

# Supporting and Developing Police Support Volunteers in a Large Urban Constabulary in England, UK

**Melissa Pepper**, University of Greenwich (London – United Kingdom),  
M.J.Pepper@greenwich.ac.uk

**Abstract** Police Support Volunteers (PSVs) – citizens who give their time freely to perform tasks that complement the duties of officers and staff – feature in every police service in England and Wales. Emerging in the early 1990s, the non-warranted and (usually) non-uniformed PSV is a relatively new addition to an established police volunteer history, performing a variety of tasks from administration and station front counter duties, to traffic speed checks and viewing CCTV footage. Drawing on a mixed-methods study including PSVs, strategic stakeholders, and volunteer managers, this chapter will explore the infrastructure required within (and beyond) policing to adequately support, develop, and involve volunteers. It will consider coordination of volunteers – from ‘top down’ vision to ground level delivery – and the pivotal role of volunteer managers in supporting and developing PSVs. Finally, the chapter will turn to the future – the challenges that police services face in rethinking and reassigning tasks against a backdrop of shifting priorities, diminishing resources, and a pluralising ‘work-force’ – and reimagine the role of PSVs within this.

**Keywords** Police; Volunteers; Police Support Volunteers; Volunteer Management

## 1. Introduction

Volunteers are a familiar presence in British policing with the most recognisable figure – the volunteer Special Constable, who holds the same powers, uniform, and equipment as a regular paid officer – enshrined in legislation just two years after the formation of the modern police service in 1829. Volunteers in British policing are unpaid, with individuals receiving no monetary remuneration for their time, other than reimbursement of reasonable ‘out of pocket’ expenses (e. g., travel costs). Volunteer roles span a range of areas including those managed within the police service (e. g., Special Constables, police cadets – uniformed volunteers aged 13 to 18 years

who participate in community, social, and sports based activities to enhance life and citizenship skills), partnered and supported by the police service (e. g., Neighbourhood Watch – networks of neighbours who work together to prevent crime, citizen patrols – members of the community who provide support and additional resources to the public and emergency services, often in town centres with busy night time economies), and which act to hold the police service to account (e. g., Independent Advisory Groups or community monitoring networks – both of which bring the police and community members together to improve service delivery around issues such as hate crime, stop and search, and other intrusive police tactics) (Bullock, 2014; Millie, 2019).

Emerging in forces from the early 1990s onwards, the non-warranted and (usually) non-uniformed Police Support Volunteer (PSV) – citizens who give their time freely to perform tasks that complement the duties of police officers and staff – is a relatively new addition to an established police volunteer landscape in the UK. The development of the PSV role coincided with the growth of community policing and pluralising approaches to policing more broadly, which recognised the limited capacity of the formal state-owned criminal justice system to control crime alone (Crawford, 2008). The involvement of volunteers in policing also chimed with UK political thinking at this time, with themes of civic renewal, decentralised decision making, inter agency partnerships, strengthening communities, and forging a democratic, inclusive society featuring heavily within Prime Minister Tony Blair’s New Labour (1997-2010) narrative of capacity building, cohesion, and collective civic engagement (Zimmeck, 2012; Bullock, 2014).

This was an agenda in which the ‘active citizen’, perhaps best epitomised by the volunteer, fitted neatly – and continues to do so. The focus of UK police forces now seems to have shifted from one centred around community engagement and quality of police-public encounters (prominent throughout the 1990s and early part of the 21st century), to increased emphasis on global security, serious, organised and cyber-enabled crime, and tackling threat, harm, risk and vulnerability (Higgins and Hales, 2016). However, with the National Police Chief’s Council Policing Vision 2025 (undated: 3) referring to the link between communities and the police as “the bedrock of British policing”, it is clear that citizens are still expected to play their part in this. Indeed, volunteers in policing continue to feature prominently within the UK police ‘family’; although the extent to which they are adequately supported and developed to perform their roles, in order to maximise the contribution that they bring, remains uncertain.

Until recently systematically collected data on the number of PSVs was limited; however, the UK Home Office included PSV data as part of their Police Workforce Returns for the first time in 2018. Data to September 2020 places the number of PSVs in England and Wales at 7,891, with the figure remaining broadly similar compared to the previous year (Home Office, 2021).

Police forces are given scope to define their own PSV roles, although within a set of broader parameters that excludes a core list of powers reserved for warranted officers (e. g., arrest, stop and search) and positions that are seen as a substitute or ‘back fill’ for a previously paid role (discussed in more detail later in the chapter). The extent to which PSV role descriptions are formalised varies by force; however, volunteers generally perform regular tasks within a designated area of the police

organisation (rather than moving around frequently). PSV tasks include administration and front counter duties, community engagement activities and operational functions (e. g., traffic speed checks and viewing CCTV footage), and specialist skill or interest roles such as scientific support, gardening, puppy walking, equine assistance, and mountain rescue, with the nature of volunteering varying by force location environment. Training to enable PSVs to carry out their tasks varies between forces; however, is often delivered ‘on the job’ by more experienced volunteers or members of staff, alongside standard induction training sessions (health and safety, IT, data security etc.). While there is no set number of hours that PSVs are expected to volunteer, forces often implement their own guidelines around this (for example, in the force area that the fieldwork for this study was carried out there was an expectation that PSVs would volunteer for a minimum of ten and a maximum of 60 hours per month). A 2018 benchmarking survey highlighted over 1,100 PSV role profiles across forces in England and Wales, reflecting the diversity of PSV tasks and the contribution that they make (Britton et al., 2018).

PSVs now feature in every police service in England and Wales, forming “just one limb of the policing tree” (other ‘branches’ of which include private security, government agencies, the third sector, and community groups) (Ayling, 2007, 74). However, despite their presence across the breadth of police organisations, research exploring their involvement remains scarce. As new opportunities to involve volunteers in policing emerge – most notably through the UK Policing and Crime Act 2017 which allows chief officers to confer a range of powers to volunteers (excluding those in a core list reserved for warranted officers) – the development of a robust evidence base around volunteers in policing becomes increasingly urgent. This chapter adds to that evidence base, exploring the infrastructure required to adequately support and develop PSVs, and optimise their contribution to policing.

The chapter is based on fieldwork conducted as part of a PhD study, drawing on freetext comments from a survey of PSVs (n=140) and interviews with PSVs (n=20) and volunteer managers (paid members of police support or ‘civilian’ staff) (n=5) in a large urban constabulary in England, UK, and interviews with key stakeholders (paid, often senior, members of police forces/national oversight bodies with a role in setting the strategic direction of PSVs) (n=7) conducted between 2015 and 2017. Interviews were face-to-face and largely conducted in the location that the volunteering (or paid work, in the case of volunteer managers and stakeholders) took place – usually a police station. Topics covered within the PSV survey and interview schedule included: motivations for volunteering; role and contribution<sup>1</sup>; experiences of supervision and support; relationships with others (officers, staff)<sup>2</sup> and views on policing; satisfaction with role; and the PSVs’ plans for the future in relation to volunteering. The volunteer manager and stakeholder interview schedule covered the following areas: understanding the place of PSVs in the organisation (role, tasks, contribution, support/infrastructure available); relationships between PSVs and

---

<sup>1</sup> For a full discussion of the motivations and contributions of PSVs in this study please see Pepper (2021a) and Pepper et al. (2020).

<sup>2</sup> For a full discussion on PSVs’ relationships with others in policing, please see Pepper (2021b).

officers and staff; external issues (unions, impact of austerity); and final points around factors that need to be in place in order to involve volunteers, successes and challenges for PSV programmes, and looking to the future. Interviews were audio recorded, transcribed in a Word document and transferred to NVivo qualitative data analysis computer software package for thematic coding. This was approached from a grounded theory stance, allowing categories and themes to emerge and guide the analysis, so that research participants – PSVs, volunteer managers, and key stakeholders – held a pivotal role in ‘setting the agenda’ of the study (Patton, 2002).

The chapter is organised under four key headings: organisational approaches to PSVs; supporting and developing PSVs through dedicated volunteer management; resourcing volunteer programmes; and involving PSVs in austere times. Finally, the chapter turns to the future – the challenges that police services face in rethinking and reassigning tasks against a backdrop of shifting priorities, diminishing resources, and a pluralising workforce – and reimagines the role of PSVs within this.

## **2. Organisational Approaches to PSVs**

Involving volunteers in policing requires commitment from the organisation at both strategic and operational level (Gravelle and Rogers, 2009a; Carr, 2012). Those who make volunteering work ‘on the ground’ (most notably, volunteer managers, whose role will be explored in detail later in the chapter) are clearly instrumental; however, the overall ethos of involving volunteers is directed and dictated by the top-level organisational approach to volunteering. The extent to which police leaders consider both paid and unpaid members within the fabric of their workforce sets the tone for involving volunteers in the day-to-day delivery of policing. An organisation needs vision in terms of how and why volunteers will add value, a strategy which embeds volunteers within it, senior management who are active in demonstrating support, and comprehensive written policies outlining the practicalities of involving volunteers in delivering services (College of Policing, undated; Brudney, 2000). Indeed, Gill (1986) argues that it is organisational policy and strategic leadership that determines the extent to which the volunteer potential is maximised. However, a lack of clear leadership and failure to develop the role of the volunteer and coordinate their involvement has been noted across the criminal justice system, not least in policing where strategy and policy have often failed to foreground the role of volunteerism (Neuberger, 2009; Britton and Callender, 2018).

### **2.1 Clarifying a Corporate Position for Involving PSVs**

Interviews conducted with stakeholders and volunteer managers as part of this study highlighted the importance of organisational direction and leadership in involving

volunteers in policing. However, there was concern about a general lack of structure or approach regarding the position and direction of PSVs within policing, both nationally and within individual forces. Stakeholder interviewee Neil commented on the national PSV picture, arguing that there are currently “43 forces [in England and Wales], 43 different opinions on the value of the role and appetite for it [involving volunteers]”. This somewhat disparate approach to volunteers in policing at national level leaves individual forces with little in the way of central direction or good practice upon which to scope and develop their own programmes. Indeed, volunteer manager interviewees in this study were often unclear about the vision or ‘steer’ for PSVs with one arguing that their police force needed to ‘firm up’ their position on whether they considered “volunteering as a valuable function or a valuable part of our family” (Annabelle, volunteer manager interviewee). Volunteer manager Colby felt that it was important to establish a sense of organisational ethos and direction around volunteering, and that the force needed to “decide how it wants to use volunteers, what volunteers should be doing and, not mandating, but encouraging the utilisation of volunteers in particular areas”. For these volunteer managers, a corporate approach was important to ‘set the tone’ for involving volunteers across the organisation, enabling consistent communication that they are part of the workforce and how the organisation ‘does business’. This corporate approach, routinely factoring PSVs in to policing at strategic, operational, and tactical level would, according to stakeholder interviewee Clive, help to ensure that PSVs are “...not a bolt on anymore”.

## 2.2 The Influence of Individual Leaders

The success (or failure) of PSVs being involved in tasks within a police department was often linked to the presence of motivated and enthusiastic individual officers and staff – usually those in positions of power or influence which, in a policing context, equated to rank. Volunteer manager Colby argued that the extent to which PSVs are able to take part in meaningful tasks is “very dependent on individuals being knowledgeable about volunteering and seeing the benefits... when someone who’s interested in volunteers, sees the benefit of volunteers, arrives in the department, that department can sometimes flourish with volunteers”. Volunteer manager Derek commented on the success of a unit in the police force that had been recognised nationally for their volunteer involvement:

“A lot of that is to do with who was running the unit... He embraced volunteering and to a certain extent that’s critical because, if somebody higher up the chain in any organisation embraces an idea, then it filters through because people agree”.

Derek returned to this point later in his interview stating: “it’s like everything, if you’ve got a good leader that... tends to infuse its way down”. Stakeholder interviewee Neil agreed, emphasising the importance of leadership that is committed to

involving volunteers: “you need to have leadership internally. So, it needs to be a priority. So, you need a chief officer sponsor who believes in it and it will work”.

### 2.3 Changing Leadership Messages

While the influence of police leaders can be positive in terms of greater PSV involvement, volunteer manager and stakeholder interviewees also highlighted challenges that this can pose. Long serving volunteer manager Marsha reflected on changing messages when there is turnover of senior officers from “they’re [PSVs] not really important but not said they’re not really important, to really, really important, they will be on our commendation ceremony”. Marsha spoke about a particularly enthusiastic senior officer that she worked alongside who has since moved on to another area:

“He got all the Senior Leadership Team on board with it. The engagement was off the scale. He injected volunteers into every single meeting, every talk he done, just everywhere. It was like thank you, the Messiah had arrived! Although he’s left that legacy, it hasn’t continued at the pace because the passion that he had for it isn’t the passion that the current one [senior officer] has”.

Stakeholder interviewee Beth highlighted similar views: “You could get an area within the police service that had been completely pro-volunteers, really engaged, really used them at every opportunity, then personalities change, and a different set of attitudes come in and it’s different”. This shines a spotlight on the fragile and tenuous nature of PSV involvement where organisational ‘take up’ of volunteer programmes is dependent on the personality, drive, and operational focus of a small and often changing cohort of senior leaders.

### 2.4 A Volunteer ‘Hierarchy’

However, even for the most enthusiastic police leaders who are committed to involving PSVs, the demanding and changeable nature of the ‘day job’ can quickly displace their focus. Volunteer manager Annabelle acknowledged the challenging position of volunteering in an environment of varied, wide-ranging, and frequently changing police priorities:

“I mean let’s face it, we’re a police force, we’ve got to sort out the operational first and I don’t think anyone is denying or thinking it should be otherwise. I’m not saying they’re not good leaders. I’m just saying that volunteering is very low down that list”.

Furthermore, PSVs were seen to occupy a considerably lower position on that ‘list’, compared to those who give their time in other unpaid police roles. Indeed, a perception of a police volunteering ‘hierarchy’ seemed evident here, with the PSV viewed as the ‘poor relation’ within this. The Special Constable and Volunteer Police Cadet programmes – the two other key volunteering roles managed within police services in England and Wales – were seen to attract considerably greater interest and investment compared to PSVs, which some volunteer manager and stakeholder interviewees related to their visibility (both are uniformed roles), measurable performance indicators, and resultant political and public ‘currency’:

“The Specials get recognised, the Specials get free travel [on public transport], the Specials get, the Specials get, the Specials get! I know that it’s a very different job in terms of what PSVs do, but they do add value and I think we could do a little bit more for them” (Marsha, volunteer manager interviewee).

“The focus is predominantly on Specials and Cadets, so PSVs can often be forgotten corporately. Corporate messages that go out talk about staff, officers, Specials. PSVs are often left out... They’re a hard sell. To tell members of the public “oh did you know you’ve got PSVs helping support police?” it means absolutely zero” (Colby, volunteer manager interviewee).

Stakeholder interviewee Kenneth felt that PSVs challenged conventional police measures of value – “part of the problem is the return. You can’t measure it. You can’t touch it” – whereas Special Constables and Volunteer Police Cadets lend themselves more readily to traditional police performance frameworks in terms of quantifiable patrol hours, visibility, and (for Special Constables) arrest rates.

Securing top-level ‘buy in’ is an important starting point for creating an environment in which volunteers can be part of policing, with senior management active in demonstrating support. However, both the strategic vision for involving volunteers and the practical tools for embedding them must be woven throughout the organisation (Myhill, 2006; van Caem et al., 2013). A dedicated volunteer manager is at the core of this, interpreting senior level strategies and policies and communicating them to ‘ground level’, advocating the role of the volunteer within the workforce, and being a visible and accessible figure for both PSVs and the officers and staff that involve them in their teams (Brudney, 1999 in Bullock, 2017; Phillips and Terrell-Orr, 2013; Millie, 2018). The next section of this chapter turns to the volunteer manager, highlighting the importance that PSVs in this study attached to their role.

### 3. Supporting and Developing PSVs through Dedicated Volunteer Management

Dedicated volunteer management is the catalyst for factors that have been identified as central to volunteer experiences<sup>3</sup> – undertaking tasks that enable PSVs to make a valid contribution and fulfil their motivations for volunteering, having access to resources and feedback that allow them to feel supported and develop in their roles, and operating within teams and alongside officers and staff that recognise and value the time and skills they bring (Shin and Kleiner, 2003; Phillips and Terrell-Orr, 2013; Bullock, 2017; Millie, 2018). Indeed, PSVs that took part in this study, together with stakeholders, and volunteer managers themselves, frequently emphasised the importance of volunteer managers pointing to the essential nature of the role to successful volunteering in the police service. PSVs often praised their volunteer managers in terms of understanding their skills, providing personal and professional support in identifying volunteering roles that ‘speak to’ their interests (including paid positions within policing for those PSVs who had career related motivations for volunteering in unpaid roles<sup>4</sup>), recognising and facilitating flexible arrangements for those with care, study or other responsibilities, and arranging opportunities for development and recognition of their contribution.

Saskia, a PSV survey respondent, related enjoyment in her role to an effective manager who seemed invested in maximising her experiences as a volunteer:

“I’ve really enjoyed the last couple of years and plan to continue [volunteering]. A lot of that is down to having a good volunteer manager who has been able to find areas that match my skills and areas in which I’m interested”.

Indeed, it seemed to be those managers that took the time to develop relationships with their volunteers and understand individual motivations for giving time, who garnered the most positive feedback. PSV interviewee Katy commented:

“I had a really good volunteer manager. She wasn’t just a manager, she was like a really good friend, like a life coach. She turned things around for everybody, not just with me, every single person – and she could see that I was keen so whatever role there was available she would say to me ‘if you’re interested, take part in it’ and that helped me to build my confidence up”.

PSV interviewee Harley also spoke about the support his volunteer manager offered in terms of searching for paid employment: “He is lovely! I can only give that man praise... we’re in a process, every single paid position that comes his way he sends the link to it straight away”. Features identified by PSVs in this study as important

---

<sup>3</sup> For a full discussion on PSVs’ experiences while volunteering and alongside others in policing, please see Pepper (2021b).

<sup>4</sup> For a full discussion on the motivations of PSVs in this study please see Pepper (2021a).

to their volunteer experience – most notably here, understanding and attempting to respond to volunteer motivations, and creating meaningful tasking opportunities – frequently fall within the remit of the volunteer manager role. For PSVs Saskia, Katy, and Harley, the role that their volunteer managers undertook held great influence in terms of fulfilling reasons for giving their time and creating a positive experience for them as a volunteer in policing.

### **3.1 An Emotional Contract**

Volunteer manager interviewees frequently highlighted the importance of their relationship with the PSV. Volunteer manager Marsha spoke of a multi-faceted relationship, which stretched far beyond the straightforward administration of management:

“I am mother, aunt, sister, counsellor, confidant. This role is so much more than what’s on paper. A big part of it is the emotional side and keeping people engaged. What I find is that the volunteers will volunteer for you – rather than volunteer for the organisation first. They see the police force and, yes, that’s what they put themselves forward for, but when they actually join it’s not the logo or the police force brand that keeps them, it’s the [volunteer] manager”.

Marsha referred to a unique ‘emotional contract’ that she felt volunteer managers need to have with PSVs – an unwritten agreement of mutual obligation, and interactions that take on perhaps elevated levels of importance for unpaid members of the organisation. Volunteer manager Annabelle made reference to the alternative ‘carrots and sticks’ available when managing unpaid staff, and the importance of ‘engaging with and knowing your volunteers’ as part of this: “...we undervalue engagement and we undervalue the personal relationship – knowing the person, their skills and their strengths, and playing to them”.

### **3.2 ‘Championing’ PSVs and the Voluntary Contribution**

The relationships that volunteer managers in this study held frequently stretched beyond the PSV, with ‘outward facing’ links across the wider organisation, and promoting and championing the voluntary contribution, viewed as essential features of their role. Volunteer manager interviewees spoke about attending force tasking meetings to identify volunteer opportunities, and the importance of getting to know teams in the force area in order to promote the voluntary resource that is available to them. As volunteer manager Jennifer commented: “It’s really just being a part of the area. Finding out things that are happening”, highlighting the volunteer

managers role as the “face of volunteering... negotiating and speaking to people but also having their [the PSVs] best interests at heart”. Volunteer managers emphasised the importance of their role in both supporting the PSV and being accessible to the paid workforce in order to identify and develop the voluntary contribution within the police force.

PSVs themselves also recognised and valued their volunteer manager’s role in this. PSV interviewee Salma commented:

“I have a manager who does a fantastic job and is quite forward thinking in terms of “who do I have in my cluster who has these skills I need for such and such a thing?” And therefore – because they know us so well – is quite quick to say to senior officer X “I have two volunteers who could potentially help you with that, I’ll put you in touch with them today” and then things can move along quickly”.

PSV interviewee Alan highlighted the role of their manager in ‘bring[ing] people together’ – both PSVs and paid members of the organisation, emphasising the manager’s unique position as an interface between the volunteer resource and the wider police service. Referring to a large-scale filing task that a group of PSVs undertook to support a team who were preparing for a high-profile case to go to court, Alan stated: “But that’s because of the strong manager being there to accept the work, get the volunteers in. We can’t do that on our own. We can’t build up the relationship”.

Volunteer managers have been recognised as the ‘interface’ between the organisation and the volunteer, and the ‘nexus’ of a range of factors that have been identified as integral to the volunteer experience both in policing and more broadly: role development, recruitment, training, understanding and responding to motivations, managing information and communication, and creating an environment which fosters commitment (Shin and Kleiner, 2003). It is at the volunteer manager level where policies or programmes (where they exist) are interpreted and communicated from the ‘top’ to the ‘street’, where the individual volunteer may have most direct contact with representatives of the organisation (particularly in the early phases of their service), and where officers and staff often have their first experiences of PSVs (Phillips and Terrell-Orr, 2013).

These initial ‘encounter phases’ – predominantly delivered or facilitated by a strong volunteer manager – are vital for new volunteers in terms of ‘sense making’ (Weick, 1995), ‘meaning making’ (Schnell and Hoof, 2012), ‘membership negotiation’ (Castor and Jiter, 2013), and ‘organisational socialisation’ (Kramer, 2001). Furthermore, these experiences serve to develop PSVs’ understanding of organisational priorities and offer a space to connect with them, signalling the value that the organisation places on them and their role. Indeed, Callender et al. (2019, 401) found a significant association between self-reported perceptions of whether the force was good at managing volunteers and PSV morale, pointing to the “importance of a positive, pro-active approach to volunteer management in which PSVs are able to see how their activities ‘fit’ within the totality of policing activity and feel appreciated for their inputs [helping them to] ... actively integrate and feel part of the wider policing team”.

The volunteer manager role is a skilled one and, although there are some similarities with theory and practice underpinning traditional (that is, paid) human resource functions, Gay (2000 in Howlett, 2010) posits that volunteer management requires a broader, more eclectic set of skills – co-ordinating, managing, developing, representing, campaigning – which operate alongside a limited set of ‘levers’ to engage and incentivise people. In the absence of monetary compensation or material incentives, Shin and Kleiner (2003, 63, 69) argue that “the effective management of unpaid volunteers is crucial in instilling and maintaining the spirit of volunteerism among individuals” and, because volunteers give their time and energy to the organisation at their own cost, they must be “managed with special care”. However, volunteer management of this quality can only be achieved within an organisation that is prepared to invest and develop an adequately resourced and sustainable programme – themes that are explored in the next section of this chapter.

## **4. Resourcing Volunteer Programmes**

Good quality volunteer management and co-ordination, together with features that have been recognised as essential to the volunteer experience – recruitment, comprehensive induction, training and development opportunities, schedule flexibility, rewards and recognition, information and communication, and access to resources – each have costs attached, negating any suggestion that PSVs are a ‘free’ resource (Millie, 2019). As Clive, a stakeholder interviewee, highlighted, although ‘unpaid’ in terms of salary, volunteer programmes require investment: “it’s not a no cost option – it’s a low-cost option”. However, adequate resources to support volunteer programmes are often underestimated and, particularly during times of fiscal restraint, may not be forthcoming. This section considers the diminishing investment in volunteer management that took place throughout the lifetime of this study in the force area in which fieldwork was conducted, and the implications of this in terms of managing PSVs with fewer resources and concerns about losing the ‘profile’ of the PSV programme within the force.

### **4.1 Diminishing Investment in Volunteer Management**

One of the clearest indications of the impact of budget restrictions on the force’s PSV programme during this study was the significant reduction in dedicated volunteer manager posts that took place throughout the lifetime of the research. Although clearly holding a vested interest in terms of their own ongoing employment, volunteer managers were pessimistic about the future of the volunteering programme in the absence of dedicated co-ordination, frequently commenting on this throughout interviews:

“Who is going to manage our volunteers? Because we have a really great additional workforce that gives their time willingly; however, a lot of it is based on their personal relationships with their volunteer manager, and the motivation and the contact they have” (Colby, volunteer manager interviewee).

“I think once the volunteer managers go that will in itself reduce the number of volunteers because of the dedication and commitment they have to the volunteer manager. They won’t have the support they’ve had, and I think it will be very, very few people that will volunteer” (Jennifer, volunteer manager interviewee).

Volunteers themselves were also concerned about the loss of their volunteer manager, a reality which some seemed keenly aware of: “Uncertainty of volunteer manager job has created an uncertain future for the volunteer programme with a lack of proactive approach for roles to keep volunteers busy and interested” (Gail, PSV survey respondent); “The current cull of volunteer managers and the way it is being implemented has affected morale” (Kyrán, PSV survey respondent); “I am losing my volunteer manager, who has been a staunch supporter for years. Those with less experience as volunteers may feel cast adrift” (Alana, PSV survey respondent). PSVs also raised issues around the increased workload for remaining managers, and the impact on their ability to engage and retain volunteers. PSV survey respondent Nancy stated: “I personally have felt a diminished connection with the volunteer managers because they are decreasing in number”, while PSV survey respondent Saskia highlighted the effect on volunteer numbers:

“The force needs to be careful to retain a good volunteer management team. A good volunteer manager can deliver a lot of value through the people they recruit and manage (many multiples of what they cost). Losing the expertise here could mean a dwindling in numbers and quality”.

## 4.2 Managing PSVs with Fewer Resources

In interviews, volunteer managers reflected on the wider changes they were experiencing ‘on the ground’ against a backdrop of reducing budgets and organisational re-structuring in order to meet financial targets – in particular, centralisation of the recruitment process for both paid and unpaid members of the workforce. Volunteer managers were concerned about the priority that PSVs would hold alongside filling officer, staff, and Special Constable positions, and their now-reduced opportunities to inform, manage expectations, and identify positions for volunteers. Volunteer manager Derek commented on his more limited role in PSV recruitment and the implications of this:

“You interview people and you were thinking what sort of role you could offer them... I think that’s important to make sure the right people are in the right job, and to a certain extent that is going to be taken away from us”.

Derek went on to reflect on the problems associated with identifying and developing volunteer opportunities, and placing them in teams without considerably increasing the workload of those officers and staff who oversee their work on a day-to-day basis that may arise with fewer volunteer managers:

“If they didn’t have managers, I do worry that the programme would die. The team leaders are quite busy as it is. So, if you’re told “here’s another 20 volunteers you’ve got to look after”... the volunteers might go to them with a problem and they might not have time to sort it out. If they’ve got a senior leader saying, “I want this done now” and the volunteer saying, “I’ve got a problem with my computer”, I’m afraid... priorities...”.

Volunteer manager Annabelle commented: “If you lose the manager then often the programme begins to crumble... You lose that local level management line or ‘go-to’ person for that volunteer, you lose the volunteer”. Stakeholder interviewee Beth raised a similar concern: “It is important to recognise and harbour volunteering opportunities. All the while we have dedicated volunteer managers – things will happen. If or when they go, the likelihood of this will reduce”. Beth went on to highlight the importance of adequately resourced volunteer management, providing ‘central direction’ and “someone paid to be that point of contact”. As stakeholder interviewee Neil commented: “It’s got to be your full-time job to worry about volunteers”.

Inconsistent and inadequate management and support has been highlighted in other studies of police volunteers. Bullock (2017) recognised variance in the levels of supervision, guidance, and management afforded to PSVs, while respondents in Millie’s (2019, 414) study referred to a limited “organisational infrastructure and sufficient personnel” to manage and develop volunteers. This has implications for the way in which PSVs are involved in policing, the contribution they are able to make, and their likelihood of continuing to give their time. Failing to embed effective volunteer management and supervision can lead to challenges around retention, with lack of induction, development, and training – central features of a well-resourced and managed volunteer programme – more often drivers for volunteers to leave the organisation than poor initial selection reasons (Bullock, 2017).

## **5. Involving PSVs in Austere Times**

The challenge of resourcing volunteer programmes and delivering policing services in austere times presented itself throughout data collection for this study, perhaps most notably in relation to the infrastructure (or lack of) in place to support the involvement of PSVs. Indeed, police services in the UK have had to face up to the difficult realities of operating in a climate of fiscal constraint. According to a 2018 report by the National Audit Office, police forces have experienced 30 per cent real term budget reductions since 2010/11 and are finding it harder to deliver an effective service, not only in terms of financial cuts but the significant costs of investigating terrorism and increased reports of high harm crimes such as sexual offences.

There is the suggestion that this has been further exacerbated by the Covid-19 global pandemic, with forces required to invest resources into a new and unfamiliar terrain of public health policing, as well as protective equipment and technology to enable officers and staff to work from home (Clements and Aitkenhead, 2020; Dodd, 2020). Budget reductions have had implications across the broad remit of policing – including, according to participants in this study, the manner in which PSVs are involved in the delivery of services.

### 5.1 The PSV ‘Offer’: Additionality or Substitution?

While the involvement of volunteers in policing, as respondents in Bullock’s (2017, 346) study reflected, offer a ‘pragmatic response to economic reality’ in financially precarious times, balancing the ‘additionality’ that PSVs can bring alongside concerns about job substitution is a challenging path to negotiate. Similar to other areas of public life including health (NHS England, 2017) and community services (e. g., libraries) (Forkert, 2016), the financial – as in cost saving – contribution of volunteers is a thorny issue. Unpaid (although by no means ‘cost free’) volunteers have been viewed, according to some studies, as an effective means of compensating for increasingly scarce police resources (Ren et al., 2006; Ayling, 2007; Gravelle and Rogers, 2009a, 2009b; Phillips, 2013). However, in a UK context, volunteering activity (in any realm – not just policing) cannot be seen as a substitute for paid work (Compact Code of Good Practice on Volunteering, 2005). Despite this, issues around additionality and substitution in relation to volunteering activity remain contentious, not least in the police service with a report by the public services union Unison (2014, 3, 8) referring to “volunteer mission creep”, suggesting that some police volunteer roles “look remarkably like established police staff posts”, with PSVs being “quietly recruited” to replace job cuts.

Issues around the volunteer input bringing ‘additionality’ or veering into substitution of paid members of staff arose throughout fieldwork in this study, particularly during interviews with stakeholders and volunteer managers. Stakeholder interviewee Beth set out the current parameters clearly:

“A volunteer should not replace a member of staff. It should not be a job substitution. Volunteers bring additionality. They should be completing tasks that otherwise would not be done... improving, rather than delivering core business. We should be able to function without them... Whilst volunteers are a huge benefit there is a limit to how much the organisation can call on them”.

Stakeholder interviewee Clive – a senior officer responsible for direction of PSVs at a national level – spoke about the importance of systems of accountability to ensure that the ‘limits’ around involving PSVs that Beth referred to above were adhered to:

“It’s [PSV roles] as wide as your imagination, isn’t it? The important thing is that in my view you’ve got a mechanism in your force to make sure that you’re not doing what Unison accuses us of which is mission creep. You’re being careful that your organisation has agreed what tasks it will allow their volunteers to actually do and that it’s got the relevant support and development mechanisms in place to allow it to happen”.

Volunteer manager interviewee Derek highlighted his role in ensuring and communicating the nature of volunteer tasks, emphasising the supportive (rather than replacement) intentions of their PSVs:

“You have to be conscious of job substitution, so whenever we put forward a new volunteer role it has to go to the committee, you know to make sure that it isn’t going to impact and people don’t consider that job substitution... sometimes they [PSVs] are looked upon as a threat when they’re not. They’re there very much as a support and I emphasise that. They are there to support staff, not to take over their job”.

## 5.2 The Challenges of Balancing Additionality and Substitution in a Changing Service

However, volunteer managers also outlined the challenges of remaining on the ‘right side’ of the additionality vs. substitution ‘debate’ in a climate of reductions in paid police staff (i.e., non-warranted or ‘civilian’ roles<sup>5</sup>), and when trying to source meaningful and fulfilling PSV roles that meet the needs of the force:

“That line is becoming more and more grey, more and more wide... I personally would like to see the force not replacing people’s jobs – absolutely not – but being quite realistic with what a volunteer can do, what help we need, and looking at other organisations and how they utilise volunteers” (Marsha, volunteer manager interviewee).

“We are restricted in terms of what practically a volunteer can do because of job substitution. So that means where, as a volunteer in theory could do 20 things for a team, in reality it comes down to ten... I certainly appreciate that some of our volunteers will be underutilised. I don’t know how that will be changed without a dynamic shift in the way that the organisation views volunteers... then you’re blurring the lines” (Colby, volunteer manager interviewee).

Stakeholder interviewee Beth reiterated the difficulties of balancing a “fine line between what a volunteer can and can’t do, and what a member of paid staff should be doing” and concerns of volunteers themselves around this: “It’s wrong to think that we can survive on just volunteers. You can’t, you wouldn’t – the volunteers

---

<sup>5</sup> A reduction of over 10,000 posts across forces in England and Wales (from 81,772 to 71,996) between 31 March 2010 and 31 March 2020. This increased to 75,625 in most recent data to 31 March 2021 (Home Office, 2021).

wouldn't want to do it. If they knew they were taking someone's paid livelihood from them, we wouldn't keep them in the organisation".

Indeed, a small number of PSVs in both surveys and interviews acknowledged these issues when considering their contribution as a volunteer, indicating a clear stance around job substitution: "One wants to assist without depriving anyone of a job" (Michelle, PSV survey respondent); "I joined because I wanted to help my local officers in any way I could. It definitely was not to take jobs away from the force. I stipulated that from the start and have maintained that stance since" (Danielle, PSV survey respondent). PSV interviewee Pippa was also firm about this point:

"I would like to stress this, that one of the first questions I asked – and I asked it repeatedly to be sure – I was very worried about taking someone's job... Because that was really important to me. The truth is, if I thought that was going to be the case, I wouldn't do it. It's as simple as that".

### 5.3 Changing Conversations in a Changing Landscape

The rapidly changing landscape in which policing operates, largely prompted by fiscal constraint, led some stakeholders to reflect on the need for renewed debate around who does – or could – carry out policing tasks in the future. Stakeholder interviewees were under no illusion about the magnitude of this, referring to a 'sea change' in terms of involving PSVs (Kenneth, stakeholder interviewee), confronting "difficult, crunchy issues" (Clive, stakeholder interviewee), and "working out a pragmatic response" to no longer being able to say that "volunteers should never replace paid staff", while acknowledging that this can be "very, very damaging where that does happen" (Nathan, stakeholder interviewee). However, there was recognition that this position may not remain static, particularly in a changing police environment where finances are contracting but demands to deliver a broad service continue unabated.

According to stakeholder interviewee Clive, "there is a demand out there for policing services and a significantly reduced workforce left to do it, so you've got to think of different ways of achieving that". Stakeholder Kenneth questioned whether the "game would change": "Will austerity push the fact that forces will say one day "we cannot do all this without volunteers"?" Stakeholder Neil broadened the focus to wider issues around pluralisation of policing:

"I think that the expectation on what the police will do as an organisation will change. The police organisation will do less. But it doesn't mean that there will be less policing. It just might be that work will happen outside of the formal police service... This opens up the potential for more activity to be done by volunteers".

Moving conversations forward to more imaginatively consider the role of PSVs in policing demands strategic vision and an adequately resourced infrastructure to

support and develop volunteers. Indeed, failing to invest in the resources necessary to appropriately involve volunteers, according to stakeholder interviewee Nathan, may risk leaving “a trail of destruction behind you”.

## **6. Discussion and Concluding Thoughts**

This chapter has highlighted that the support, direction, and overall ethos of inclusion that the police service offers (or, indeed, fails to offer) to volunteers fundamentally underpins each of the issues that PSVs in this study – and wider studies of volunteers in policing and other environments – have identified as important to the volunteer experience: motivations being recognised and fulfilled; meaningful, interesting tasks that provide a genuine feeling of ‘being useful’; and working alongside officers and members of staff who acknowledge and value the time and skills that they bring. Experiences, perceptions, or feelings about the way in which the organisation treats volunteers can affect the extent to which volunteers define, understand, and identify with their role, and the connection and attachment that they feel to it (Grube and Piliavin, 2000; Penner, 2002; Marta et al., 2014). The greater the connection and attachment that the volunteer feels within the organisation, the more important the volunteer identity becomes to their sense of self – features that have been shown to be influential on volunteer satisfaction and retention (Laverie and McDonald, 2007; van Ingen and Wilson, 2017).

Achieving this has been closely linked to an adequately resourced volunteer programme (including a paid manager or coordinator) and an organisational approach which embraces (or, at least, notices and considers) volunteers (Brudney, 2000; Shin and Kleiner, 2003). As Cordery et al. (2015) argue, organisations that dedicate resources to volunteer programmes and adopt effective management practices are likely to benefit most from involving volunteers in their work. However, leadership and direction, dedicated volunteer management, and an adequately resourced infrastructure to support and develop volunteers has often shown to be lacking in the policing paradigm (Britton and Callender, 2018; Callender et al., 2019). Indeed, this seems to resonate across volunteering spheres beyond policing, with Howlett (2010) commenting that organising and co-ordinating the tasks of unpaid ‘amateurs’ is frequently seen as unimportant and low value compared to managing paid ‘professionals’. This has implications for the resources that are allocated to involving and embedding volunteers within policing, with the nature of volunteer co-ordination and management expertise often not readily recognised.

## **6.1 The Importance of Leadership**

Findings from this study pointed firmly to the importance of leadership at national, force, and individual team level – themes that have featured prominently throughout volunteering literature more generally (e.g., Grossman and Furano, 1999; Brudney, 2000) – however, concern that this was lacking in parts. Indeed, stakeholder and volunteer manager interviewees referred to a lack of clarity around strategic vision for PSVs, disparate approaches to their involvement, and lower priority afforded to this type of police volunteer compared to their Special Constable and Police Cadet counterparts. The tone of this was often set by individual leaders, and the transitory nature of senior officer positions – a trend exacerbated in a changing police organisation – often led to a lack of consistency around how PSVs were viewed, involved, and valued. Notwithstanding, volunteer managers also spoke of a number of committed senior leaders who recognised the contribution that volunteers could bring, placing them at the heart of service delivery alongside officers and staff, and of teams that welcomed volunteers and made clear that they were valued. However, this was often dependent on enthusiastic individual officers and staff, rather than sustainable, comprehensive policies that embedded volunteers within the workforce and viewed their presence as ‘business as usual’.

## **6.2 The Importance of Volunteer Management**

The influence of management on volunteer experience was clear from PSVs who took part in this study. The volunteer manager was instrumental in terms of understanding PSVs’ skills and reasons for giving their time and identifying opportunities for them to fulfil them. They also took on an important ‘outward’ facing role, championing and promoting PSVs throughout the police service and acting as an interface between the individual volunteer and broader organisation. These initial encounter phases – in which the volunteer manager plays a central role – enable both the individual and the wider police service to understand where the PSV ‘fits’ and the contribution they can make, supporting their integration within the organisation (Callender et al., 2019). Many PSVs shared positive stories of supervision and support from their volunteer manager. Some spoke about development opportunities and the effort that volunteer managers invested in identifying roles that matched their interests, and allowed them to see the contribution they made to policing – features that volunteers have been shown to attach importance to in both policing (Callender et al., 2019) and non-policing (Jamison, 2003; Wisner et al., 2005) spheres. However, a number of PSVs – and the volunteer managers that supported them – reported a less positive range of experiences: of limited access to training and other opportunities to develop, of depleting resources and structural changes that vastly reduced volunteer management capacity, and of a lacking infrastructure to support a sustainable volunteer programme.

### **6.3 The Impact of Austerity**

The impact of austerity and the fallout of a police service struggling to deliver services in the face of reducing budgets featured prominently throughout discussions on volunteer programme infrastructure. Volunteering is not free: an adequate programme to effectively involve, support, and develop PSVs requires investment (Wolf and Bryer, 2020). However, throughout the lifetime of this study, investment in the volunteer programme in the police force where fieldwork was conducted was diminishing – most visibly in terms of large-scale reductions in volunteer manager posts. Both PSVs and volunteer managers themselves (albeit acknowledging their vested interest here) were concerned about the future of the PSV programme once these changes started to take effect, and those that had already begun to do so as a result of streamlined recruitment processes and centralisation of local departments. These changes, they felt, would impact negatively on the profile of the volunteer programme at local level and the ability of volunteer managers to influence and be involved in the recruitment and development of volunteers. The challenges of tasking PSVs, while negotiating the somewhat thorny ground around ensuring that volunteers bring additionality rather than substituting previously paid roles, also emerged here. This can present barriers to volunteer managers and other staff when identifying the meaningful tasks that PSVs in this study attached much importance to. There was a sense from stakeholder and volunteer manager interviewees that this debate needed to move forward, and that the difficult issues surrounding appropriate involvement of volunteers would need to be confronted in light of a changing policing landscape.

### **6.4 Looking to the Future: PSVs in a Changing Policing Landscape**

The final section of this chapter seeks to explore and imagine the PSV role going forward in a rapidly changing police service. With considerably smaller budgets available to UK police services over recent years there has been a “narrowing of the front-line and a narrowing of the police task in general” to create ‘post-austerity policing that is both slimmer and fitter’ (Millie, 2014, 7). This climate has required forces to reconsider their priorities and the overall ‘shape’ of policing in light of available resources. The ability of policing services to meet the challenges they are currently presented with arguably will, in part, depend on their willingness to embrace the “fullest advantages of the opportunities that a pluralised approach can offer” (Stenning and Shearing, 2015, 7) and “adapt to a context in which they are no longer perceived as the monopolistic provider” (Crawford, 2008, 175). As police services attempt to more realistically align their responsibilities with available resources, they must consider those who may be better placed to take on some of the tasks that form part of ‘wide policing’ – broad and diverse objectives that feature

within an expanded policing mission (Millie, 2014). Indeed, it may be that the contribution of those beyond the warranted officer or paid member of staff – other statutory agencies, community groups, and volunteers, including the PSV, with their potential to draw in new skills, experience, capacity, and capability – are at the forefront of helping to meet some of the challenges currently facing the police service (Britton and Knight, 2016; Britton and Callender, 2018; Callender et al., 2019).

Reimagining the involvement of PSVs in this way requires a new approach, one that enhances creativity, and attempts to view their role more broadly than through the narrow policing focus currently adopted (Callender et al., 2020). Indeed, the processes and patterns of ‘being’ a volunteer do not have to mirror those of paid officers and staff. Episodic stints of volunteering, relying on a registered bank of individuals or companies willing to share their (or their staffs) time and skills during periods of demand, or when workloads require specialist knowledge which may not be available in the paid workforce (e. g., languages, financial knowledge, or IT expertise), could prove particularly fruitful in a police environment where tasks are becoming increasingly global and complex in nature, allowing a more flexible approach within the organisation in which volunteering takes place (Fairley et al., 2014). Furthermore, exploring alternative arrangements for management external – but closely linked to – the police service could offer some merit. Such an approach may expand capacity to better provide PSVs with the features that this study and others have shown to be important – flexibility, opportunities for development, appropriate and meaningful tasking, and dedicated volunteer management that seeks to understand and respond to individuals’ motivations for giving their time – while offering the police service a reliable and well-managed resource that they can tap in to on a regular or sporadic basis depending on need. New approaches to involving volunteers must aim to foster an environment in which they are recognised, valued, able to develop, and contribute to both existing operating models and new directions in policing practice, and where there is a genuine enthusiasm for enabling volunteers to become part of policing ‘business’ (Callender et al., 2019).

Policing is an evolving sector that must be capable of responding to rapidly shifting priorities. For volunteers to continue to be a relevant part of this, the way they operate within the police service must also be adaptable. Adopting a flexible and imaginative stance, and thinking more creatively about the potential of the volunteer contribution, is essential as police services navigate their way through challenging climates that have been further compounded by the uncertainty and blurring of boundaries around policing tasks in the Covid-19 global pandemic (Farrow, 2020). Assuming that PSVs will continue to play a role in policing, the need for an adequately resourced infrastructure to support and develop PSVs remains – indeed, takes on increasing prominence during unstable times. This calls for a two-pronged approach: dedicated volunteer management ‘on the ground’ to support and develop PSVs, and strategic leadership to set the overall vision for involving volunteers in the organisation. Indeed, the appetite and motivation of police leaders to engage with volunteers has been recognised as indicative of the “future prospects for the[ir] meaningful integration...within contemporary policing” (Wells and Millings, 2019, 377). The absence of such commitment and investment presents an unstable and precarious future for the PSV. If the failure of police leadership, strategy, and policy to foreground volunteering continues (Britton and Callender, 2018), it is unlikely

that police services will be able to capitalise on the value that PSVs can bring to contemporary plural policing.

## References

- Ayling J (2007) Force Multiplier: People as a Policing Resource. In: *International Journal of Comparative and Applied Criminal Justice* 31(1):73-100
- Britton I, Callender M (2018) Strategic Direction and Leadership in the Special Constabulary. In: Bullock K, Millie A (eds) *The Special Constabulary: Historical Context, International Comparison, and Contemporary Themes* Abingdon, Routledge, London, pp. 149-168
- Britton I, Knight L (2016) 2030 Vision: Specials and Police Support Volunteers – At the Heart of Policing Reform Northampton: Institute for Public Safety, Crime and Justice, Citizens in Policing, Northampton
- Britton I, Knight L, Lugli V (2018) 2018 Benchmarking Exercise Northampton: Institute for Public Safety, Crime and Justice, Citizens in Policing, Northampton
- Brudney J (2000) The Effective Use of Volunteers: Best Practice for the Public Sector. *Law and Contemporary Problems* 62(4):219-255
- Bullock K (2014) *Citizens, Community and Crime Control Hampshire*, Palgrave Macmillan, Hampshire
- Bullock K (2017) Shoring Up the ‘Home Guard’? Reflections on the Development and Deployment of Police Support Volunteer Programmes in England and Wales. *Policing and Society: An International Journal of Research and Policy* 27(4):341-357
- Callender M, Cahalin K, Cole S, Hubbard L, Britton I (2020) Understanding the Motivations, Morale, and Retention of Special Constables: Findings from a National Survey. *Policing: A Journal of Policy and Practice* 14(3):670-685
- Callender M, Pepper M, Cahalin K, Britton I (2019) Exploring the Police Support Volunteer Experience: Findings from a National Survey *Policing and Society. An International Journal of Research and Policy* 29(4):392-406
- Carr P (2012) Citizens, Community and Crime Control: The Problems and Prospects for Negotiated Order. *Criminology and Criminal Justice* 12(4):397-412
- Castor T, Jiter M (2013) Learning by the “Seat of Your Pants”: The Socialization of Non-profit Board Members. In: Kramer M, Lewis L, Gossett, L (eds) *Volunteering and Communication: Studies from Multiple Contexts*. Peter Lang, New York, pp. 85-104
- Clements J, Aitkenhead E (2020) Policing the long crisis: an appraisal of the police response to Covid-19 London: The Police Foundation. <https://www.police-foundation.org.uk/2020/12/long-read-policing-the-long-crisis-an-appraisal-of-the-police-response-to-covid-19/>. Accessed 30 Dec 2021
- College of Policing (Undated) *Police Support Volunteer National Plan* London, College of Policing, London
- Compact Code of Good Practice on Volunteering (2005) *Compact Code of Good Practice on Volunteering* Birmingham: Commission for the Compact
- Cordery C, Smith K, Proctor-Thompson S (2015) Staff and Volunteers’ Perceptions of the Volunteer Programme: An Alternative Use of the Nets Benefits Index. *Voluntary Sector Review* 6(1):173-191

- Crawford A (2008) Plural Policing in the UK: Policing Beyond the Police. In: Newburn T (ed) Handbook of Policing Second Edition Devon, Willan Publishing, Devon, pp. 147-181
- Dodd V (2020) Police in England and Wales facing 'new era of austerity'. The Guardian, 1 July 2020
- Fairley S, Green B, O'Brien D, Chalip L (2014) Pioneer Volunteers: The Role Identity of Continuous Volunteers at Sport Events. *Journal of Sport and Tourism* 19(3-4):233-255
- Farrow K (2020) Policing the Pandemic in the UK using the Principles of Procedural Justice Policing. *A Journal of Policy and Practice*, 14(3):587-592
- Forkert K (2016) Austere Creativity and Volunteer-run Public Services: The Case of Lewisham's Libraries. *New Formations* 87, pp. 11-28
- Gill M (1986) Volunteerism and the Criminal Justice System: A Comparative Analysis PhD Thesis Plymouth: Plymouth Polytechnic
- Gravelle J, Rogers C (2009a) Your Country Needs You! The Economic Viability of Volunteers in the Police. *Safer Communities* 8(3):34-38
- Gravelle J, Rogers C (2009b) The Economy of Policing – The Impact of the Volunteer. *Policing: A Journal of Policy and Practice* 4(1):56-63
- Grossman J, Furano K (1999) Making the Most of Volunteers. *Law and Contemporary Problems* 62(4):199-218
- Grube J, Piliavin J (2000) Role Identity, Organisational Experiences, and Volunteer Performance. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin* 26(9):1108-1119
- Higgins A, Hales G (2016) Cutting Crime in the 21st Century: Informed Proactivity in the Midst of Social and Organisational Change London, The Police Foundation
- Home Office (2021) Police workforce data tables, Home Office, London
- Howlett S (2010) Developing Volunteer Management as a Profession. *Voluntary Sector Review* 1(3):355-60
- Jamison I (2003) Turnover and Retention Among Volunteers in Human Service Agencies. *Review of Public Personnel Administration* 23(2):114-132
- Kramer R (2001) Identity and Trust in Organizations: One Anatomy of a Productive but Problematic Relationship. In: Hogg M, Terry D (eds) *Social Identity Processes and Organizational Contexts* Hove: Psychology Press, pp. 167-179
- Laverie D, McDonald R (2007) Volunteer Dedication: Understanding the Role of Identity Importance on Participation Frequency. *Journal of Macromarketing* 27:274-288
- Marta E, Manzi C, Pozzi M, Vignoles V (2014) Identity and the Theory of Planned Behaviour: Predicting Maintenance of Volunteering After Three Years. *The Journal of Social Psychology* 154(3):198-207
- Millie A (2019) Citizens in Policing: The Lived Reality of Being a Police Support Volunteer. *Policing and Society: An International Journal of Research and Policy* 29(4):407-419
- Millie A (2018) The Beliefs and Values of Police Volunteers. In: Bullock K, Millie A (eds.) *The Special Constabulary: Historical Context, International Comparisons and Contemporary Themes* Oxon, Routledge, London, pp. 105-117
- Millie A (2014) What Are the Police For? Rethinking Policing Post-Austerity. In: Brown J M (ed) *The Future of Policing* Abingdon, Routledge, London, pp. 52-64
- Myhill A (2006) *Community Engagement in Policing: Lessons from the Literature* London, NPJA
- National Audit Office (September 2018) *Financial Sustainability of Police Forces in England and Wales 2018* London, National Audit Office
- National Health Service England (2017) *Recruiting and Managing Volunteers in NHS Providers: A Practical Guide* Redditch, NHS England
- National Police Chief's Council (undated) *Policing Vision 2025*. <https://www.npcc.police.uk/documents/Policing%20Vision.pdf>. Accessed 30 Dec 2021

- Neuberger J (2009) *Volunteering Across the Criminal Justice System: Baroness Neuberger's Review as the Government's Volunteering Champion* London, HM Government
- Patton M (2002) *Qualitative Research and Evaluation Methods* California, Sage Publication
- Penner L (2002) Dispositional and Organisational Influences on Sustained Volunteerism: An Interactionist Perspective. *Journal of Social Issues* 58(3):447-467
- Pepper M (2021a) Once I Joined my Motivations Changed: Exploring the Initial and Continuing Motivations of Police Support Volunteers in an English Constabulary. *Policing: A Journal of Policy and Practice* 15(4):2297-2309
- Pepper M (2021b) Theorising the Police Support Volunteer Experience in an English Constabulary: A Role Identity Perspective. *Policing and Society: An International Journal of Research and Policy*. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10439463.2021.1999449>
- Pepper M, Bullock K, McCarthy D (2020) Exploring the Role and Contribution of Police Support Volunteers in an English Constabulary. *Policing: A Journal of Policy and Practice* 15(4):2015-2028
- Phillips S (2013) Using Volunteers in Policing: A Force Field Analysis of American Supervisors. *The Police Journal* 86:289-306
- Phillips S, Terrell-Orr A (2013) Attitudes of Police Supervisors: Do Volunteers Fit into Policing? *Policing: An International Journal of Police Strategies and Management* 36(4):683-701
- Ren L, Zhao J, Lovrich N, Gaffney M (2006) Participation Community Crime Prevention: Who Volunteers for Police Work? *Policing: An International Journal of Police Strategies and Management* 29(3):464-481
- Schnell T, Hoof M (2012) Meaningful Commitment: Finding Meaning in Volunteer Work. *Journal of Beliefs and Values* 33(1):35-53
- Shin S, Kleiner B (2003) How to Manage Unpaid Volunteers in Organisations. *Management Research News* (26)2/3/4:63-71. <https://www.emerald.com/insight/content/doi/10.1108/01409170310784005/full/html>
- Stenning P, Shearing C (2015) Privatisation, Pluralisation and the Globalisation of Policing. *Australian Institute of Police Management Public Safety Leadership Research Focus* 3(1):1-8
- Unison (2014) *Home Guard of Police Support Volunteers to Fill in for Staff Cuts* London, Unison
- Van Caem B, Steden R, Boutellier H, van Stokkom B (2013) Community Policing 'Light': On Proximity and Distance in Relationships between Neighbourhood Coordinators and Citizens. *Policing: A Journal of Policy and Practice* 7(3):263-272
- Van Ingen E, Wilson J (2017) I Volunteer, Therefore I am? Factors Affecting Volunteer Role Identity. *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly* 46(1):29-46
- Wells H, Millings M (2019) Scrutinising the Appeal of Volunteer Community Speedwatch to Policing Leaders in England and Wales: Resources, Responsivity and Responsibilisation. *Policing and Society: An International Journal of Research and Policy* 29(4):376-391
- Weick K (1995) *Sensemaking in Organisations* Thousand Oaks, Sage, California
- Wisner P, Stringfellow A, Youngdahl W, Parker L (2005) The Service Volunteer – Loyalty Chain: An Exploratory Study of Charitable Not-For-Profit Service Organisations. *Journal of Operations Management* 23:143-161
- Wolf R, Bryer T (2020) Applying an Outcomes-Based Categorisation to Non-Warranted/Non-Sworn Volunteers in United States Policing. *The Police Journal: Theory, Practice and Principles* 93(1):42-64
- Zimmeck M (2012) *Government and Volunteering: Towards a History of Policy and Practice*. In: Rochester C, Ellis Paine A, Howlett S (eds) *Volunteering and Society in the 21st Century* London, Palgrave Macmillan

### **Biography**

Melissa Pepper is a lecturer in criminology in the School of Law and Criminology, University of Greenwich, London, UK. Prior to joining Greenwich, Melissa worked in government social research for 18 years, first in the UK Home Office, then the London Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime.