boosted my confidence. It gave me a focus”*

*“It was a wonderful experience and gave me a sense of pride in my city and myself. Through it I became more outward looking and concerned about the needs of others in our communities.”*

### **4.2 Older people (aged 60+)**

68 survey respondents were aged 65+ (meaning that at the time of the Games they would have been aged 62+). A key finding was that those in this age group have increased their volunteering - 88% (60 people) were involved in volunteering prior to the Games, compared with 93% (63 people) now – a small increase of 5%.

Several of those who attended the focus groups fell into this age category, and reported a range of experiences:

- One attendee who has increased his levels of volunteering since the Games explained that his sense of connectedness to Glasgow had increased “10 times more”: *“Glasgow became the centre of the world for me... I’ve now been able to say to people ‘well it will take a lot to beat Glasgow in the Commonwealth Games’.”*
- Another attendee whose levels of connectedness have increased since the Games explained how the Games had led to her striking up conversations with those in her neighbourhood: *“I live on the corner, my garden’s high. I come out with this lovely bunting. The bunting had every single flag of every single nation that was involved in the Games, and I tied it to the tree and I let it go right across my garden... Everybody that went past and went to the park...said they loved it. And that was the thing that boosted everybody.”*

But for some attendees, not much had changed since the Games:

*“I have an incredibly busy life anyway... I do an awful lot of other stuff, so it didn't really change that at all”*

*“Since [the Games], I've done nothing... where I live the community seems to be quite buoyant. I don't see any need for charity.”*

### 4.3 Disabled people

65 people who self-identified as having a disability or long-term illness completed the survey. Overall, their levels of volunteering have slightly decreased since the Games, with 75% (49 people) volunteering now compared with 80% (52 people) before the Games. Nonetheless this still compares favourably with figures from the 2016 Scottish Household Survey, which indicate that volunteering levels amongst adults who are 'permanently sick or have short term ill health issues or are disabled' stand at 11%. The decline in volunteering levels may also simply be reflective of the national trend: the Scottish Household Survey has identified a significant drop in volunteering amongst disabled people/those with ill health issues, from 17% in 2015 to 11% in 2016.

The survey data do indicate that this group has increased their connectedness more than our overall survey population by a number of key measures since the Games:

- 23% (15) talk to their neighbours more now than they did before the Games (compared with 16% overall) – Figure 6
- 31% (20) meet up with other people more (compared with 25% overall) – Figure 7
- 31% (20) feel more able to influence decisions in their local area (compared with 22% overall) - Figure 8
- 31% (20) feel more connected to their local community now (compared with 20% overall) – Figure 9

Figure 6: Talking to neighbours since the Games

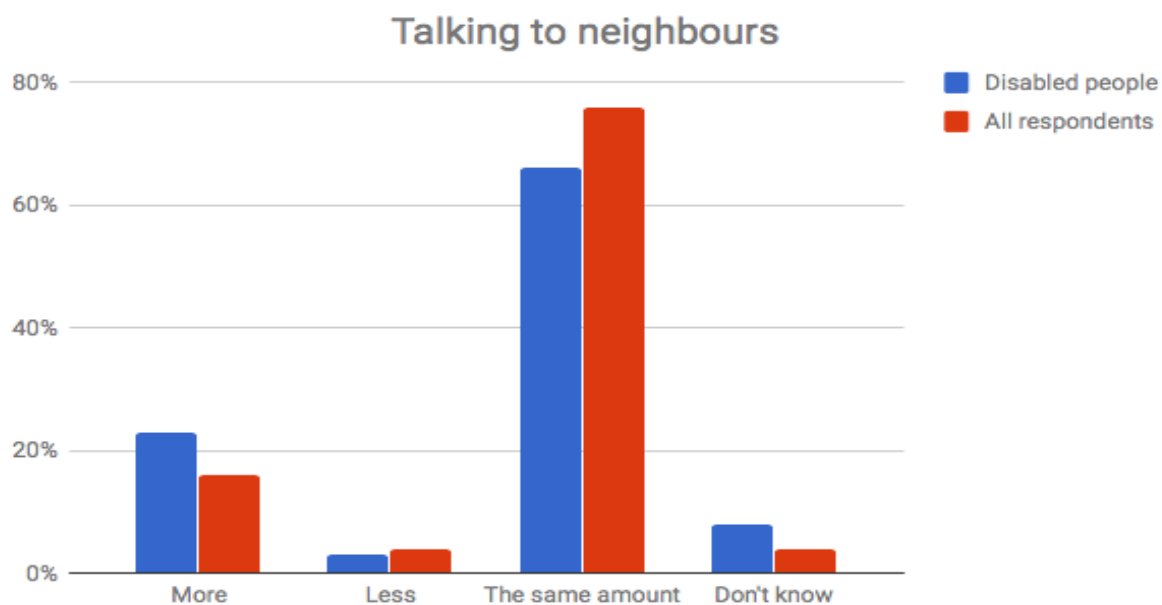


Figure 7: Meeting up with other people since the Games



Figure 8: Ability to influence decisions affecting their local area since the Games

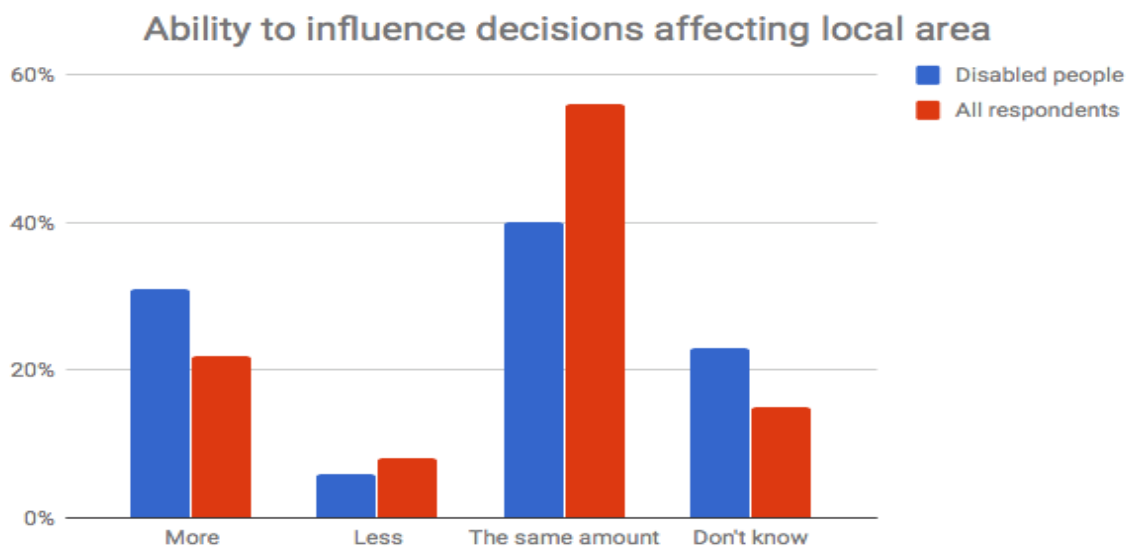
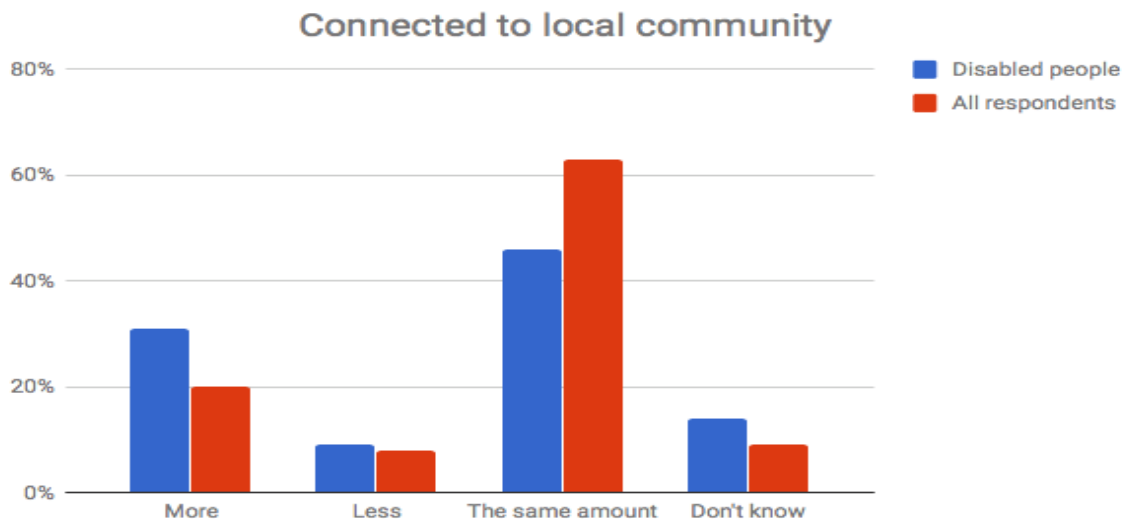


Figure 9: Connectedness to their local community since the Games



When assessing the ways in which the Games had impacted on their lives, comments included:

*"I feel proud of what I did and I know people like what I did."*

*"Knowing you can make a difference and be involved"*

*"I have found a lot of information about what goes on in the city during the year"*

*"Learned about making friends and got better at talking to people"*

Additionally, several discussions in the focus groups centred around the theme of inclusivity, with all attendees commenting favourably on the provisions made for those of all abilities to take part. One HCV who had been a team leader stated:

*"You had a lot of people who were disabled who didn't have the confidence to actually help people...and when they found that they could do it they were actually blooming and shining... it was really good to actually see them coming out of their shell."*

#### 4.4 Summary

While connectedness amongst all survey respondents has remained largely unchanged since the Games, an investigation of key target groups reveals that the Games has increased either their levels of volunteering (older people) or their sense of connectedness (people living in deprived areas, and disabled people). There is also a general feeling amongst those involved in our research that the HCV programme was an inclusive one, which may well have contributed to this positive impact.

## **5. Intangible legacies**

Previous research into the HCV experience had already identified that the programme had several more intangible, positive effects on participants, including meeting people, getting to know Glasgow better, and making new friends.<sup>11</sup> It was important, though, to assess whether these more intangible effects had endured, 3 years on from the Games. As part of our survey, respondents were asked to identify the overall impact that being a Host City Volunteer had had on their lives. This allowed for the identification of any changes not otherwise measured by the survey.

### **5.1 Intangible changes**

Responses generally focused around a number of key themes:

- Confidence: e.g. *“I have gained more confidence in speaking and interacting with people, and feeling okay about being myself around others.”*
- Getting involved: e.g. *“I have been inspired to do other things that I would not have done before.”*
- Making friends: e.g. *“I have made lifelong friends that I keep in touch with regularly and we volunteer together at other events”*
- Increased awareness of the community: e.g. *“I can make a difference”*
- Increased interactions with those around them: e.g. *“I talk to people a bit more e.g. at the bus stop and say hello to people in the wider community”*
- Increased civic pride
- Improved psychological well-being: e.g. *“It has made my depression a bit easier than before”*
- Employability: e.g. *“Able to use information from the experience in job interviews”*

For our purposes, these more intangible impacts are also important because they might well lead to the kind of changes which we are seeking to measure, namely volunteering and social connectedness. For example, confidence was seen in the focus groups as a prerequisite for volunteering:

*“It’s getting them through the doors. They need the confidence with which to do that... Once they’ve experienced it, once they’ve just seen it, you know, people then lose their fear.”*

*“there’s a whole load of shyness in people and they are frightened to make that first move because they don’t know anybody”*

Increased feelings of civic pride were also identified as encouraging people to volunteer:

*“People are saying ‘well why shouldn’t I be involved in my community? It’s my community, the Commonwealth Games were in Glasgow and it was all about Glasgow and we put on a good show. So let’s keep it up, y’know?”*

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<sup>11</sup> R. Rogerson et al, ‘Participating as a Host City Volunteer: perspectives from those involved in the Glasgow Commonwealth Games’ (2015).

Of course, having a positive experience as an HCV and indeed gaining benefits is not necessarily translated into volunteering practice. Amongst the respondents who reported they had not been involved in volunteering, there were still benefits from being a HCV, although many admitted that the experience did not have a lasting impact. However, some felt personal gains:

*“Volunteering for the first time at the Commonwealth Games helped to give me more confidence. While volunteering, it gave me a purpose to go up to people and start a conversation, which I had trouble with before volunteering. This led to me being more confident in talking to people in my day-to-day life.”*

*“I am disabled and I enjoyed being a volunteer at the Commonwealth Games. My Support worker helped me to do things which made me feel that I was part of volunteering and also showed the community what disabled people can do with a little support. It was a great feeling to be part of it all.”*

As one respondent aptly explained, other life factors impact on their ability to volunteer, even though she viewed the HCV experience as a motivator:

*“I thoroughly enjoyed the experience and it encouraged me to volunteer more. I realise the importance of volunteering and the benefits it can bring. Unfortunately as I am the main carer for two very elderly parents I cannot currently commit to a regular programme of volunteering, but would love to become involved with one off events.”*

For those inspired by the HCV role to take up volunteering, they noted that the one-off volunteering opportunity provided them with a sense of pride (in the city and themselves), and especially self-confidence, and a chance to be more extrovert:

*“It gave me a sense of pride in myself, and more confidence in myself. I also have been to many workshops on various subjects. Really enjoying my life now.”*

*“It was a great experience but it involved a set of skills which I had (e.g. socialising with people). It was right up my street. The only time I could genuinely ask people about their business and not be told to beat it.”*

*“It gave me the confidence I didn't have after having my brain tumour and my life altered. I wanted to love and live in this world again and that experience greatly helped me. For this I am thankful.”*

*“Being a Host City Volunteer gave me a new level of confidence in dealing with the public and strangers and renewed my enthusiasm for volunteering.”*

*“I was a team leader and I feel more able to manage a team. I learned more about Glasgow. I learned more about different cultures. I learned that I can do more without second guessing myself.”*

As noted above, a proportion of the HCVs who had previously volunteered before the Games indicated that they no longer undertake regular volunteering. It was however evident that their time as an HCV had brought other positives, expressed in ways other than through volunteering. For some this was expressed in terms of changing outlooks on



life, which in turn enabled them to engage in more social activities. Typical were these three comments:

*“It has given me a different outlook. I had just been widowed and was retired from work. It helped me to get out and meet new people. I loved the feeling it gave me, giving visitors to our beautiful city help and information. I also made many friends whom I have met in other volunteering roles since. Looking forward to the 2018 World (sic) Championships to do it over again.”*

*“It was a very positive experience, and I was very glad to have done it and been part of the positive welcome to our city. It gave me more interest in 'having a go' and trying new things. I have since been volunteering at a children's community group although it is not in the area where I live, so I do not feel it is actually part of my community.”*

*“It made a huge difference. It gave me confidence. I have joined some local groups and I have been looking after my health and trying to maintain my fitness. I also enjoyed so much about my city and meeting lots of different people. It was a wonderful and enjoyable learning experience for me and I would love to be involved again in any capacity.”*

## **5.2 Reminiscence**

One unanticipated outcome of the research was the enthusiasm shown by HCVs to discuss the Games-time experience, and to reminisce about what was for the vast majority a positive time in their lives. Of our 333 survey respondents, 142 (43%) indicated that they would be happy to participate in a focus group, and some of those who were unable to attend expressed disappointment at not being able to do so. Within each of the three focus groups attendees spent a significant proportion of time sharing fond memories of the Games period, as the following exchange demonstrates:

*A1: “I think everyone is going to reminisce for a long time because even tonight when I was coming up in the cab, the taxi driver said ‘Ohh, the Games were wonderful’...he says, ‘there wasn’t one bit of crime in the whole city’. Which is unbelievable, but you know it’s true...”*

*A6: “We had 4 days of the hottest weather we’ve ever had in Glasgow!”*

*A1: “Yes! God was good to us!”*

While the benefits of reminiscence are difficult to quantify, the recent development of “reminiscence therapy” suggests it has potential to enhance psychological well-being, with the opportunity to share memories enabling people to feel connected and valued. Whilst the focus of this approach has largely been in relation to supporting people with dementia, it clearly has wider applications, and simply providing the HCVs with the opportunity to share positive memories with each other might itself be viewed as a favourable legacy of the Games.

## **5.3 Summary**

There have been several more intangible changes in the lives of HCVs, including increased confidence, increased interactions with those around them, and increased civic pride. It is important to measure these changes because they may in turn have led to an

increase in willingness to volunteer and / or an increase in levels of connectedness to the local community. Additionally, while intangible changes may be difficult to quantify, they do suggest evidence of a positive legacy from the Games.

## **6. Exploring change and continuity**

As well as identifying continuity and change in the lives of HCVs since the Games, it was also important in our research to explore the reasons behind any changes. Can positive change be attributed to the Games experience? This links, of course, to the wider question of whether one-off sporting events can create a lasting legacy in the lives of those involved in them.

### **6.1 Reasons for no change**

As suggested above, the survey highlighted that there are some HCVs who have experienced little to no change since the Games. Why is this?

The formation of the “no change” focus group (that is, those who had experienced no change in both volunteering levels and levels of connectedness - see section 1.2) allowed for a deeper exploration of this question.

Firstly, it is important to note that all the participants in this group expressed positive feelings about the HCV experience. Quotes included: *“it was a wonderful experience, I loved every bit of it”*; and *“as a team leader... to see people you were working with develop was really rewarding”*. The key question is why these positive feelings did not translate into a change in behaviour.

For some, this is because they were already engaged in volunteering and/or involved in their communities and have simply continued with this - *“I was busy beforehand, I made time for the Commonwealth Games, and I’m busy now”*, in the words of one attendee. For others, the Games were simply viewed as a one-off:

*“I think that everybody thinks they’ll never capture that atmosphere again, that’s what they feel.”*

For those who viewed the Games in this way, the HCV experience was presumably unlikely to have any longer-term impact.

Lastly, it must be stressed that there were methodological limitations to the survey tool, which was ultimately a blunt instrument that may well have failed to capture certain types of change. In one of the focus groups, having identified change in their sense of connectedness which the survey had failed to detect, attendees discussed this issue:

*C3: “A survey is difficult...you’re ticking boxes...”*

*C2: “I think it’s, you know, there’s more explanation at a face-to-face so maybe reading the questions at face value and thinking nah, not really, I don’t really feel much more connected, but it’s only at discussion that actually the changes come out and you’re like, ‘no actually, now you come to mention it’.”*

### **6.2 Reasons for a change in connectedness**

Another of the focus groups was made up of those who had experienced a change in social connectedness, although their volunteering levels had remained constant since the

Games. This included insights from those who had increased their levels of connectedness, and those whose connectedness had decreased.

Involvement in organisations is a key way to develop connectedness, both to other people and to the local community. One attendee noted that his levels of connectedness to Glasgow had decreased since the Games, and linked this directly to the closure of a walking group he had been a member of, which had ceased to exist two months after the Games.

Increased confidence in both their own capabilities and that of the Glasgow authorities were also seen as important factors in an increased sense of connectedness. Importantly, this increased confidence was directly attributed to the HCV experience:

*“Going to college... doing a presentation, that was like ‘aahhh’. It won’t work for me because I won’t be able to stand in front of a class and start talking...but now, oft, I talk!”*

*“I think I go to more events now and I support things more... [the Games] were such a success that it's kind of like, yes this will be good too.”*

*“It’s given a confidence that when you go to other events that Glasgow put on, and you think: now this is going to be good. They are going to do it well.”*

Relatedly, for some in the focus groups, the HCV experience had helped them feel more connected to Glasgow:

*“I just feel my love of the city increased enormously. I felt connected with the city and that has remained with me since the Commonwealth Games... [people] were so gregarious and friendly and helpful.”*

This was also supported by data from the survey, in which respondents were asked to identify reasons why they felt more or less connected to their local communities since the Games. Some of the commonly identified factors in feeling more connected were:

- Membership of or involvement in organisations (8 people)
- More confidence (7 people)
- Meeting new people (6 people)
- Greater awareness of opportunities (6 people)
- Volunteering (5 people)

These appear to be mostly under the control of the individual, whereas in contrast, some of the commonly identified factors in feeling less connected were:

- Health problems / getting older (5 people)
- Change in employment circumstances (3 people)
- No longer or not attending groups (3 people)
- Less trust (3 people)
- Moving house (2 people)

These factors are generally external, have little to do with the Games volunteering experience and it is difficult to see how it would be possible to counteract them.

Overall, therefore, it does appear that the HCV experience was an important factor in raising levels of social connectedness; while any decline in social connectedness is not directly attributable to the Games-time volunteering experience.

### 6.3 Reasons for a change in volunteering levels

The final focus group was made up of those who had experienced no change in social connectedness, and had either increased or decreased their levels of volunteering since the Games.

Those who were doing more volunteering highlighted several reasons why this was the case. Confidence was again a commonly recurring theme, as one attendee who has recently been through the skills-matching process for the 2018 European Championships identified:

*“When I first started [volunteering] I was quite nervous about doing it... but now I have no issues with that at all. With the Skills Match, I love it... it’s given me a lot of confidence in actually going out there.”*

*“We’ve had a few folk who say ‘oh I’d like to help but I’m not really into Brownies or I can’t add up so I don’t want to really work in the credit union’, and we’re like, but there’s other things you can do. And sometimes you have to be open to people who want to come in and not think ‘no, no you’re not good enough’.”*

Civic pride was also an important factor:

*“I probably would have decreased [volunteering] had it not been for the Commonwealth Games. I think that gave me that surge to say, I want to keep volunteering... because it’s my city. And if I can’t help out in my city then who else is going to do it? It’s this sense of being a Glaswegian and being a true Glaswegian and helping out and doing your bit.”*

Amongst those who were doing less volunteering since the Games, external factors once again played a part. Time was mentioned frequently as a constraining factor:

*“I haven’t done anything recently because I had an elderly father who I was looking after”*

*“In my case...I’m beginning to pick and choose what I volunteer for because I’m involved in so many other things and you can only do so much. And there’s no use putting pressure on yourself.”*

*“I used to do long term volunteering with Children’s Panel which was quite a big commitment... But then my circumstances changed... I had an elderly mother in law with dementia on her own. The usual. And my parents were getting more elderly, and they live a bit of a distance away.”*

*“I work full-time as well so it’s like there is only so much you can do.”*

However, another frequently mentioned factor was a lack of awareness of volunteering opportunities. Some focus group attendees noted that they felt the Games had raised

awareness of volunteering: *“there was more of a spotlight on the fact that you could volunteer for things”*. However, this was felt to generally be a short-term phenomenon, and overall there was a definite sense of a missed opportunity to utilise their volunteering experience in the wake of the Games:

*“I think people don’t know how to get involved in volunteering and there’s a lot of people who might want to give their time”*

*“It needs to be put out more, because there’s things that somebody says to you and you go ‘what was that? Sorry, go back. When did that happen? I never heard that.’”*

Two focus group attendees felt particularly strongly about this point:

A3: *“There have not been any events that they have contacted us to be a part of...”*

A2: *“Nothing.”*

A3: *“And we thought that like as long as we were part of the Commonwealth Games we should at least be part of more...”*

A2: *“I think Glasgow Life missed a fantastic opportunity because there’s a lot of things still to do... It’s almost as if ‘we’ll get the next lot through’. So it’s like they’re kind of not using the volunteers that they trained.”*

Another attendee felt he had not been notified about any further opportunities at all: *“I’ve not been involved in anything since then. I’ve not been asked to.”*

The sense of not feeling needed or wanted clearly impacted on some of those in the focus groups, especially those more lacking in confidence. One noted: *“Once you’re in the door and your name’s known then it makes it easier to go the next time... while I’ve kind of looked for things to volunteer for, I don’t know if it’s been that easy to actually get in.”* Another felt that *“there was people saying, ‘oh aye, now the Commonwealth Games everything is taken over... we’ve done this for so many years and now all these newbies are coming in and thinking they get to run the place’”*.

## **6.4 Summary**

Overall, therefore, some of the increase in volunteering was seen within the focus groups as attributable to the HCV experience, while any decrease tended to be due to external factors such as lack of time. However, there is also a clear sense that some HCVs felt they needed more support to translate the one-off Games experience into further volunteering.

## **7. Research conclusions**

The research has found that the overall picture of volunteering by the HCVs over the past three years since they were involved with the Games has been one of limited change. This challenges the existing conceptualisation of volunteering legacy from one-off major events where continued or increased volunteering post-event is anticipated and researched. The evidence indicates that the Games-time experience has not transformed the HCVs into repeat volunteers. On the other hand, legacies appear to be more intangible: increased social connectedness, a growth in confidence, increased interactions with those around them, and increased civic pride.

Although their Games volunteering remains remembered positively, it has not been an experience which has significantly impacted on respondents' subsequent volunteering behaviour, although social connectedness has slightly increased. In large part this may reflect the characteristics of those recruited as HCVs – many of whom were already volunteering in some capacity, and/or who were involved with their local community.

Where there has been change at an individual level, this appears to reflect individual circumstances as well as external factors (e.g. changes in personal health, caring responsibilities, etc.), rather than any larger scale or longer-term impact of being a HCV.

Our research also sought to assess whether there has been any shift in overall levels of “social connectedness” experienced by HCVs since the Games. Once again, the results of this suggest continuity rather than change. Levels of connectedness - as measured by factors such as speaking to neighbours, meeting up with other people, ability to influence decisions affecting one's local area, and general feelings of connection to one's local community - have overall remained constant for the majority of HCVs who responded to the survey, although a sizeable number of respondents had increased in each of the measures. This was particularly noticeable amongst disabled respondents.

Taken as a whole, this research therefore suggests that a one-off intervention like the HCV programme is not, by itself, sufficient to have a long-term impact on the lives of participants in terms of existing concepts of event-based volunteering ‘legacy’. As highlighted in the focus group discussions, HCVs do not feel that their Games-time experience alone has given them the personal agency to seek out further volunteering opportunities for themselves. Whilst HCVs remain enthusiastic about the experience of being involved in the Games, further action is needed on behalf of event organisers and volunteer-involving organisations to translate this enthusiasm into long-term change in terms of volunteering in particular.

## **8. Implications**

### **8.1 The impact of one-off events**

The research presented in this report points in some ways to a lack of some of the hoped-for legacies which were identified at the time of the Glasgow Commonwealth Games bid in 2009. Instead of a clear increase in volunteering post-Games, we have seen a mixed long-term impact with a slight decrease in volunteering rates (3%) while most respondents have not changed their volunteering behaviour (89%). However, amongst the majority of HCVs, levels of connectedness have tended to increase or remain at similar levels since 2014.

Nonetheless, these findings are not unexpected, given that the Glasgow 2014 Commonwealth Games was a unique event. Our findings in fact point to the difficulties in going from staging a one-off event to having a more permanent, longer-term impact on the lives of those involved. As those in the focus groups highlighted, some people will always be more willing to give time to a one-off “event of a lifetime” than to commit to longer-term volunteering. And while the HCV programme was well-resourced during the Games, the transience of the programme and of the staff involved in delivering it made it unlikely that this would translate into every-day changes once the Games had concluded and the heightened level of support was no longer available.

### **8.2 The Host City Volunteer programme**

But this does not mean that the HCV programme was a failure. Indeed, previous research and the responses to this research suggest that the delivery of the Host City Volunteer programme was an overwhelming success, with 82% of respondents considering their Games-time experience to have been a positive one, 3 years on from the event. The focus groups were unanimous in recalling the HCV experience in a positive light, and in fact it was at times difficult to move participants away from fond reminiscing towards a discussion of their lives since the Games!

The report does, however, highlight that it may be necessary to reconceptualise the meaning and definition of “legacy” in the wake of the HCV programme. Firstly, given that the experience in itself generated lasting positive memories for those involved, perhaps future claims for legacy should stress the central importance of a successful event experience, rather than focusing on longer-term behaviour change (e.g. increased volunteering). Additionally, the evident enjoyment shown by the HCVs in the focus groups when given the opportunity to reminisce about a positive time in their lives could itself be considered a favourable part of the Commonwealth Games “legacy”.

Secondly, it becomes clear that even amongst those who had ostensibly experienced a lack of change, both the survey and the focus groups captured more intangible shifts: a growth in confidence; an increased ability to interact with those around them; and enhanced feelings of pride in Glasgow. These are important legacies in their own right, and it is recommended that future event organisers consider a range of potential outcomes when undertaking legacy planning in relation to volunteer programmes (including evaluation thereof).

In addition, going forward, opportunities also remain to capitalise during future events on some of the positive feelings of civic pride felt by HCVs - the forthcoming 2018 European Championships being the obvious example. However, given the unique nature of each



event, and participants' acknowledgement of the "once-in-a-lifetime" experience involvement in the Glasgow 2014 Commonwealth Games provided, it is also important that event organisers are clear that subsequent events will offer a different and distinct experience.

### 8.3 Inclusion and social connectedness

While the lives of HCVs overall since the Games have not undergone drastic change in terms of subsequent involvement in volunteering, a number of the programme's target groups did experience either an increased sense of connectedness (disabled people) or increased participation in volunteering (older people). This suggests that while a one-off event may not be able to transform the lives of all those involved, the direction of resources at key groups can have a longer-term impact on those groups. Indeed, one of the most positive aspects of the programme as identified by focus group participants, and something which marked it out as different from other event volunteering programmes, was its inclusivity: "*comparing my experience at the [2012] Olympics... to working on the streets with the local people... there was aspects [of the Commonwealth Games] that were actually more inspirational*". The HCV programme is a good example of the success of inclusive practice, and it is positive that going forward Glasgow Life indicates key learning has been shared with volunteer involving organisations and other event organisers developing volunteering programmes (e.g. Great Exhibition of the North 2018, Tokyo 2020, etc).

Nonetheless, while the levels of support provided during the Games were high, there is a clear implication from the focus groups that some individual HCVs feel they would have benefitted from greater levels of intervention and assistance since 2014. One of the aims of the HCV programme was to raise awareness of the benefits of volunteering, in the hope that this would inspire people to continue their volunteering journey, but the current research has demonstrated that a one-off positive experience was not in and of itself sufficient to achieve this aim. While Glasgow Life did attempt to signpost HCVs towards future volunteering opportunities in the wake of the Games, some HCVs were not necessarily equipped with the social capital and confidence necessary to offer themselves forward as volunteers independently: "*I did a lot of the work myself to try and find where to go and who to speak to... but I think for some people, maybe they need a bit more help than I,*" as one focus group participant put it.

The HCV programme provided a high level of support to participants, which is often not available in wider volunteering opportunities. Yet it may have been that, had there been a formal post-event structure in place providing information and guidance, beyond the basic signposting of future volunteering opportunities, some HCVs may have felt more able to continue in their volunteering journeys. Given the link suggested in this research between volunteering and a feeling of belonging to one's local community there is also an opportunity for key volunteer development agencies to think about how best to utilise their existing resources to better support those who may require additional support.

With regard to future events in Glasgow, then - for example the 2018 European Championships - our research points to the importance of ensuring that:

- Consideration is given to how legacy is conceptualized and planned for – 'softer' outcomes such as increased confidence amongst target groups may be just as meaningful and more achievable than long-term behaviour change, and event

organisers in conjunction with host cities should be clear about desired outcomes from the outset;

- Volunteer development agencies at both local and national level (e.g. Volunteer Glasgow and Volunteer Scotland) should work together with volunteer-involving organisations (e.g. Glasgow Life) in the wake of big events to capitalise on the heightened level of engagement and interest such events can produce. However, to realise meaningful long-term change, this work must extend beyond simple information provision (e.g. raising the profile of available volunteer opportunities), to ensure required levels of support are available to those with additional support needs. While offering an increased level of support in this manner may require a reconfiguration of existing resources, or indeed investment of additional resources post-event, it seems the best way to ensure the maximisation of legacies. A one-off intervention is not, in itself, enough to produce lasting tangible change.
- Host cities consider what their 'ask' is of volunteers post-event, in order to capitalise on the heightened engagement of event-volunteers and to maximise the potential opportunity to channel this enthusiasm to address issues of importance to citizens. There is an opportunity to avail of this enthusiastic and motivated group to assist the city to achieve other tangible legacies beyond just volunteering (e.g. providing support to reduce social isolation and enhance connectedness).

## **Appendix 1 – Review of previous event volunteering research**

There is a burgeoning literature which deals with the legacy of one-off sporting events, which has helped frame this research in several ways. Firstly, previous research into sports event volunteering has considered future volunteering intentions as a key measure of event legacy and has generally indicated a strong enthusiasm to continue with volunteering after the event has concluded. In a seminal study Doherty (2009) examined volunteers at the 2001 Canada Games, and found that 98% indicated they would volunteer for another major event. She suggests that volunteering at a sporting mega-event can “turn [people] on to volunteering”. Downward and Ralston (2006) similarly found that the experience of volunteering at the 2002 Commonwealth Games in Manchester increased interest and participation in non-sports volunteering after the Games concluded. More recent research into the London 2012 Games-Makers has reinforced this perspective, with 45% of those surveyed in one study by Dickson and Benson (2012) indicating that they expected to increase their levels of volunteering in the wake of the Games.<sup>12</sup>

Nonetheless, most of this research deals with volunteer intentions at the time of the event, or shortly thereafter, and fails to re-contact volunteers to see whether they followed through on such intentions. It seems likely that once the “buzz” around an event diminishes, enthusiasm for repeat volunteering may also diminish. This formed the basis of our hypothesis that it was unlikely that volunteering levels would have increased amongst HCVs since the Games.

Research has also examined whether the experience of the event itself might help shape future volunteering intentions: if a volunteer is mismanaged, for example, would this make them less likely to volunteer again? There is general agreement that volunteer satisfaction can play an important role in future intentions to volunteer: Doherty (2009: 201) states that “the experience of volunteers with a given event can have a significant impact on future volunteer behaviour in other events and in the community in general”. Farrell, Johnston and Twynam (1998), in a survey of volunteers at the Canadian Women’s Curling Championships in 1996, found that high volunteer satisfaction during the event generated a high proportion of volunteers (59%) whose likelihood of volunteering for future events had increased.

Previous research into the HCVs found high levels of satisfaction (89%) with the Games-time experience (Rogerson et al 2015). Thus, in keeping with the above literature, the experiential aspects of the role were unlikely to be a contributing factor to explain any absence of future volunteering. It was necessary, therefore, to look beyond this to examine other reasons for continuity and change amongst HCVs.

Lastly, researchers have recently begun to look beyond simply considering repeat volunteering as the central measure of event legacy, and to consider an increase in the social capital of volunteers as another key measure (Misener and Mason 2006).<sup>13</sup> Among those who have looked specifically at “social connectedness”, it has generally been defined as a key aspect of social capital, that is focused specifically on connections with

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<sup>12</sup> T. Dickson and A. Benson, ‘London 2012 Games Makers: Towards Redefining Legacy’, available at [https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/224184/Games\\_Makers\\_Anne\\_x.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/224184/Games_Makers_Anne_x.pdf)

<sup>13</sup> L. Misener and D. Mason, ‘Creating community networks: Can sporting events offer meaningful sources of social capital?’ *Managing Leisure* 11, 2006.

other people. The original “social connectedness” scale designed by Lee and Robbins (1995) seeks to capture levels of connection or distance between the self and others.<sup>14</sup> Studies of involvement in community sport in Victoria, Australia (Hoye, Nicholson and Brown 2015) and of youth sport volunteering in the UK (Kay and Bradbury 2009) have concluded that involvement in voluntary sport and/or sport volunteering is positively correlated with high levels of social connectedness. Nonetheless, much of this literature relates to longer-term involvement, not one-off events. Our research is designed to assess whether a one-off intervention such as the Commonwealth Games can have the same kind of impact on social connectedness.

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<sup>14</sup> R. Lee and S. Robbins, ‘Measuring belongingness: The Social Connectedness and the Social Assurance Scales’, *Journal of Counselling Psychology*, 42:2 (1995).

## **Appendix 2 - Research methods**

This research was conducted between September 2017 and December 2017 and included a questionnaire survey and three focus groups. Together these explored the lives of the HCVs since the Games, with a focus on: whether they have engaged in any repeat volunteering; whether they currently engage in any activities in their local communities; whether they feel more or less connected to their local communities, to other people and to Glasgow since the Games; and how they now feel about the HCV experience.

The questionnaire survey (details in Appendix 3) was devised by the research team using questions adapted from the General and Scottish Household Surveys, Home Office Citizenship Survey and British Household Panel Survey, as contained in the Office of National Statistics' Social Capital Question Bank.<sup>15</sup> The survey was emailed to 905 HCVs and posted to 88 HCVs, all of whom had provided their contact details to Glasgow Life and given permission to be contacted regarding future research. 333 people completed the survey, a response rate of 34%.

Survey data was used to sort respondents into three distinct groups:

1. Those who had experienced a change in levels of volunteering but no change in their social connectedness since the Games (12 people);
2. Those who had experienced a change in their social connectedness but no change in levels of volunteering since the Games (25 people);
3. Those who had experienced no change in both social connectedness and levels of volunteering since the Games (19 people).

Each of these people was contacted by the researchers and invited to attend a focus group. In total 15 people attended the groups (3 from the first group, 6 from the second group and 6 from the third group).

The focus groups (see Appendix 4 for the list of topics discussed) were held at Glasgow Caledonian University in November 2017. The discussions were recorded and transcribed verbatim after the completion of each group. The aim of the groups was to discuss the reasons for lack of change in an in-depth way with a smaller number of HCVs, as well as to identify any more intangible change which the survey may have been unable to capture.

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<sup>15</sup> D. Ruston and L. Akinrodove, *ONS Social Capital Question Bank* (2002).

## **Appendix 3 - Survey**

### **Section One: Your Life Now**

This part of the survey is about your life now.

**Q1** In the last 12 months, have you been involved in any social groups or clubs (for example sports / exercise groups, community or neighbourhood groups, children's or youth groups)?

- No (**please skip to question 2**)
- Yes

**Q1a** Can you tell us which groups or clubs?

**Q1b** How often are you currently involved in any of those groups or clubs?

- Never
- 3 or 4 times a year
- About once a month
- About once a week
- Several times a week
- Every day

**Q2** Do you currently give up any time to help as a volunteer?

- No
- Yes

**Q3** Since the end of the Commonwealth Games in 2014, have you volunteered at any other sports events?

- No
- Yes (please tell us which ones)

**Q4** During the last 12 months, have you given any unpaid help to any groups, clubs or organisations?

- No
- Yes

**Q5** In the last 12 months, have you done any of the following things, unpaid, for someone who is not a relative? This might be for a friend, neighbour, or someone else. *(Please select all that apply.)*

- Keeping in touch with someone who has difficulty getting out and about
- Doing shopping, collecting pension or paying bills for someone
- Cooking, cleaning, laundry, gardening or other routine household jobs for someone
- Decorating, or doing any kind of home or car repairs for someone
- Babysitting or caring for children
- Sitting with or providing personal care for someone who is sick or frail
- Looking after a property or a pet for someone who is away
- Giving advice to someone
- Writing letters or filling in forms for someone
- Representing someone
- Transporting or escorting someone
- None of the above

**Q6** Roughly how much time do you currently spend volunteering?

- None
  - More than 3 hours a week
  - 2-3 hours a week
  - 1 hour a week
  - 1 hour a month
  - Less than 1 hour a month
  - Other, please specify:
- 

## **Section Two: Your Life Before the Commonwealth Games**

This part of the survey is about what you were doing before the Commonwealth Games in 2014.

**Q7** Before the Commonwealth Games, had you been involved in any social groups or clubs (for example sports / exercise groups, community or neighbourhood groups, children's or youth groups)?

- No (**please skip to question 8**)
- Yes

**Q7a** Before the Commonwealth Games, which groups or clubs had you been involved with?

**Q7b** How often were you involved in any of those groups or clubs?

- 3 or 4 times a year
- About once a month
- About once a week
- Several times a week
- Every day

**Q8** Before the Commonwealth Games, had you given up any time to help as a volunteer?

- No
- Yes

**Q9** Before the Commonwealth Games, had you given any unpaid help to any groups, clubs or organisations?

- No
- Yes

**Q10** Before the Commonwealth Games, had you done any of the following things, unpaid, for someone who was not a relative? This might have been for a friend, neighbour, or someone else. (*Please select all that apply.*)



- Keeping in touch with someone who has difficulty getting out and about
- Doing shopping, collecting pension or paying bills for someone
- Cooking, cleaning, laundry, gardening or other routine household jobs for someone
- Decorating, or doing any kind of home or car repairs for someone
- Babysitting or caring for children
- Sitting with or providing personal care for someone who is sick or frail
- Looking after a property or a pet for someone who is away
- Giving advice to someone
- Writing letters or filling in forms for someone
- Representing someone
- Transporting or escorting someone
- None of the above

**Q11** Before the Commonwealth Games, roughly how much time did you spend volunteering?

- None
  - More than 3 hours a week
  - 2-3 hours a week
  - 1 hour a week
  - 1 hour a month
  - Less than 1 hour a month
  - Other, please specify: \_\_\_\_\_
- 

### **Section Three: Overall Experiences**

**Q12** Do you talk to your neighbours more or less now than you did before the Commonwealth Games?

- More
- Less
- The same amount
- Don't know

**Q13** Do you meet up with other people more or less now than you did before the Commonwealth Games?

- More
- Less
- The same amount
- Don't know

**Q14** Which **one** of the following terms best describes how you feel about your local community?

- Proud
- Excited
- Indifferent
- Disappointed
- Happy
- Sad
- Don't know

**Q15** To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement: "I can influence decisions affecting my local area."

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

**Q16** Compared with 3 years ago, at the time of the Commonwealth Games, do you feel more or less able now to influence decisions affecting your local area?

- More
- Less
- Equally able
- Don't know

**Q17** Would you say that this neighbourhood is a place where neighbours look out for each other?

- Yes, definitely
- Yes, to some extent
- No
- Don't know

**Q18** Do you feel more connected to your local community now than you did 3 years ago, at the time of the Commonwealth Games?

- Yes, I feel more connected
- No, I feel less connected
- I feel equally connected (**skip to question 19**)
- Don't know (**skip to question 19**)

**Q18a** Can you tell us why you think you are more connected now than you were 3 years ago?

**Q18b** Can you tell us why you think you are less connected now than you were 3 years ago?

**Q19** Overall, 3 years after the event, what impact do you feel that being a Host City Volunteer during the 2014 Commonwealth Games has had on your life?

## **Appendix 4 - Focus Group Discussion Topics**

### **Local Community**

- Do you feel you have strong connections to your local community? Why / why not? How would you describe these connections?
  - Are you a member of or go along to local groups / organisations? Why / why not?
  - Is there anything that gets in the way of you doing things in the community? What would make it easier for you to get involved?

### **Other People (e.g. friends, family, neighbours)**

- Overall do you feel you have strong connections with other people? And if so, who?
  - In what ways are you connected?
  - Thinking about where you live, do you regularly talk to your neighbours / meet up with people that you know? How often? Why / why not?
  - Do you help other people (without pay)? How often? Why / why not?

### **Glasgow**

- Do you feel connected to Glasgow? Why / why not?
- How would you describe this 'connection' to others?
- What has helped to make this connection and has it got stronger in the last few years?

### **Continuity / Change**

- In the survey, we've identified that:
  - a) Nothing has changed since the Games in how connected you are
  - OR
  - b) Your levels of connectedness have changed since the Games
- How do you feel about this?
- Why is this?
- Would you like to be more connected to your community / other people / Glasgow? If so, what would help you to feel more connected to your community / other people / Glasgow?

### **Volunteering**

- In the survey, we've identified that:
  - a) You're doing the same amount of volunteering as you were doing before the Games
  - OR
  - b) The amount of volunteering you are doing have changed since the Games
- Why is this? (What has changed since the Games in how you feel about volunteering, your ability to volunteer, etc?)

### **HCV experience**

- Have you or your family / people you know noticed any changes in you since you volunteered at the Games? What changes come to mind?
  - Did the 2014 HCV experience make you feel more or less connected to your local community? Why?
  - Did the 2014 HCV experience make you feel more or less connected to other people (friends, family, neighbours)? Why?
  - Did the 2014 HCV experience make you feel more or less connected to Glasgow? Why?
- Could the organisers have changed anything about the HCV experience to make you feel more connected afterwards?

## Appendix 5 - Profile of Survey Respondents

	Glasgow 2014 HCVs	Survey respondents
Age	16 - 24      30%	18-24      12%
	25 - 34      14%	25-34      9%
	35 - 44      12%	35-44      11%
	45 - 54      17%	45-54      21%
	55 - 64      16%	55-64      22%
	65+          11%	65+          23%
	Gender	Male 36% Female 64%
Ethnic minority	23%	12%
Disabled and / or have a long-term illness	15%	23%

Further detailed survey and focus group results are contained in a Technical Report.