

# Northumbria Research Link

Citation: Casselden, Bidy, Pickard, Alison and Walton, Geoff (2017) The challenges of delivering a public library service using volunteers: a qualitative investigation examining key stakeholder experiences. In: 2017 Voluntary Sector and Volunteering Research Conference, 7th - 8th September 2017, Nottingham.

URL:

This version was downloaded from Northumbria Research Link:  
<http://nrl.northumbria.ac.uk/32044/>

Northumbria University has developed Northumbria Research Link (NRL) to enable users to access the University's research output. Copyright © and moral rights for items on NRL are retained by the individual author(s) and/or other copyright owners. Single copies of full items can be reproduced, displayed or performed, and given to third parties in any format or medium for personal research or study, educational, or not-for-profit purposes without prior permission or charge, provided the authors, title and full bibliographic details are given, as well as a hyperlink and/or URL to the original metadata page. The content must not be changed in any way. Full items must not be sold commercially in any format or medium without formal permission of the copyright holder. The full policy is available online: <http://nrl.northumbria.ac.uk/policies.html>

This document may differ from the final, published version of the research and has been made available online in accordance with publisher policies. To read and/or cite from the published version of the research, please visit the publisher's website (a subscription may be required.)

[www.northumbria.ac.uk/nrl](http://www.northumbria.ac.uk/nrl)



**Title of Paper**

The challenges of delivering a public library service using volunteers: a qualitative investigation examining key stakeholder experiences

**Lead author**

Dr Bidy Casselden

i-School, Department of Computer and Information Sciences, Northumbria University

[b.casselden@northumbria.ac.uk](mailto:b.casselden@northumbria.ac.uk)

**Co authors**

Dr Alison Jane Pickard, i-School, Department of Computer and Information Sciences, Northumbria University

Dr Geoff Walton, Department of Languages, Information and Communications, Manchester Metropolitan University

**Theme**

Sectoral boundaries: private-voluntary-public sector relations

**Abstract**

This paper considers the findings of recent qualitative research, which examined volunteer use in public libraries, focussing on the perceptions of four groups of stakeholders (the library managers, front line staff, volunteers and library users) in the light of recent austerity measures in two English case study library authorities. A complex picture of public library service delivery exists, with a move from value-added volunteers supporting staff, to the replacement of paid staff with volunteers. This development challenges the previous positive relationships established by value-added volunteer use, and hints at an underlying societal misunderstanding of public libraries, which affects wider policy and practice. The paper examines the challenges of using volunteers to plug the gaps left by library closures and paid staff reductions, and identifies possible areas of good practice in what has become an increasingly hybrid model of public service delivery.

**Introduction**

The UK public library landscape has altered substantially, with the closure of 343 libraries, and the disappearance of nearly a quarter of all paid library jobs in the past 6 years, balanced by a recruitment of 15,500 volunteers in the same period (Wainwright et al., 2016). It can be argued that such a development has been fuelled by economic austerity measures (Harvey, 2016), and an underlying neo-liberal ideological shift regarding the delivery of public services (McMenemy, 2009), towards a reduction of the state. This has resulted in the emergence of a hybrid model of public library delivery, whereby volunteers, historically used in a value-added way (additionality), are increasingly utilised to plug gaps in staffing, thereby keeping libraries open that otherwise would be

unable to operate without paid staff. Anstice (2014) argues that such, 'volunteer libraries have changed the story of library cuts from that of pure black and white (closed or open) to that of varying shades of grey...a mixed model'. Although use of volunteers in public libraries has many positive benefits for the service, the volunteers themselves, and the community in which they operate (Museums Libraries and Archives Council, 2011), there are also challenges particularly relating to staff replacement, which Nichols et al. (2015) suggests has become a rather large 'elephant in the room'. There currently exists a contradictory situation, whereby the professional association that represents library staff (CILIP, the Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals) argues that volunteers should not 'undertake core service delivery or be asked to replace the specialised roles of staff who work in libraries' (Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals, 2012). In addition over three quarters of English library users are opposed to replacing paid staff with volunteers (Peachey, 2017), yet we are seeing a shift to increased volunteer use as a sticking plaster approach to heal staff cuts, and library closures.

This paper examines the phenomenon of volunteer use in public libraries, particularly with regard to the experiences of four key sets of stakeholders: the library managers, front line staff, volunteers and library users. The research aimed to provide an insight into the roles of volunteers, their value to the service, benefits and issues regarding their use, and possible future directions, and was part of a professional doctorate investigation (Casselden, 2016).

### **The benefits and challenges of volunteers**

As the Sieghart Independent Library Report for England argued 'volunteers have always contributed to libraries' (2014: p.21), and such collaborative ventures in the past have enabled public libraries to enhance their capacity and expertise, and connect more closely with the local community that they serve. These partnerships have served to enhance community engagement, benefiting the access to and provision of services, in addition to providing economic and social benefits through a strategic rather than reactionary approach (Museums Libraries and Archives Council, 2011). The reciprocal relationship that exists from such a partnership between professionals, and volunteers from the community, can serve to enhance the balance of power between public services and those who use them (Pateman and Vincent, 2010), and create a more equitable and inclusive society. Volunteers also benefit from involvement, enabling them to learn and develop new skills, widen their social networks, become empowered, and make a contribution to society, thereby feeling connected to their local community (Kearney, 2003).

However, there are also challenges associated with using volunteers, which were prevalent well before the current dramatic increase in their use in the public library sector. Participation in volunteering has many barriers, particularly related to lack of time, bureaucracy, risk and inability (Locke, 2008), and this tends to result in a particular type of volunteer, with 'high levels of skills, confidence and social capital' (Nichols et al., 2015: p.83). The predominance of certain types of person volunteering can therefore deter others from taking part (Marta and Pozzi, 2008 in Brodie et al., 2009), and create a service that is mutually inclusive rather than exclusive, which is somewhat of a challenge for a public library service welcoming a variety of users (Anstice, 2017).

The reactive nature by which recent volunteering efforts in public libraries have developed (Goulding, 2006), and the possible feeling of coercion experienced by those volunteering, who may be doing so in order to keep a particular facility open, can serve to diminish the benefits of volunteering according to Nichols et al (2015). In many communities, there may not even be the capacity required for individuals to rise to a volunteering effort, and this is more likely to be the case in disadvantaged communities that have a greater need for access to a public library service (Arts

Council England, 2013b). Volunteers are not without cost, and need to be managed, co-ordinated, trained and nurtured to ensure that relationships between the library service and volunteer are mutually beneficial, and that standards are maintained (Anstice, 2012; Hager and Brudney, 2004), which directly relates to whether a volunteer experience is successful or not. In addition, not everyone is suited to being a volunteer, and Wandersman and Alderman (1993) in Rogelberg et al. (2010: p.425) consider the additional stress that ineffective volunteers can have on paid staff, in addition to the wider library service outcomes. The highly political nature of recent volunteer recruitment has also bred resentment, and a lack of acceptance amongst some sections of the library community, and Arts Council England (Arts Council England, 2013a) suggest that gaining 'buy-in' and working in partnership are vital to any properly planned approach to increased volunteer use. Finally, it is important to consider the challenges of conflicting interests, and commitment of volunteers (Wilson, 2012), and how this interacts with the move to rely on volunteer run libraries for service delivery.

This brief review of the literature surrounding the benefits and challenges for volunteer use, provides a useful basis upon which to consider the findings of our own research, which utilised an interpretivist approach, using a qualitative methodology (Gorman and Clayton, 2005).

## **Methodology**

There were 2 phases to this particular research project, an initial Delphi Study of 15 English Library managers to gain a perspective of the current volunteer use situation, and forge links with potential research opportunities (Casselden et al., 2015), followed by a second phase of case study investigation. The case study investigation took part in 2 North East Library Authorities, both Metropolitan Boroughs, although following different strategies with regard to volunteer use. Case study one had a traditional approach to volunteer use in the library service, in that it used a small number of volunteers, for value-added use only, whereas case study two had a mix of value-added volunteers, and a number of volunteers that worked in volunteer-run libraries (created following a reduction in budget). Four key sets of stakeholders were questioned in each case study; Library managers, frontline staff, volunteers and library users, using a variety of tools suited to the respondent, which included focus groups, interviews, and questionnaires. Constant comparative analysis was used to identify the overriding themes and patterns, in addition to triangulation of all data to provide a rich picture of the overall situation.

This paper focuses on the second phase of research and explores the key findings from this phase, particularly focussing on the challenges of volunteer use, and good practice that exists.

## **Results – challenges for volunteer use in public libraries (See figure 1)**

**Challenging environment:** Volunteer use in public libraries is in transition to an increasingly hybrid model where volunteers not only add value, but also replace paid staff and help to run libraries, that would otherwise have closed. This phenomenon is interdependent on contextual, organisational and individual factors, fuelled by ideological overtones, political misunderstandings of the role of a library and the staff that work within it, and a lack of power from the library profession. Library closures are a soft, slightly more palatable option for local councils, and are an inevitable consequence of the current economic and political climate. Such a situation creates an uncertain environment, with random and reactive behaviour, that creates a very challenging working environment. Goulding (2006: p.4) argues that financial austerity is the primary force shaping changes in public services at present, and this was supported by the stakeholders questioned.

*'The ultimate challenge is one of resources; its financial, it's the budget situation we are in, because of the situation that the council is in. The budget has been massively hit, we've so far managed without closing any libraries though we have reduced hours, we've also taken hits in the book fund over recent years, but we are now at a situation where there is nowhere else to go really' (Library manager interview LA1).*

*'In the North-East we know that our local authorities have had the brunt of the cutbacks from the Tory government, and you just think how far can they cut them?' (Volunteer focus group LA1).*

*'That's the way people think; if it's not making money it's not worth its salt' (Volunteer focus group LA1).*

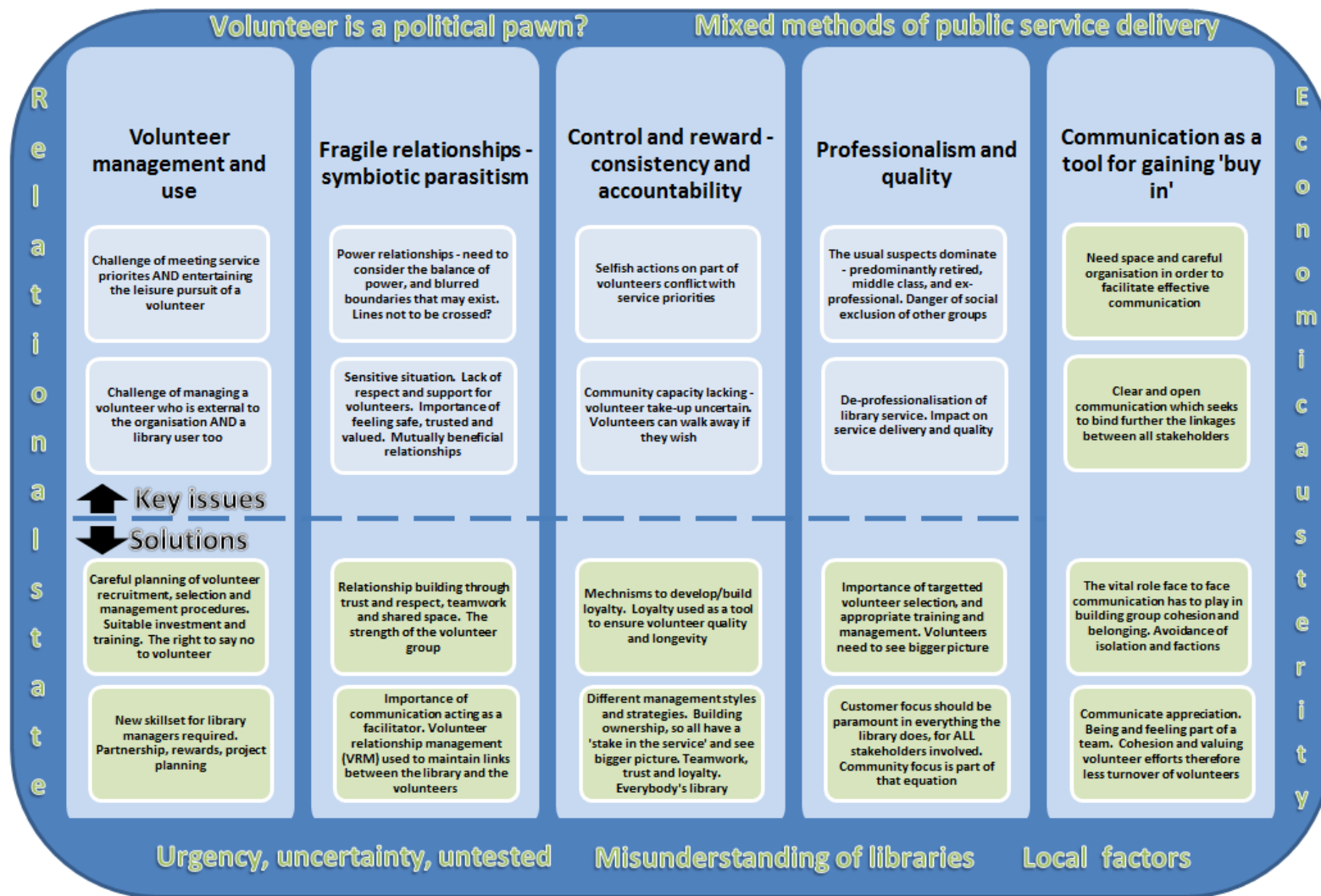


Figure 1. Issues and solutions arising from the qualitative research

**Volunteer management and use:** The increasing 'saviour' role of volunteers as a means to replace library staff and keep libraries open, in response to cuts has certainly tarnished the relationship between volunteers and library workers, and has challenged the trust mechanisms that exist between the two sets of stakeholders by legitimising budget reductions.

*'It's become tinged lately, there's not animosity towards them (volunteers), but there's definitely a few rumblings amongst staff. The staff are getting more and more work to do front-line, and less and less of the..... nice side, when you get to work with the historic materials.....so I think bad feeling of the wider voice of volunteers has definitely tinged it a bit' (Library manager interview LA2).*

Many volunteers and front line staff discussed the importance of the 'line not to be crossed', in terms of the roles and responsibilities they undertook, and felt that it was important to be clear that there were differences. This was also something that arose from library users questioned, although there was also some lack of understanding related to understanding the difference between a volunteer, and a paid member of staff, and the roles that they undertook. This could have implications for perceptions of quality, which we will return to later.

The challenge of managing an entity that is entirely voluntary to deliver a statutory service, and provide a high quality service came up frequently as a key theme.

*'Volunteers are I think.....tricky to handle. It's more difficult than staff, because after all, as a manager or a supervisor, you can tell somebody to do something who is staff, or NOT to do something, and they either listen to you and do what you say, or they can be in trouble. It's not quite the same with volunteers' (Library manager interview LA1).*

*'We can walk away for a start if we don't like it, but they can't. We can pick or choose, they can't. If we decide not to come in on a Wednesday or come in on the Thursday instead, we can' (Volunteer focus group LA1).*

Library managers considered the challenge of managing volunteers, and that this required a new skill set on their part, to enable a flexible, friendly and suitably resources management style, that included more partnership working, intrinsic reward development, and project planning. It was also evident that management of volunteers could potentially be less efficient, in terms of staff time, than managing paid staff.

*'Volunteer groups are fabulous, their commitment is great, they do some very very good things..... However, the amount of support from paid staff that volunteers need is.....not kind of balanced. A small volunteer group can take more support, of paid staff's time, than the rest of the paid staff put together. So does their value outweigh the benefits that they bring?'(Library manager interview LA2).*

**Relationships:** A fragile set of relationships exists between all the stakeholders questioned, which is further intensified by the current macro and micro environment conditions. Library volunteers have traditionally operated in a mutually symbiotic relationship whereby both the volunteer and the library have equally benefitted from the relationship, however recent developments have challenged this equilibrium. Replacing staff with volunteers is perceived as more of a one sided relationship, whereby volunteers benefit at the expense of a diminished public library service, with compromised service priorities.

*'I think there could be quite a lot of resistance to new people (volunteers), and staff are resistant to new people. They're alright with the people you've got, but it is quite a delicate balance' (Library manager interview LA2).*

Power relationships can be challenging, in that the hegemony of traditional public service delivery, is being reconstructed by using volunteers to deliver a service. This causes misunderstandings regarding the balance of power within the service, and creates friction between those paid as employees to deliver the service, and those volunteering their efforts who may have another agenda, and require greater autonomy. Such misunderstandings clearly impacted on the trust, respect and support that existed between stakeholders, and created tensions which then compromised working relationships.

*'The council kind of acts as though it's willingly giving up its time. It doesn't want us... well I'm not saying it doesn't want us to have it (the library), but it wants us to have it, but within its own sound box really. They've put up a lot of walls'' (Volunteer focus group LA2).*

In addition it was clear that not all volunteers were cohesive and factions existed that further challenged the status quo.

*'They've (volunteers) had arguments amongst themselves. I'm now very aware there are probably 3 distinct groups of people, and they come in at separate times, and they're not communicating with each other even though they are working on the same project. The older group don't like the newer group of people who have come in' (Library manager interview LA1).*

**Control and reward:** Control, or lack of it, was an omnipresent theme, relating to a number of facets within the results. This ranged from the lack of control the library service had over whether a particular community had the capacity to volunteer, to ensuring that those volunteers recruited delivered the wider library service priorities whilst under no contractual obligation. The concepts of professionalism, consistency and accountability all arose during stakeholder discussions, together with the challenges of managing volunteers, who are neither paid nor contractually obliged to work in their public library. The concept of institutional power versus individual empowerment created tensions within the library service, and was a constant issue for a variety of stakeholders who took part.

*'It's the level of control you can have as well; volunteer staff are volunteering their time, they can come and go as they like. You've got no real authority over volunteers, I mean you can put guidelines in place, but you can't bring to bear some of the pressures you can on paid staff. You're not offering them wages' (Library manager interview LA1).*

*'You're here for your own enjoyment, and you're here voluntarily.....so it is a little bit more relaxed amongst us because of that, so we do operate differently to paid staff' (Volunteer focus group LA2).*

Inconsistency of individual volunteer efforts, and a lack of accountability were concerns raised by a number of library managers, and frontline staff, in addition to some value-added volunteers.

Controlling 'who' volunteers was also outlined as a challenge by library managers and frontline staff: The majority of volunteers questioned were retired, middle class and well educated, often coming from a background of other altruistic activities, with many individuals having a past link with the library service, and a strong desire for civic duty. Such 'usual suspects' can deter certain types of people from volunteering, or using a library service, as they may perceive the service as not fully inclusive. In addition, case study one, which had adopted a more traditional approach to using value-added volunteers, did not appear to have sufficient capacity within the community, and concerns were voiced by all sets of stakeholders. There is a key issue here, in how a library service can ensure that the volunteering effort does not result in a postcode lottery, whereby 'the quality



and range of library services could vary widely across the country' (Pateman and Williment, 2013: p.19).

*'I do think the population couldn't support that (volunteering). I don't think you would get the body of people to run a library on a consistent basis, I really can't think of any of the areas, possibly?.....I just don't think we've got enough, for want of a better word, professional people, as a pool to come in to do that' (Library manager interview LA1).*

*'The local people round here (LA2), I don't think any regular customer came forward as a volunteer. We came from just outside the local area. To me that is as good a reason as any for keeping it open' (volunteer focus group LA2).*

The challenges of rewarding volunteers for their efforts without the use of remuneration was a theme that arose from the research. This particularly related to the importance of ensuring intrinsic motivators such as loyalty and ownership, as ways to ensure the delivery of a high quality consistent service.

*'You can't make them (volunteers) stay, you have to ask nicely. You do have to always be aware that they are not employees, they are members of the public who are helping you, and they can be a law unto themselves' (Library manager interview LA1).*

*'It was lovely that the staff were saying, 'this is getting done and it's great', it just makes you feel that you're doing something worthwhile' (Volunteer focus group LA2).*

**Professionalism and quality:** Library managers were particularly concerned about the ability of volunteers to run a professional and high quality public service. Volunteers are not a homogenous group, and have different motivations for volunteering, and varying levels of skills, qualifications and experience, which may all impact on the library role they are serving. As previously stated, the lack of formal control makes it more challenging to ensure that a suitable quality of service provision is provided, particularly when volunteers may work very few hours per week, and may have ulterior motives for their volunteering, such as gaining experience to get a paid job, or to enjoy social interaction.

*'We do have one gentleman, who's possibly got Alzheimer's or senility. His volunteering really really helps him, but there's a point at which it's quite difficult to find him something to do, so we're not going to say 'oh, we don't want you to come here anymore', but ..... he really likes indexing, he's been really helpful over the years and things, but it's really difficult for me..... But we know it is really important for him to keep coming along, and to be as involved as possible, so I find that quite a challenge' (Library manager interview LA1).*

The lack of understanding regarding the role of a public library, and those working within it, was perceived by many respondents as having worked to their detriment. Pateman and Williment (2013) suggest that there exists amongst the wider public a misguided association of library workers having a shop assistant role, which has serious implications in terms of current policies. Such misconceptions of what a public library does have resulted in it being viewed as an easy target for local authorities when considering austerity cuts, in addition to providing volunteers who may have a skewed idea of how and why a public library functions.

*'You might get some very enthusiastic people, but I think it is more than having enthusiastic people, you need someone who understands what a library is' (Library manager interview LA1).*

The wider implications of this misunderstanding may manifest itself through the provision of a certain type of library service at the hands of volunteer run libraries. Although this is not necessarily a bad thing, it may serve to exclude sectors of the community who do not subscribe to this view of what a public library is.

### **Communication as the lynchpin**

It is clear that communication has a vital role to play in ensuring there is understanding on all sides, and can be viewed as the lynchpin by which misunderstandings can be avoided, and the stakeholders within the public library service can feel connected through a common purpose. Communication can serve to legitimise the hybrid models of working within public libraries, and provide a mechanism by which trust networks can be fostered, and positive relationship developed.

*'I suppose the way we deal with it is through dialogue, so there are not misunderstandings' (Library manager interview LA2).*

The importance of a clear volunteer structure, with access to space and resources to enable effective group working, and regular face-to-face meetings were considered ways by which volunteers could remain in communication with paid staff, in addition to avoiding the isolation and misunderstandings associated with being a predominantly part-time, somewhat un-connected entity. Such mechanisms help to build a sense of belonging, and foster loyalty and ownership, thereby encouraging volunteers to become less transitory.

The ability of volunteers to communicate and build themselves as a group was something that the volunteers questioned felt was vital. Many volunteers worked only a few hours a week, and strongly expressed the social reasons why they had joined the volunteering effort. A culture of face to face meetings for volunteers did appear to work well not only as a guiding and motivating force, but also for allowing group cohesion and belonging to develop further.

*'I think.....that when you don't see everybody all the time, if you are on a different shift to someone, and something happens on a.... Monday afternoon, how do you find out about it? The meetings.....I know they take up people's time but I think decisions are made. We all make decisions together..... some people have more of a handle on some things than others, so we communicate with these monthly meetings, emails generally as well, but we also talk to each other, we can drop in and see each other' (Volunteer focus group LA2).*

The role of the library manager in facilitating the building of a volunteer community to avoid isolation, and thereby ensure that they see the bigger picture, is paramount. Many stakeholders stressed the fact that effective and meaningful volunteer management takes time, and costs money, and this should not be overlooked. However, the benefits of increasing volunteer allegiances and cohesion, thereby improving their longevity within the service, have key benefits for the quality of a library service.

*'You always treading very carefully over what you're doing with people (volunteers), and negotiating different situations as well. .... I think you do need to handle your volunteers carefully in most situations, because they are a set of personalities' (Library manager interview LA1).*

### **Recommendations for future volunteer use in public libraries**

The following recommendations are suggested to combat the challenges identified:

- Firstly it is vital that any volunteer appreciates their role as part of a library team, rather than as an individual. Seeing the bigger picture and understanding how they contribute to the overall public library offer will help to foster a sense of common purpose, belonging, ownership and loyalty.
- Volunteers require formal selection, recruitment, and training. The latter is vital, particularly the use of induction activities to ensure they fully understand their role within the library, and how it facilitates high quality service standards.
- Volunteers also require careful management, in addition to clear roles and responsibilities to ensure a professional approach, and counter any misunderstandings. It is important to match a person's skills and abilities to a particular volunteer role, to ensure they work effectively and are more likely to enjoy what they do.
- Communication facilitation is vital to the smooth operation of volunteer use. Although a variety of media should be utilised, face-to-face communications with volunteers, staff and wider community is an important mechanism for countering misunderstanding and encouraging cohesion. Communicating a positive outlook regarding such partnerships is vital for gaining 'buy-in' from a variety of stakeholders. In addition providing transparency, clear lines of communication and definition of where the boundaries lie, ensures that stakeholders feel secure.
- Library space has a part to play in enhancing the volunteer effort, and needs to be considered carefully. Where volunteers and paid staff work together, it is important to understand the messages that are implied by either separating volunteers from paid staff, or placing the two groups together. Careful thought is required, and needs to be monitored. However, giving volunteers and paid staff the time and space to come together is important.
- Relationship and trust building, particularly between paid staff and volunteers; volunteers and library users; and the volunteers themselves is key for improving understanding and cohesion.
- Library managers require specialist skills in order to effectively manage volunteers, and get the best out of them. This may require additional training, as many library managers qualified when volunteers were used in a value-added context only, and in significantly fewer numbers. Key areas include intrinsic reward management, partnership working, and project working.
- Customer focus should be used as a mechanism for improving quality for volunteers.
- Mechanisms that help to develop respect and understanding amongst the key stakeholders are very important to the smooth functioning of a seamless library service.
- The key to successful volunteer use in public libraries is to ensure a mutually beneficial relationship such that volunteers, library workers and the library users benefit from the relationship.
- The development of volunteer relationship management (VRM) strategies, which adapts the marketing concept of customer relationship management (Bussell and Forbes, 2007) and uses strategies, technology and communication to facilitate a new way of working with volunteers, thereby ensuring a cohesive and successful, high quality public library service.

## **Conclusions**

Public libraries are an important part of our civilised society, so it is vital to ensure that volunteers are used effectively to ensure their continued existence. Increased use of volunteers is inevitable given current economic predictions, and therefore it is important that public libraries utilise this

unpredictable, yet often extremely valuable resource with care and caution. There are substantial challenges that exist, particularly regarding the sudden and largely reactive nature of the move towards a more hybrid delivery of public libraries, and this has resulted in large-scale challenges for the current paradigm, creating distrust and uncertainty for all stakeholders.

Volunteers have the power to act as the 'social glue' (Goulding, 2006) for the community, and bring skills, experience and provide a bridge between the public library and a community. However, the party political nature of such increased volunteer use has damaged relationships, and ways of healing these wounds are vital, in order to achieve a mutually beneficial arrangement, that provides a high quality, socially inclusive public library service throughout the UK.

'A library in the middle of a community is a cross between an emergency exit, a life raft and a festival. They are cathedrals of the mind; hospitals of the soul; theme parks of the imagination. On a cold, rainy island, they are the only sheltered public spaces where you are not a consumer, but a citizen instead.....As the cuts kick in, protestors and lawyers are fighting for individual libraries like villagers pushing stranded whales back into the sea. A library is such a potent symbol of a town's values: Each one closed down might as well be 6,000 stickers plastered over every available surface, reading. 'WE CHOSE TO BECOME MORE STUPID AND DULL!'....Libraries that stayed open during the Blitz will be closed by budgets. A trillion small doors closing' (Moran, 2013: p.211).

(4,575 words)

## References

- Anstice I. (2012) *Public Libraries News*. Available at: <http://www.publiclibrariesnews.com/>.
- Anstice I. (2014) *2010-2014: From Community Library to Community-run library: a look at the impact of volunteers* Available at: <http://www.publiclibrariesnews.com/campaigning/volunteer-run-libraries/2010-2014-from-community-library-to-community-run-library-a-look-at-the-impact-of-volunteers>.
- Anstice I. (2017) *A crude strategy but here to stay: Bidy Casselden on volunteer public libraries in the United Kingdom* Available at: <http://www.publiclibrariesnews.com/campaigning/volunteer-run-libraries/practicalities/a-crude-strategy-but-here-to-stay-biddy-casselden-on-volunteer-public-libraries-in-the-united-kingdom>.
- Arts Council England. (2013a) *Community Libraries. Learning from experience: guiding principles for local authorities*. Arts Council England and Local Government Association.
- Arts Council England. (2013b) *Community libraries. Learning from experience: Summary briefing for local authorities*. Arts Council England and Local Government Association.
- Brodie E, Cowling E, Nissen N, et al. (2009) *Understanding participation: A literature review*. Available at: <http://www.ivr.org.uk/images/stories/Institute-of-Volunteering-Research/Migrated-Resources/Documents/U/Pathways-literature-review-final-version.pdf>.
- Bussell H and Forbes D. (2007) *Volunteer Management in Arts Organizations: A Case Study and Managerial Implications* *International Journal of Arts Management* 9(2): 16-28.
- Casselden B. (2016) *A Delicate Balancing Act: an investigation of volunteer use and stakeholder perspectives in public libraries*. *i-School, Department of Computer and Information Sciences*. Northumbria University.
- Casselden B, Pickard AJ and McLeod J. (2015) *The challenges facing public libraries in the Big Society: The role of volunteers, and the issues that surround their use in England*. *Journal of librarianship and information science* 47(3): 187-203.
- Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals. (2012) *Public libraries use of volunteers: Full policy statement*. Available at: <https://www.cilip.org.uk/research/sectors/public-libraries/briefings-statements/public-libraries-use-volunteers>.
- Gorman GE and Clayton P. (2005) *Qualitative research for the information professional. A practical handbook*: Facet.
- Goulding A. (2006) *Public libraries in the 21st Century: Defining services and debating the future*.: Ashgate.
- Hager M and Brudney J. (2004) *Volunteer Management Practices and Retention of Volunteers*. The Urban Institute.
- Harvey A. (2016) *Funding arts and culture in a time of austerity*. Available at: <http://www.nlgn.org.uk/public/wp-content/uploads/Funding-Arts-and-Culture.pdf>.
- Kearney JR. (2003) *Volunteering: Social Glue for community cohesion?* *Voluntary Action*, 6. (accessed 26 Jun 2015).
- Locke M. (2008) *Research bulletin. National survey of volunteering and charitable giving. Who gives time now? Patterns of participation in volunteering*. Available at: [http://www.ivr.org.uk/images/stories/Institute-of-Volunteering-Research/Migrated-Resources/Documents/G/Final\\_Giving\\_Time.pdf](http://www.ivr.org.uk/images/stories/Institute-of-Volunteering-Research/Migrated-Resources/Documents/G/Final_Giving_Time.pdf).
- McMenemy D. (2009) *The Public Library*, London: Facet.
- Moran C. (2013) *Moranthology*: Ebury Publishing.
- Museums Libraries and Archives Council. (2011) *Community engagement in public libraries: An evaluation of the Big Lottery Fund's Community Libraries Programme*.
- Nichols G, Forbes D, Findlay-King L, et al. (2015) *Is asset transfer of public leisure facilities in England an example of assistive democracy?* *Administrative Sciences* 5: 71-87.
- Pateman J and Vincent J. (2010) *Public libraries and social justice*, Farnham: Ashgate.

- Pateman J and Williment K. (2013) *Developing community-led public libraries*: Ashgate.
- Peachey J. (2017) *Shining a Light: English data about attitudes to and use of public libraries 2011–2016. Country factsheet*. Available at:  
<https://www.carnegieuktrust.org.uk/carnegieuktrust/wp-content/uploads/sites/64/2017/04/England-Shining-a-Light.pdf>.
- Rogelberg SG, Allen JA, Conway JM, et al. (2010) Employee experiences with volunteers: Assessment, description, antecedents, and outcomes. *Nonprofit Management & Leadership*, 20. (accessed 21 October 2011).
- Sieghart W. (2014) Independent library report for England. Department for Culture Media and Sport.
- Wainwright D, Bradshaw P, Sherlock P, et al. (2016) *Libraries lose a quarter of staff as hundreds close*. Available at: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-35707956>.
- Wilson J. (2012) Volunteerism research: A review essay. *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly* 41: pp. 176-212.