



**EVALUATION OF THE HIGHER
EDUCATION ACTIVE COMMUNITY
FUND (HEACF) PROJECT IN
BOURNEMOUTH**

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FOREWORD

It is important to acknowledge that a number of changes in organisation, management, accountability, and staffing challenged this project from its inception. Lessons have been learnt and disseminated amongst all those involved and the project, as a consequence, is now fit for purpose in a way that was not possible over the initial period. Despite these early challenges much has been achieved and it is a reflection on the current team that this Review reports retrospectively on a diverse range of projects and initiatives and has reached a positive conclusion. The collaboration on HEACF between PACE and SUBU continues to thrive and the volunteering footprint of Bournemouth University (staff and students) extends and impacts across the sub region. From this year (2005/06) HEACF projects and opportunities will be consolidated and all will be consistently and rigorously evaluated, as they happen, thus building the evidence base for future work and demonstrating the “value added” for all concerned.”

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3. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

3.1. PROJECT OVERVIEW

This report evaluates the Higher Education Active Community Fund (HEACF) Project from its first year in September 2002 to May 2005. The report presents the research findings that detail the findings of the project and its subprojects. The report also makes recommendations as to how it may be sustained in the future.

The objectives of the study were:

1. To evaluate the implementation of the HEACF project, its impact and its capacity to achieve the aims and objectives;
2. To assess the self development and progression of the individual volunteers;
3. To utilise the project findings in order to facilitate a rolling programme of improvement to the quality of volunteering experience and dissemination of good practice – this would also take the form of a monitoring process that could check if agreed policies, procedures or systems are in place and being implemented;
4. To identify ways for embedding the acquired practical knowledge to sustain the project after the HEACF funding ends;
5. To identify alternative possible ways of funding the project in the future.

3.2. THE ROLE OF PARTNERSHIPS ACCESS AND COMMUNITY EDUCATION (PACE), STUDENT UNION (SUBU), AND INSTITUTE OF HEALTH AND COMMUNITY STUDIES (IHCS) IN THE PROJECT

The staff from PACE (Bournemouth University) has played an important role in the continuity of the project in terms of financing, organising and administering as well as evaluating it since its introduction in 2001. Staff from PACE have facilitated the co-operative working of different parties (university staff, student union, local voluntary sector, and local private sector) in order to achieve the successful development of the project over the years. Finally, PACE obtained finance for the project through Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE).

In addition, the contributions by the project coordinators, members of the Student Union of Bournemouth University (SUBU), and members of the Institute of Health and Community Studies (IHCS) should be noteworthy as they were important in developing and sustaining volunteer activity. To this extent, they have also been able to explore possibilities for maintaining particular projects taking into account that project funding expires in 2006.

3.3. RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on research evidence the HEACF project has introduced a holistic and systematic way of organising and developing volunteer activity at Bournemouth University. In addition to this, the project has provided an important foundation upon which volunteering has not only become an important facet within the university but also within the local community in Bournemouth.

The following recommendations refer to which specific subprojects should be sustained and financially maintained. In particular:

1. The Hub, Community Champions, MAD Days, and Volunteers in Sport should be sustained because they have had successful campaigns in recruiting volunteers from students, staff and the. They have also been successful in fostering a 'volunteering culture' at Bournemouth University.
2. Smaller projects such as School Governors, Community Arts, CODA Orchestra, UK Youth Parliament and the Scouts could be sustained on the basis of collaboration with the other project organisers. This depends upon the nature of the project, the volume of volunteer activity and financial resources that are available.
3. Programmes such as Fresh Gang-Recruitment, PR Committee, Raising and Giving, the Credit Union, Classroom Assistants and the Victoria Education Centre could be maintained on a short-term basis considering their aims and objectives.
4. It is imperative that the Befriending Asylum Seekers and Refugees project should reassess its scope and objectives in a way that could consolidate volunteer activity. The inability to collaborate successfully between the participating parties has led to disagreements. Steps towards resolution have been put in place (the partnership contract between the Steering Group and the British Cross has not been renewed). The lead of this project has been taken over by IHCS.
5. There is a need to renew monitoring and evaluation processes for all projects. The guarantee of receipt of information on issues (e.g. whether a project has been value-for-money, whether a project has been successful both in terms of student participation, reaction of recipients and actual costs) is imperative for the evaluation team. The evaluation processes that have been established for MAD Days and Community Champions have proved to be successful therefore should be rolled out as a model for the other sub-projects.

It is expected that the future of the projects rely on secure financing, especially after the HEACF expires in 2006. Potential sources of financing could include:

- To maintain projects by reviewing the following years budget and identifying and establishing appropriate financial steps for a funding strategy post 2006;
- To maintain projects by working in partnership with the local community (including Bournemouth Borough Council, other public agencies, private firms such as JP Morgan and the voluntary sector);
- To establish a form of cooperative sponsorship. This would be possible taking into account that graduate recruiters could potentially be a good source of income. This is because volunteer projects tend to attract students that graduate recruiters can be interested in;
- To maintain HEACF particular projects via direct sponsoring. This might take the form of collaboration between the HEACF team and other organisations such as volunteer agencies;
- To maintain particular projects such as the Volunteers in Sports project through funding by relevant university departments. In this particular case funding could be offered by the Sports department.

3.4. DATA COLLECTION APPROACH

Four qualitative research methods were used however a significant amount of quantitative data had already been collected for some of the HEACF subprojects i.e. MAD Days and Community Champions.

The methodological tools chosen for the projects' evaluation are detailed below:

1. A series of small-scale surveys, which included:
 - a. A survey in autumn 2003 (12 completed responses through the Community Champions sub-project);
 - b. Small-scale surveys that were conducted at the end of particular events throughout the implementation, mainly of the;
 - i. Community Champions and MAD Days programmes (on average 3-5 completed evaluation forms depending on the occasion) – in this light, 32 evaluation forms were completed by individual volunteers and 11 by volunteer organisations for all the subprojects in which this method was used.
2. The collection of primary data via questionnaires which gave an overview of the HEACF project. This was conducted between January and March 2005. 27 of these questionnaires were sent to potential respondents and 14 responses were received (response rate higher than 50%).

3. Interviews with key project staff were conducted using semi-structured interviews. Eleven interviews were conducted with 8 coordinators of particular subprojects and 3 with people who have held senior managerial posts on the Steering Group of the HEACF project.
4. Secondary data was collected to obtain background information. In addition to this documents produce by Hefce, minutes of meetings and reports updates were used to provide detailed background information upon which the evaluation could be planned. Finally 10 volunteer diaries who were involved in the Community Champions programme.

3.5. SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

The research findings with regard to 16 subprojects are summarised below.

3.5.1. ASYLUM SEEKER AND REFUGEE BEFRIENDING PROJECT

Project Implementation: There have been noteworthy steps towards successful implementation of the project: Project and session coordinators have been appointed; coordinators and volunteers have been working to make the relationships with asylum seekers and refugees steady and lasting in order to help asylum seekers integrate into the local community; the HEACF contribution to this project delivered £19,000 in extra funding; there have been approximately 12 volunteers and asylum seekers/refugees who keep attending the programme's sessions.

However, continuous obstacles in running the project, concerns about the suitability of the current running of sessions as well as concerns about the quality of the standards offered during these sessions started to mount especially in the later months. This was closely linked to the way the Red Cross preferred to contribute to the running of the project, which according to research evidence was incompatible with the particular needs of the asylum seekers and refugees. As a result a chasm had developed between the parties which had worrying consequences for the future of the collaboration between the project's steering group and the representatives of the Red Cross. This project has now been taken over by IHCS to resolve issues and take forward.

Self-development of Participant Volunteers: Despite the organisation of specific training sessions for participant volunteers the morale of volunteers seems to be heavily affected by lack of coordination.

Evaluation Process: Although there have been plans for evaluating the project on a regular basis research evidence was not available at the time of writing this report.

3.5.2. CLASSROOM ASSISTANT

Project Implementation: This project was created with the aim of creating 2 volunteering opportunities. It was a small scale project (in terms of participation and duration) and it enjoyed particular successes in terms of assisting classroom teachers, especially in literacy, numeracy, helping in the preparation of material for displays and enabling children to achieve some of their educational goals.

Self-development of Participant Volunteers: There have been positive comments by participant volunteers on the skills gained as a result of their participation in the project.

Evaluation Process: In place through completion of evaluation forms.

3.5.3. CODA MUSIC TRUST

Project Implementation: The project obtained some involvement by the local community; this helped in maintaining the orchestra's skills. However, more steps need to be taken vis-à-vis a more-personal type of relationship between the project's coordinators and participant volunteers.

Self-development of Participant Volunteers: It has not been possible to measure volunteer self-development and satisfaction, as participant volunteers did not stay within the project for a measurable period of time. However, the fact that membership has been renewed constantly and the number of participants has risen to 30 indicates strong interest in taking part in the orchestra.

Evaluation Process: There is no evaluation process in place.

3.5.4. COMMUNITY ARTS

Project Implementation: The project aimed to diversify art forms that can be supported both in terms of financial and human resources. An exhibition was held at the Sovereign Centre in Boscombe for Dorset Arts week in May 2004 and issue 1 of the Community Arts Newsletter was published with the help of student volunteers in August 2004.

Self-development of Participant Volunteers: There has been no indication about volunteer self-development apart perhaps from an increase in volunteer participation because of the scheme.

Evaluation Process: There is no evaluation process in place.

3.5.5. COMMUNITY CHAMPIONS

Project Implementation: The project was seen as a 'flagship' project because of its innovative character and promise to offer a 'holistic approach to volunteering'. In terms of participants 50 volunteers have been cited as Champions and members of

the committee up to May 2005. Subsequently, it has been estimated that around 200 people have been affected directly by the work of Community Champions.

The activities of the Community Champions included:

- A leaflet drop for the Fiona Appleyard Appeal;
- Organising a theatre performance;
- Redecorating the West Howe Community Hall;
- Working with the police to implement a student watch scheme, which also raised £2,000 in funding;
- Helping at ad hoc events such as a Deaf Arts Symposium conference, several governors events and Aimhigher days;
- Raising £500 from JP Morgan for their community projects.

Self-development of Participant Volunteers: With just a few rather extreme exemptions suggesting about the opposite the programme has satisfactorily offered training skills. This has been sufficiently evident through the programme's activities e.g. the pilot volunteer programme in October 2004. In terms of numbers 50 volunteers have been cited as Champions and members of the committee. However, a few volunteers have expressed opinions about 'lack of a solid structure, unreliable timetable of events, unreliable training courses, limited interaction with other areas of the community'.

Evaluation Process: The evaluation procedure established for the project has offered the appropriate depth necessary for the outcomes to be rigorously monitored and evaluated.

3.5.6. FRESH GANG-RECRUITMENT/ PR COMMITTEE/ RAISING AND GIVING (RAG)/ THE CREDIT UNION

Project Implementation: These four subprojects have promoted volunteering activity within the university.

Self-development of Participant Volunteers: Despite the small numbers involved there have been clear indications of volunteer's satisfaction as a result of participation in these four subprojects.

Evaluation Process: A small-scale evaluation processes was in place for each of these projects which included 3 evaluation forms completed for the PR committee project and 2 responses to the questionnaire that was sent out for the Raising and Giving' project in autumn 2003).

3.5.7. SCHOOL GOVERNORS

Project Implementation: The project has produced three successful events to recruit school governors. This project was successful in recruiting 5 new governors.

Self-development of Participant Volunteers: There is no evidence as yet about self-development assessment for the recruited school governors.

Evaluation Process: Evaluation forms on the success of the events were completed with overall approval rating of over 85% by the participants.

3.5.8. SPORTS VOLUNTEER PROGRAMME

Project Implementation: The programme has proved to be very popular with its participants. Various events for promoting the programme have been organised for children in Bournemouth and Poole. There have been approximately 50 volunteers who have helped in coaching or helping in different events in 2003/2004 and this expected to rise to 60 in 2004/2005.

Self-development of Participant Volunteers: There is no up-to-date evidence about how satisfied the participant volunteers have been or how participation to the programme has helped their self-development.

Evaluation Process: No evaluation process has been available to date.

3.5.9. STAFF VOLUNTEERING – MAD DAYS

Project Implementation: MAD Days have been another popular volunteer programme. These are based on single-day events. These have included nine one-day events which took place between June 2004 and May 2005. In total, 44 volunteers have been involved and 13 volunteers have attended 2 or more MAD days. In addition to this there have been about 8 people who constitute the core part of volunteers - four of those volunteers have been working for the National Trust. In terms of presence per event this has been ranging from 6 to 20 volunteers.

Self-development of Participant Volunteers: According to the organisers no previous experience of volunteering or specific skills was required, only 'a positive and willing attitude' and, because of the short duration of each event no particular training has been necessary.

Evaluation Process: Efficient evaluation process has been put in place that involves completion of just-after-the-event evaluation forms.

3.5.10. THE HUB

Project Implementation: The project is based on the innovative idea of constructing an online service which matches students who want to be involved in volunteering with organisations who need them. In this respect the Hub is the first point of contact for someone who wants to get involved in volunteering under the HEACF. In terms of the numbers of organisations and participants linked with the project there are:

1. Organisations registered:	69
2. Organisations approved:	69
(Internal Organisations 17)	
(External Organisations 52)	
3. Volunteers registered:	141
(Volunteers fully registered 75)	
(Volunteers approved for opportunities 72)	
4. Current live opportunities:	42

Self-development of Participant Volunteers: The project has offered no particular professional skills apart perhaps from some very specific ones e.g. knowledge on web design.

Evaluation Process: No particular evaluation process has been set up as yet.

3.5.11. THE SCOUTS

Project Implementation: The project has been the product of collaboration a between HEACF project and scouting movement in Bournemouth, Poole and Christchurch. It aimed to deliver a county-wide recruitment to scouting events. The event was organised in October 2004 to provide interested students with information about the Scouts and the opportunities available. Six students were recruited.

Self-development of Participant Volunteers: There was not sufficient evidence to comment on volunteer development.

Evaluation Process: No evaluation process was in place.

3.5.12. UK YOUTH PARLIAMENT

Project Implementation: This was a successful project in which the HEACF provided the UK Youth Parliament project with funding for, amongst others, the designing and production of a CD-ROM that promoted UKYP activities.

Self-development of Participant Volunteers: There was neither a great deal of involvement for the 4 volunteers nor were there any particular opportunities for

self-development. However, the project did offer important job opportunities to a couple of its participant volunteers.

Evaluation Process: Due to the poor response rate to the national evaluation questionnaire a detailed evaluation was not undertaken.

3.5.13. VICTORIA EDUCATION CENTRE

Project Implementation: Despite its small-scale (2 volunteers) this project gained some significant achievements vis-à-vis volunteering in terms of assisting physically and mentally disabled students with their weekly tasks at the athletics club.

Self-development of Participant Volunteers: Volunteers needed to be appropriately skilled to manage such a difficult task and, their feedback indicated a high level of enthusiasm for their involvement.

Evaluation Process: This sub-project was evaluated through completion of evaluation forms (1 evaluation form was completed until June 2005).

4. BACKGROUND TO THE HEACF PROJECT – AIMS & OBJECTIVES

4.1. BACKGROUND TO THE HEACF PROJECT AT THE NATIONAL LEVEL

The Higher Education Active Community Fund project is a collaborative scheme across Bournemouth University led by the Students' Union and PACE. The project has been funded by Higher Education Funding Council for England in order to develop volunteering opportunities for students and staff. Its targets have been orientated to meet exactly this focus. Additionally, other benefits have accrued as the project has provided an example of good practice of how work can be integrated across not only the University but also the local community.

Nationally, the HEACF has been part of the government's wider Active Community initiative and it is one of the governmental packages for encouraging involvement of university students and staff in community and volunteering activities.

The project had two rounds, Round 1 beginning in March 2002 to August 2004, and Round 2 from September 2004 to July 2006. As stated above, the project aimed to develop and coordinate voluntary work not only within the context of the university but also within their local communities in ways that would:

- Encourage greater involvement in voluntary and community activities;
- Build links with national, regional and local voluntary organisations;
- To extend the potential for volunteering activity in the sub-region;
- Map current staff and student involvement and developing appropriate data bases of volunteering ;
- Develop and disseminate good practice in recruitment, retention and support of volunteers.

(Higher Education Funding Council for England, 2004)

4.2. BACKGROUND TO THE HEACF PROJECT AT B' MOUTH UNIVERSITY

For Bournemouth University an evaluation had been considered as an integral part of the HEACF project in order to identify successes and lessons that could be learnt for the future. Until now, monitoring and evaluation of the project had been kept to a minimum. However, now that the project and associated activities are well established it is important to provide an up to date account of its impact and outcomes. In this light, monitoring and evaluation of the project is an important element of university policy to promote good practice and risk management. As HEFCE's recent report states 'in the best-run organisations, risk management is synonymous with good management and good governance. It is not considered as a bolt-on to existing practices or a separate exercise simply to meet regulatory requirements' (Higher Education Funding Council for England, 2005, p. 2).

HEACF	<i>2004/05 Funding</i>	<i>As in September 2004 2005/06 Funding</i>	
HEFCE Income	- 39,522	-39,522	
Under spend 2003/04	- 25,704	0	
Under spend 2003/04 – SBU	- 13,838	0	
August 04 payment from HEFCE	- 10,727	0	
Contribution from SU	- 30,000	-30,000	
Transfer from 2004/05 to 2005/2006	17,505	-17,505	
Total Income	-102,286	-87,027	
Expenditure	Sept 04 – Aug 05	Sept 05 – August 06	Total Funds
Students Union staff salaries (JB & SJH)	49,511	50,989	100,500
Asylum seekers project (WC)	8,000	8,500	16,000
PACE administration costs	5,000	5,000	10,000
Evaluation costs	5,000		5,000
Project costs (see Table 2)	18,750	12,877	31,127
Activities (see Appendices 1 & 2)	16,025	9,661	25,686
Total	102,286	87,027	189,313

Table 1. HEACF Project – HEACF Round 2 - 2nd year funding forecast as amended in 14/02/2005

Source: Financial planning phased September 2004 produced by Jon Bowmer, Volunteer Co-ordinator for the project (HEACF Task Group Meeting, 06 September 2004)

The allocation for Round one was £49,808 for 2001-02 and 2002-03, and £107,273 for 2003-04 (in total £206,889 for Round 1). The allocation for Round 2 has been £39,522 for years 2004-2005 and 2005-2006 (in total £79,044) (Higher Education Funding Council for England, 2001 and 2004). The spending over the different phases can be seen in Tables 1 and 2 (see also Tables 13, 14, 15 and 16 in Appendices 1 and 2).

Bournemouth University has been involved in the HEACF project since 2001 and has been actively participating since March 2002. According to the university's proposal to HEFCE the aim under HEACF has been to develop a strategy for community involvement which is sustainable and embedded within mainstream activity under the institution's Strategic Plan (REFERENCE). This work has been undertaken by a task group liaising as an *important collaborative venture* between the university and the Students' Union. It has incorporated activities such as:

- Mapping current staff and student involvement and developing a data bases of volunteers;
- Development and dissemination of good practice (in recruitment, retention and support of volunteers);
- Recognition of voluntary work undertaken by staff and students;
- Promotion of the University's position within partner institutions and the wider community

(Bournemouth University, 2002)

The programme partners have included the Social Inclusion sub-group of the Bournemouth and Dorset Lifelong Learning Partnership (BDLLP) and Bournemouth Dorset and Poole Partnership (BDPP), the Voluntary Sector Training Consortium and the Community Development Forum. All are closely linked with the University's Strategic Plan for access and widening participation and are comprised of representatives of organisations including: the Bournemouth and Poole's Councils for Voluntary Service and Dorset Community Action; the Co-operative Development Agency; local community development workers involved in priority neighbourhoods in the sub-region; Healthworks; the Dorset Police; Connexions service; Connect to Learning; Business Link Wessex, Sure Start, and partner colleges in the region (Bowmer and Head, 2002).

In order to identify what the university staff's opinions were on volunteering a survey was conducted between October and December 2002. This survey presented the first indicative evidence of volunteer activity within the university. With regard to duration of their volunteering activity 19.1% of the respondents were involved for up to 1 year whereas 26.6% were involved for 2 to 5 years. In terms of the profile of the staff involved:

- 60.2% were female and 39.8% were male;
- 27.7% were aged under 40; 33% aged 40-49; and 39.4% aged 50 and over;
- 45.7% were academic; 30.9% were administrative; 19.1% were in support services and 4.3% from other occupations.

(HEACF Task Group Meeting, 10th December 2002)

HEACF PROJECT COSTS 2004/05		
<i>Project Title</i>	<i>2004/2005</i>	<i>2005/2006</i>
Arts	4,000	0
The Round Table	700	700
MAD Days	1,200	2,000
Governors	750	0
Volunteers in Sports	5,000	3,000
CODA	500	500
Community Champions	2,700	3,000
The Hub	1,000	500
Training Team	1,500	1,777
Scouts	200	200
Please	500	500
UKYP	500	500
Credit Union	200	200
Total	18,750	12,877

Table 2. HEACF Project – Project costs 2004/5 as amended on 27/04/2005

Source: Financial planning phased September 2004 produced by Jon Bowmer, Volunteer Co-ordinator for the project (HEACF Task Group Meeting, 06 September 2004)

Development of volunteering opportunities and participation has been at the core of the HEACF activities. As shown in Table 3 there have been 120 opportunities filled up to the 25 January 2005 implemented by 26 members of staff, 88 students and 6 other participants.

Considering then the background to the project as well as the particular needs for evaluation, the evaluations' objectives have been as follows:

1. To evaluate the implementation of the HEACF project in Bournemouth, its impact, and capacity in achieving its aims and objectives;
2. To assess the progression of the individual volunteers in terms of self-development;
3. To utilise the outcomes in facilitating a rolling programme of continuous improvement to the quality of volunteering experience and dissemination of good practice in the years to come – this would also take the form of a monitoring process that could check if agreed policies, procedures or systems are in place and being implemented; and

DATE	PROJECT	VOLUNTEERS	FILLED OPPORTUNITIES	BREAKDOWN
AUTUMN TERM 2004				
02.10.04	Freshers Fair	Kate Adderley	1	
06.10.04	the hub launch	Kate Adderley	1	
16.10.04	MAD Day Dolphin House	Tamsin, Sophie, Malcolm	3	1 partner
19.10.04	Scouts event	Chris Phillips	1	1 staff
27.10.04	CC Learning styles	David Hodgson-Egan	1	1 staff
30.10.04	MAD RAG Day		24	9 staff (SU & FS)
28.10.04	MAD Day Studland	Sophie, Sally, Jacki, Nathan, Drifa, Rebecca, Jeremy	7	2 staff, 1 partner
01.12.04	Governors event	Christine, Sam, Christoph Sophie, Sharday, Camilla	6	
08.12.04	CC Nutrition	Ally Hanks	1	1 staff
SPRING TERM 2005				
12.01.05	Chocfest PR event		9	
20.01.05	Big Sleep Out		14	1 staff, 1 NUS officer
23.01.05	MAD Day Hod Hill		19	7 staff, 3 partners
23.01.05	Dylans Music night		6	1 staff,
Ongoing	Community Champions		9	
Ongoing	PR Committee		11	3 staff
Ongoing	RAG Officer		1	
Ongoing	BUSCA Officer		1	
Ongoing	Victoria School	Jenny, Kate & Kath	3	
Ongoing	Parley First School	Jen & Michelle	2	
Ongoing	Sports			
Ongoing	Befriending project			
FIGURES ON 21.01.05			TOTAL OPPORTUNITIES FILLED 120	
Volunteers referenced on the hub (formal) = 43				
Volunteers referenced on the hub (formal) & active (taken part in or applied for 1 or more opportunities on the hub) = 14				
Informal volunteers (not on the hub or not fully referenced but have taken part in one or more opportunities) = 66				
Total number of opportunities filled = 120				
Staff = 26				
Students = 88				
Other (partners, friends) = 6				
NB – HEACF DEFINITION OF A VOLUNTEERING OPPORTUNITY: “Ideally a single opportunity should be an ongoing link between an HEI and external not-for profit organisation where there is the potential for a succession of volunteers to take advantage of that opportunity. If the new link allows several volunteers to be active at the same time – ‘on the premises together’– this could count as several opportunities.”				
NB We require 80 existing opportunities to be maintained and 20 new opportunities to be developed over the 2 year period				

Table 3: HEACF – Volunteering opportunities and participants 2004-2005

Source: Bowmer and Harrison, 25 Jan 2005

4. To identify ways for embedding good practice in order to achieve continuation of the project after the HEACF funding is completed. Equally important is to identify alternative possible ways of funding the project in the future.

This report gives the opportunity for having a complete up-to-date account of the HEACF project in Bournemouth and its effectiveness. In addition its individual sub-projects are assessed in terms of outcomes, participant self-development and evaluation processes that have been established.

5. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

5.1. BACKGROUND TO THE RESEARCH

Since 2002 the HEACF project has undergone an evaluation only in relation to certain subprojects. These evaluations have been associated with each of these projects success in achieving their aims and objectives. Consequently, the evaluation under consideration was the first one that assessed the impact of the project as a whole.

As for the type of evaluation implemented it can be identified through the following definition of evaluation:

Evaluation is primarily concerned with determining the merit, worth or value of an established policy [as in the case of HEACF] or planned intervention. This makes it a unique form of social inquiry. Emphasis is placed on providing practical knowledge to aid the decision-making process; a feature that has led to evaluation being seen as a type of policy research. (Clarke and Dawson, 1999: p 3).

This evaluation had a focus on assisting in decision-making not only with respect to the effectiveness of the HEACF project to reach its targets but most importantly to identify potential financial resources, which would ensure the continuation of subprojects. In this light, the research process took the form of *summative evaluation*, in which the main principle was to determine the impact of the project with the view to recommend its continuation or otherwise (Clarke and Dawson, 1999).

The first attempt to investigate the aspirations on volunteering at Bournemouth University was the Staff Volunteer Survey, which was conducted between October and December 2002. 1794 members of staff were approached via e-mail and 157 replies were received. Of these, 94 (59.9%) stated that they were at the time involved in volunteering to one way or the other. The main volunteering activities that were mentioned were as it follows:

- Youth organisations;
- Community activities;
- Sport;
- Religion;
- Disability;
- Counselling;
- School governorship. (HEACF Task Group Meeting, 10th December 2002)

Additionally, 358 questionnaires were sent out by the project's research team to mature students via e-mail in order to identify their willingness in participating to volunteer activities. This survey was conducted to establish the needs of the '50 and over' scheme in January 2005. Before the research process began the Student Union piloted the questionnaire in the Atrium and received a very positive response (44 out of 100 students that were approached showed interest). However, the level of response to the main questionnaire was very low up to March 2003 (HEACF Task Group Meeting, 30th January and 13th March 2003). Subsequently, the questionnaire was sent out again in April- May 2004 but no replies were received up to June 2004 (HEACF Task Group Meeting, 14th June 2004). Finally, evaluation diagnostic tools were established regarding particular subprojects e.g. MAD Days, Victoria Education Centre, School Governors, etc. This took the form of evaluation forms, evaluation project overviews, and evaluation completion reports (HEACF Task Group Meeting, (14th June 2004).

5.2. RESEARCH ISSUES

Robson describes how particular research methods can benefit an evaluation project. As he argues the purpose and nature of evaluation and, in particular, the questions to which someone might seek answers largely govern the choice of methods for gathering data (Robson, 2000). In addition, practicalities such as resources and time available for the research are also vital.

Following Robson's suggestions two types of approaches in gathering data were employed in this evaluation:

- *Talking to people* involved or otherwise and collect their opinion;
- *Getting hold of documents* e.g. minutes of meetings, policy documents, etc.

Particular difficulties in terms of access to information were not encountered. The main issue with data collection was of coordination on how to collect, analyse and assess data from different sources knowing that this data covers a time span of three years. Overall, the evaluation had a rather qualitative character despite the fact that it also included quantitative measures i.e. survey questionnaires at specific times through the running of the project (the process for designing the evaluation questions can be seen in Figure 1).

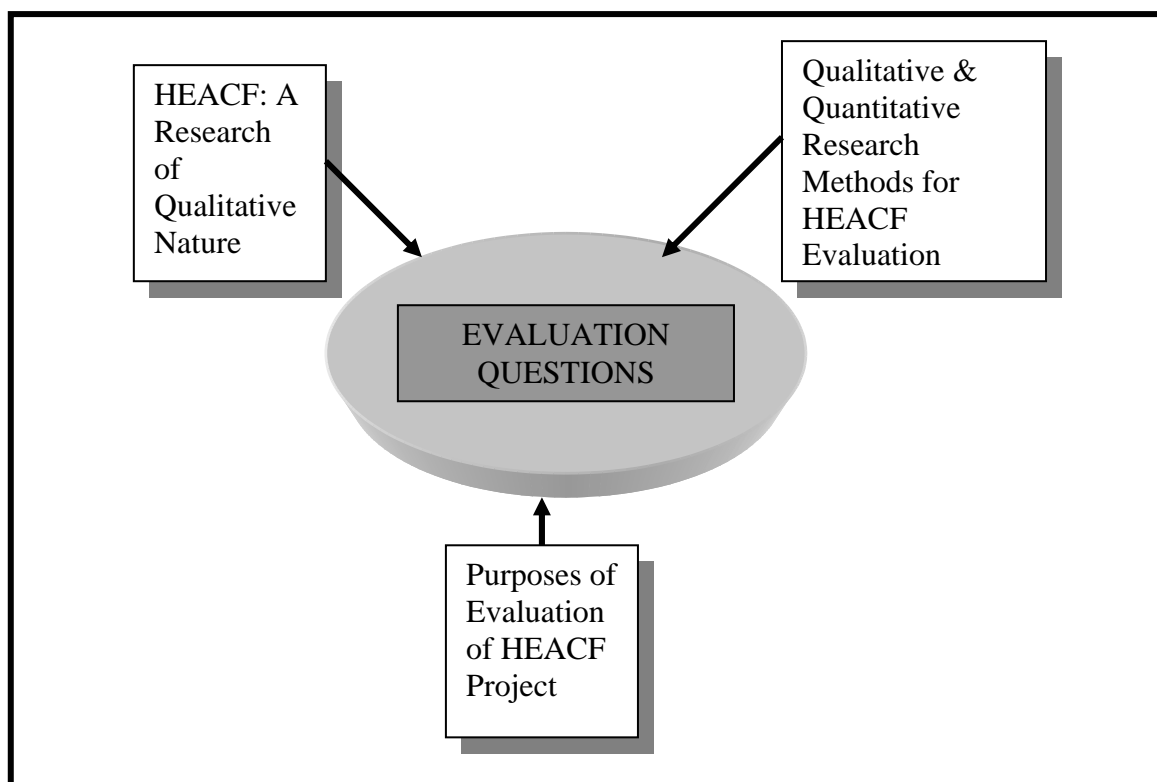


Figure 1. Evaluation design of HEACF Project

Source: Adapted from Robson (2000: 80).

This fitted with the nature of the evaluation questions in identifying how efficiently the project has been run and most importantly in addressing the issue of continuation for specific subprojects e.g. Community Champions, the Hub, and MAD days in the years to come.

The research methods used for this evaluation were:

- Surveys for particular individual subprojects;
- Surveys regarding HEACF project as a whole;
- Semi-structured interviews with key participants, who have been involved during the 3 years the project has run; and
- Collection of secondary data.

5.3. RESEARCH METHODS

5.3.1. Surveys for Individual Subprojects

There were a series of small-scale surveys, which aimed to collect primary data for the project. The Community Champions subproject one was conducted in autumn 2003 and resulted into 12 completed responses. The questionnaire was based on 11 questions and the vast majority of them were closed ones. The aim of the survey was to identify the role of volunteers within the project and the degree of satisfaction that came out because of their participation. Due to the low number of

participants the sample could be considered as *representative*. According to Simmons *reliability* (the extent to which similar results can be obtained by others using the same questions) and *validity* (the extent to which a study measures what it sets out to measure) are the main aspects someone has to deal with when conducting research (Simmons, 2001). Regarding the HEACF evaluation it could be argued that there were not issues of reliability and validity because of the specifically low number of responses.

In addition, a way for dealing with the collection of primary data was established in June 2004. Part of this approach has been to specifically design and distribute evaluation forms which could be of use for the needs of particular projects such as Community Champions or MAD Days. The objective behind this move has been to provide volunteers with the opportunity to comment on the events they have been participating 'on the spot'. There have been slightly different designs of evaluation forms for individuals and organisations. Additional forms for evaluating particular subprojects or events as well as forms for completion of projects were designed. Templates of these forms can be seen in Appendices 3, 4, 5, 6. In summary, there were 32 evaluation forms completed by individual volunteers, 11 evaluation forms completed by volunteer organisations, 10 completed project overviews and 8 completed project completion forms.

5.3.2. Surveys for the Whole HEACF

Collection of primary data for the whole of the HEACF project was put into place between January and March 2005. The process included the design, sending out and receipt of responses of questionnaires that was aimed at volunteer perceptions, aspirations and degree of satisfaction re the design and implementation of the particular projects they were involved. In addition, the questionnaires sought responses on more personal issues i.e. comments on the project's ability to equip them with professional/training skills and to motivate them towards successful volunteering.

Twenty seven questionnaires were sent to participants and 14 responses were received (response rate higher than 50%). However, two of the respondents never fully completed the actual questionnaire. Most of those who completed a questionnaire were involved in the School Governor and Community Champions projects. A template of the survey questionnaire can be seen in Appendix 7.

With respect to generalisation, Denscombe argues that:

Social research rarely covers each instance of the particular thing that is being investigated. To do so would cost too much and would take too long. Instead, research tends to focus on a reduced number of instances of the thing under investigation. It investigates a sample or it investigates specific cases. Research that is based on representative samples addresses this

question using the logic that the instances actually used in the research share the same key characteristics as the full set. But instead of investigating the all parts of 'the cake' the research concentrates on just 'one slice'.

(Denscombe, 2002: 143).

The conduct of this particular survey had as a main aim to resolve this issue, the generalisation of findings. In this respect, it could be argued that the questionnaire sample was representative because it included respondents from all main subprojects such as School Governors and Community Champions. Additionally, a lack of responses from other main projects such as MAD days did not have a negative impact as there was already sufficient primary data, which was collected via small scale surveys attached to the particular subproject.

5.3.3. Semi-structured Interviews

Semi-structured interviewing was the main qualitative-type of research method used for this evaluation. Interviewing is considered as a particularly suitable research method when data is based on *privileged information*. Here the justification for interviews is based on the value of contact with key players who can give this information (Denscombe, 2003). This was the case for the HEACF evaluation as key people involved in the project could enrich the evaluation by discussing processes and outcomes particular subprojects. Also they could discuss about the future of the HEACF project in terms of funding. In this light, 11 interviews were conducted 8 with coordinators of particular subprojects and 3 with people who have held senior managerial posts at the Steering Group of the HEACF project (Appendix 8).

Interviews were semi-structured because the researcher had a clear list of issues to address and questions to be answered (see Appendix 9). However, with this type of interview the researcher was flexible with issues such as the order in which the topics were considered, and more significantly, let the interviewees to develop ideas and speak more widely about the issues that arose during the interview. The interview schedule can be found in Appendix 9.

5.3.4. Collection of Secondary Data

There was a significant amount of data collected through secondary research i.e. documents produced by the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) about HEACF, documentation on the bidding process that was followed in 2001/2002, minutes of meetings throughout the period since 2001, and project updates. Documentation was used to enhance accountability and as a check on progress. Furthermore, other types of secondary data were used as well such as ten diaries of particular activities produced by the volunteers who were involved in the Community Champions programme e.g. sessions on first aid and career development.

6. THE EVALUATION FINDINGS

6.1. ASYLUM SEEKER AND REFUGEE BEFRIENDING PROJECT

The Asylum Seeker and Refugee Befriending' Project was set up to address the isolation of asylum seekers and refugees in Bournemouth and support them through friendship and structured activity. The scheme was initiated through a multi agency steering group, the Asylum Seekers and Refugees Strategic Group, which is a collaborative body of local organisations to address issues raised in the report '*Waiting on the Home Office; a survey of Asylum Seekers and Refugees in Bournemouth*' (2003). The report pointed out that there are 384 Asylum Seekers and Refugees in Bournemouth. Based on this report the Asylum Seekers and Refugees Strategic Group decided that a befriending scheme would resolve some of these issues. The project has been managed by Bournemouth University (PACE) who created a partnership contract with the British Red Cross. The project has been funded by the HEACF as its objectives fit with objectives within the HEACF remit (From the Proposal about the project).

The initial proposal, as it was identified in the Grant Application Form by the Commission for Racial Equality, stated that the objectives of the project from the PACE point of view were to:

- Introduce a mentoring training scheme for asylum seekers and refugees in partnership with local bodies;
- Develop links with local community bodies to share best practice and promote good race relations.

For the British Red Cross it was to employ some of their tested approaches such as to:

- Use best practice to encourage volunteer activities for the whole community;
- Target marginalised groups.

The aim for the project was to '*develop a volunteer befriending scheme to address the isolation and confusion felt by Asylum Seekers and Refugees that prevent their integration into the local community*' (From the Project Overview and Proposal).

Subsequently, the project objectives have been to:

1. Reduce social isolation by recruiting volunteers from Bournemouth University and the local community, who would get to know asylum seekers/refugees and offer friendship, guidance and signposting;
2. Organise regular orientation and familiarisation advice and activities at a variety of locations in Bournemouth;
3. Give educational/vocational guidance and encouragement;

4. Coach where necessary asylum seekers and refugees in independent living skills (e.g. budgeting, cooking and diet);
5. Empower both the individual and the group;
6. Improve perception of Asylum Seeker and Refugees within the local community;
7. Create volunteering opportunities for Bournemouth University staff and students;
8. Sustain the project beyond the period of British Red Cross Seedcom funding (one year) (From the Project Overview and Proposal).

In terms of recruiting volunteers it was suggested that recruitment could take place through:

- The Student Union;
- The Student Union's website;
- The Freshers week and various events;
- Leafleting and posters;
- Articles in the University's internal press;
- Partner organisations;
- People from the local area (From the Project Overview and Proposal).

In terms of obtaining financial resources it was anticipated initially that the project would receive funding for one year from HEACF, Bournemouth Borough Council, Dorset Police, Bournemouth and Poole College, Bournemouth Primary Care Trust, British Red Cross, and the Commission for Racial Equality. An additional £5,000 was earmarked for year 2 with the aim for the project to achieve self-sustainability in year 3 (From the Project's Proposal).

The initial approach on the project was explored and consequently established at the university level in 2004 supported by the University's Race Equality Advisor with the aim to have placements in 2005. At this point the project consisted of:

- A volunteer befriending scheme for local asylum seekers and refugees, which aimed to become embedded in the local community;
- In this light, a project coordinator was appointed. Apart from Bournemouth University other key partners such as the British Red Cross and Bournemouth Borough Council were also involved in developing the project;
- The HEACF contribution to this project has levered £19,000 in extra funding (Bowmer, and Harrison, September 2004).

In December 2004, the session co-ordinator's report pointed out the level of progress that was made to date by stressing that 'the need for volunteers for the project has been highlighted and...several prospective volunteers have come

forward' (Tarrant, December 2004). Furthermore, the report was referring to the project evening on the 1st December 2004 which 28 people attended, including prospective volunteers, and a number of asylum seekers and refugees. The report detailed additional steps e.g. visits to ESOL classes, and to Open Door and suggestions on locations and dates for the sessions that followed since January 2005.

The project ran a weekly group for referred adults in partnership until June 2005. There has been an attempt to develop a recreational group project in partnership with Bournemouth Youth and Community Service that could operate within a youth club setting. With regard to these developments, the evaluation has had to answer the following questions: First, what was the added value of the project so far; and secondly what was the relationship between PACE, as the representative body from Bournemouth University and the British Red Cross?

Beginning with the project's achievements these could be summarised as follows:

- Appointment of the project coordinator;
- Integration of the refugees and asylum seekers into local community and improvement of community relation through work by coordinators and volunteers e.g. by transforming the relationships with asylum seekers/refugees into obtaining a more steady form;
- Approach in progress to seek continuation of funding for the project which at the moment has been about making a bid for funding – There has also been another attempt about finding funding for recreational facilities for refugees and asylum seekers, which the coordinating group has been addressing since March 2005;
- Twelve volunteers and asylum seekers/refugees who keep attending the programme's sessions – as in May 2005 (From the interview with one of the project's coordinators).

With respect to an overall assessment of the project, from the interviews conducted it could be argued that the first period was in effect a *shaking down period*, which was mainly about forming relationships with partners within the Steering Group and within the wider multitask group. In addition, on this particular time people of the project were learning from the British Red Cross approach to run a project.

However, continuous obstacles in the running of the project, concerns about the suitability of the running of sessions as well as concerns about the quality of the standards offered during these sessions had started to amount. According to project staff, who were interviewed this was because of the way the Red Cross ran the project. This was seen as irrelevant to the particular needs of the asylum seekers and refugees. As one interviewee put it the project people knew about the Red

Cross's approach as 'they had some concerns when they [the Red Cross] were working for and became uninvolved [in a similar project] in Exeter. The project there failed because there was not appropriate infrastructure to carry on'.

According to the interviewees there have been specific incidents that support the need for reconstructing the Asylum Seeker and Refugee Befriending Project on a friendlier for the asylum seekers and refugees and therefore more sustainable way. In particular:

1. At the Open Evening (December 2004) there was a separate application form given to potential volunteers by the Red Cross representatives, as apposed to the one that was given by the people from the project's steering group. One of the interviewees when they were asked stated that:

Indeed, we had no idea that this was going to happen and because we had no experience of running this type of project with asylum seekers, we believed that they knew how to develop these projects and these sessions. So we were completely at their hands and we all felt really uncomfortable about the fact that there seemed to be *agencias egos* there rather than the comfort the asylum seekers and refugees were requiring.

2. There has been a confusion regarding particular roles within the project e.g. the role of the project coordinator who is responsible for overseeing the project sessions and the sessional worker, who has been appointed by the Red Cross and as a result not accountable to the project but to the Red Cross!
3. According to one interviewee many of the volunteers, particularly those who are university staff have expressed their dissatisfaction of the fact that they have been left out of the planning of the sessions by the sessional worker, despite the fact that they were left to believe at the beginning that they would get involved.
4. There have been particular cases of confusion. In one of these occasions (in March 2005) one of the Thursday night sessions was replaced at a very short notice with a course in child protection for volunteers. This was decided by the sessional worker. This course was held at the same time with the time the group normally meet. However, this was not communicated adequately to the service users and seven of them turned up. The sessional worker claimed that she had spoken to the service users and had also spoken to Bournemouth Youth Services and had arranged for these young asylum seekers to go and play football at the local youth club, which they were expected to find on their own.

5. On another occasion and in particular during the first two-hour session, which was supposed to be a training session for the volunteers about 'planning the future' it became an ordinary session instead. The important point is that this session was spent with the asylum seekers and refugees filling in forms and parental permission forms! As a result the first week's attendance of 11 asylum seekers and refugees went down to 2 or 3 in the following week!
6. There have been doubts on how far the British Red Cross has participated financially. According to one of the project's representatives PACE had to sign a partnership agreement in order for the project to be able to draw down £2,000 in kind. However, with this money the Red Cross employed their sessional worker for the project! The Red Cross were also holding £2,000 which was funded by Bournemouth Borough Council to support voluntary organisations. In addition, the application the Red Cross made to TSB for £5,000 was not revealed to other participant organisations. (From the interviews that were held about the Asylum Seeker and Refugee Befriending Project).

As a consequence, the project coordinators (apart from the people from the British Red Cross) have been thinking about possible ways that would resolve the issue in consideration. They suggested that for the issue to be resolved another approach was necessary, one that could see an 'umbrella' project and within this different approaches to be developed. In this light, the Red Cross could continue running the sessions with an emphasis perhaps on education and youth achievement awards. Additionally, another group could be created to complement the existing group that will include volunteers from the student body, particularly people who are similar age to the asylum seekers and refugees in an environment that will lend itself to building relationships and friendships. This group would follow a more recreational and social approach to support the asylum seekers and refugees.

The second group has been in existence since June 2005. This has come as a result of the decision by the British Red Cross not to renew the partnership contract with the university team something that has been accepted (From the report for HEACF meeting, 8th July 2005). This new group is being called Bfriends and it aims 'to improve the quality of life for refugees and asylum seekers living in the area, to provide local information, help improve skills and build confidence' (Bfriends, HEACF open meeting of 8th June 2005). However, the capability of the new group to develop in helping asylum seekers and refugees remains to be seen, as the project coordinators and volunteers involved should now work without the administrative and financial support by a significant partner.

6.2. CLASSROOM ASSISTANT

This project was created as an opportunity for the Hub. In particular the aim was to create 2 volunteering opportunities for this project. Specifically, two student

volunteers with an interest in primary school education would be recruited and spend an agreed period of time on a weekly basis at Parley First School, assisting in a Year 1 class. The objectives of the programme were:

1. To assist a class teacher during literacy and numeracy;
2. To help prepare material for display; and
3. To enable children to achieve their tasks (From the project's Overview).

The programme was implemented between October 2004 and June 2005 and it was seen as having a positive impact by its participants. It was rated as 9 out of 10 in terms of its level of success with the rate of the project achieving its aims and objectives to be 10 out of 10 and 9 out of 10 respectively (from participant's Project Evaluation). Responses about acquired skills included:

- 'Targeting instructions/directions at different groups e.g. young children';
- 'Communicating with young children'

(From participant's Volunteer Self-evaluation completed form)

However, there were comments on improvement mainly referred to procedural and advice/support aspects provided by the school's management regarding issues e.g. listening to children's reading, and giving support information to the volunteers (from participant's Project Evaluation).

6.3. CODA MUSIC TRUST

CODA Music Trust is a local charity founded in January 2004, which provides music tuition and music therapy to everyone regardless of age, ability or financial circumstances. The relationship between the University's Student Union and CODA was established after JP Morgan requested some assistance in setting up CODA's new computers. The computer network was successfully implemented and it has been in use ever since (HEACF Task Group Meeting, 20th January 2004, Minutes – Progress report HEACF project).

In March 2004 a new project was established between the university and the charity, the CODA Fiddle Orchestra. This established the orchestra for disadvantaged children in Boscombe. Throughout the project the student union has aimed to create a variety of volunteering opportunities for students and staff (HEACF Task Group Meeting, 2nd March 2004, Minutes – Progress report HEACF project). The HEACF provided funding towards the establishment of the CODA Fiddle Orchestra as well as helping to design a logo for the orchestra. Also, a redundant University minibus was donated to the charity (The Hub, Summer 2005).

In addressing the issue of how far the project has reached its aims and objectives an interviewee pointed out that:

Involving more projects into CODA project involves more opportunities for volunteers. From the start of the project the director of CODA offered us a list of new jobs need covering for example a pianist or somebody to organise the set up of the project and things like that...Also we organised to ask for volunteers from Bournemouth University. And we did have a few inquiries asking about the orchestra based on participation from the community. And we did have some people coming along. ...There were people though who at some point gave up and they came and said to us 'we're moving away' which is absolutely fine. We always advertise what is going on, on press release. Or there is a newsletter which I maintain that becomes a source for potential people to come.

In terms of the project's scope the same interviewee said that some people have thought that the orchestra had been just for children because this is where the idea comes from. But, as she stressed, the orchestra side of the project has been 'for everybody' that would fit to the orchestra. As a result the orchestra counted 30 members but not all of those participated every single week. There have also been 5 volunteers that help with the project administering activities. In addition, the involvement of children in the orchestra has been a potential pool for volunteering, as this can attract the parents of these children as well.

With respect to strengths of the project these can be listed as follows:

- The fact that CODA Fiddle Orchestra has been community-based and as a consequence it can involve anybody who would like to get involved;
- There has been continuous improvement on the orchestra people's skills, primarily musical skills;
- The fact that as a community orchestra, CODA are able to perform in different places and get themselves known;
- CODA Fiddle Orchestra allows people to 'come in and out' all the time instead of having just the same 30 people. As a result there have been a higher number of people who know what the orchestra are doing.

As for the areas of improvement:

- The orchestra's administrating staff think that they need to do more in dealing with the volunteers on a more personal basis, and make them feeling more 'welcome' at the personal level (From the interview with one of CODA Music Trust coordinators).

6.4. COMMUNITY ARTS

The scheme has been the product of collaboration between HEACF project and the Boscombe Community Arts Network in order to produce a series of newsletters that would promote student artwork alongside professional working artists. The project has had a major impact in raising the profile of local community artists and at the same time in promoting student artwork. HEACF funding enabled this collaboration to come to fruition. In particular, with regard to action that was taken:

- An exhibition was held in the Sovereign Centre in Boscombe for Dorset Arts week in May 2004;
- Issue 1 of the Community Arts Newsletter was produced with the help of student volunteers in August 2004.

(Bowmer and Harrison, September 2004)

According to one participant the achievements of the project were: To diversify art forms that can be supported; to increase awareness of art activities; and most importantly recruitment of volunteers was benefited because of the scheme. On the other hand they stressed the need for a volunteer 'manager' who would be able in overseeing and guiding developments through the project (From participant's Survey Questionnaire).

6.5. COMMUNITY CHAMPIONS

Community Champions began to operate as a pilot programme for volunteering in October 2003. The programme came as a response to the growing demand for volunteer project leaders/mentors with a strong community focus. In this light, 12 students were selected on the basis that they were characters, who would benefit from the personal development focus of the scheme. To immediately help the team bond, the selected Community Champions were taken on an activity weekend for personal and team building skills. By early 2004 the programme was well established and two of the 12 student participants declared that 'they would have left university by then without the programme'. In particular, the students were heavily involved in volunteering activities with the West Howe Community project by supporting the Community Planning day and creating the Christmas grotto. (HEACF Task Group Meeting, 20th January 2004 Minutes – Progress report HEACF project). Another intake of Community Champions followed the next year. Fifty volunteers have been cited as Champions and members of the committee. The impact of their volunteering work has been considerable, as it has been estimated that around 200 people were affected directly from the work of Community Champions in the community (From the interview of a project coordinator).

Other activities of the volunteer group included:

- Carrying out a leaflet drop for the Fiona Appleyard Appeal;

- Organising a performance for a theatre play (The Vagina Monologues);
- Redecorating the West Howe Community Hall;
- Working with the police to implement a student watch scheme that raised £2,000 in funding;
- Helping at ad hoc events such as a Deaf Arts Symposium conference, several governors events and Aimhigher days
- Raising £500 from JP Morgan for their community projects (Bowmer and Harrison, September 2004).

As a consequence, the project has promoted good practice of volunteering work within Bournemouth University. For instance, it was nominated for the Volunteer of the Year and Volunteer Group of the Year Awards 2003-2004 by the Mayor of Bournemouth. The nomination was made on the basis that Community Champions ‘contribute to the improvement of communities, raise awareness of local issues amongst their peers and encourage other young people to follow their example’ (From the comments on the project’s nomination form in February 2004). In addition, Community Champions entered the HEACF Student Volunteering Awards 2004 as a ‘finalist’, which was recognition of the project’s positive image. To this it should be added the fact that a range of universities in the region e.g. Bristol, Plymouth and Bath Universities asked about how they would use the programme. As one of the project coordinators pointed out:

[We] realised that students couldn’t necessarily walk into a community and be just volunteers. They needed to have a more rounded skill base. So we designed a programme that would create like an ‘elite’ volunteer which is what Community Champions was and it was specifically for students, not for staff and other volunteers (From the interview with one of the project coordinators).

	Frequency	Valid Percent
N/a	7	9.3
1	1	1.3
3	1	1.3
4	3	4.0
5	9	12.0
6	18	24.0
7	16	21.3
8	10	13.3
9	10	13.3
Total	75	100.0

Table 4: Evaluation of team work skills used by the Community Champions [Note: On this 1-10 scale 1 has been characterised as poor and 10 as excellent]

During the implementation of the pilot programme volunteers were encouraged to keep a work book overview that would enable the volunteer committee to evaluate their progress. Based on the assessments made by the volunteers on these workbooks tables of responses were produced in order to be analysed. Two of these tables and graphs are given in this section (see Tables 4 and 5, and Figures 2 and 3). As it can be seen in Table 4 volunteers emphasised the positive effects of team skills that were used through the various projects they were involved. Taking into account the variety of projects (ranging from skills required to organise parties up to issues of safety awareness) and that each volunteer had to respond to 9 of these assessment grids, it is worthwhile to notice that 83.9% of the respondents found the they were able to use their skills to the standard of ‘excellent’ or ‘satisfactory’.

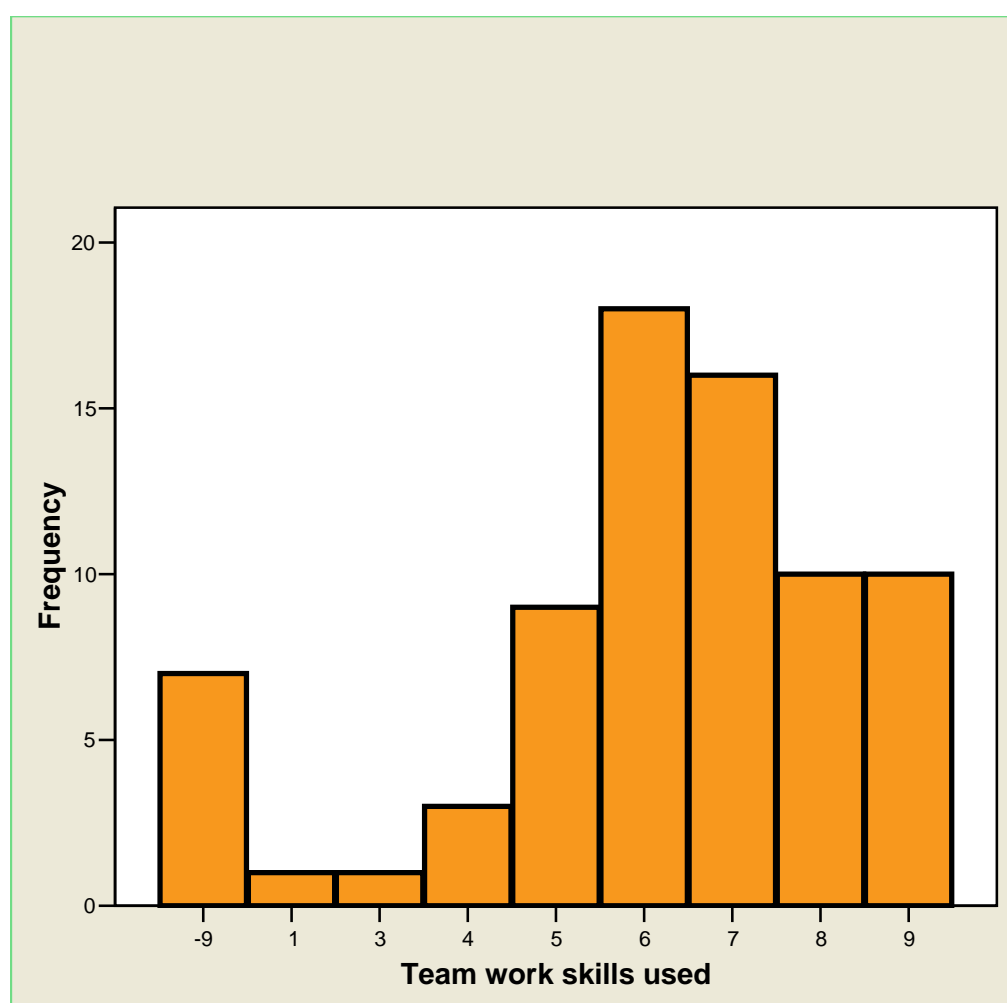


Figure 2: Evaluation of team work skills used by the Community Champions [Note: On this 1-10 scale 1 has been characterised as poor and 10 as excellent – The -9 value represents the non applicable responses]

Success on application of team working skills has also verified by a project coordinator involved with volunteer training who asserted that volunteers were

equipped very well. He added that there was concentration on two aspects. One was to develop volunteers' self-awareness and make them 'get an insight into the whole personality and how they could operate in groups and teams'. The second one was 'to try and develop their perspective as global citizen so that they get an understanding of the world outside the local university, the world in local communities'.

However, looking at Table 5 it is noteworthy that 14.6% of the volunteers thought that their time management skills were weak regarding their participation to particular subprojects. Time management seems to be an issue of concern as only 5.3% thought they achieved high standards to the point of excellence.

	Frequency	Valid Percent
N/a	7	9.3
1	1	1.3
3	3	4.0
4	7	9.3
5	5	6.7
6	21	28.0
7	13	17.3
8	14	18.7
9	4	5.3
Total	75	100.0

Table 5: Evaluation of time management skills used by the Community Champions [Note: On this 1-10 scale 1 has been characterised as poor and 10 as excellent]

Summarising the aims of the programme it has been about 'creating enlightened community workers through personal development, innovative training and successful community collaborations' (From the project overview cited in the Champions workbook). Additionally, the objectives of the programme have been to:

- Use newly developed social skills;
- Demonstrate skills and use knowledge learnt about the media;
- Demonstrate skills in first aid;
- Select and use relevant communication skills in various situations;
- Use time effectively and to the volunteer's advantage;
- Evaluate and manage volunteer's stress levels;
- Identify the need for self control;
- Perform the role of a leader;
- Work effectively and organise volunteers in acting within a group;

- Organise volunteers capabilities in working efficiently;
- Evaluate health and safety concerns when necessary;
- Identify fire safety issues;
- Demonstrate crime prevention methods (From the project overview cited in the Champions workbook).

Regarding one of the most prominent projects Community Champions participated in a project coordinator pointed out that the involvement of the Community Champions was a way to prove that ‘by going bottom up through a resident-led project, that approach works better and the learning can be sent to other groups’. They also asserted that ‘the Community Champions have broken down that idea that only certain people go to university or college. In this respect, Community Champions have been incredibly successful apart from the fact that they’ve been incredibly useful in painting walls and doing practical stuff’ (From the interview with one of the project coordinators).

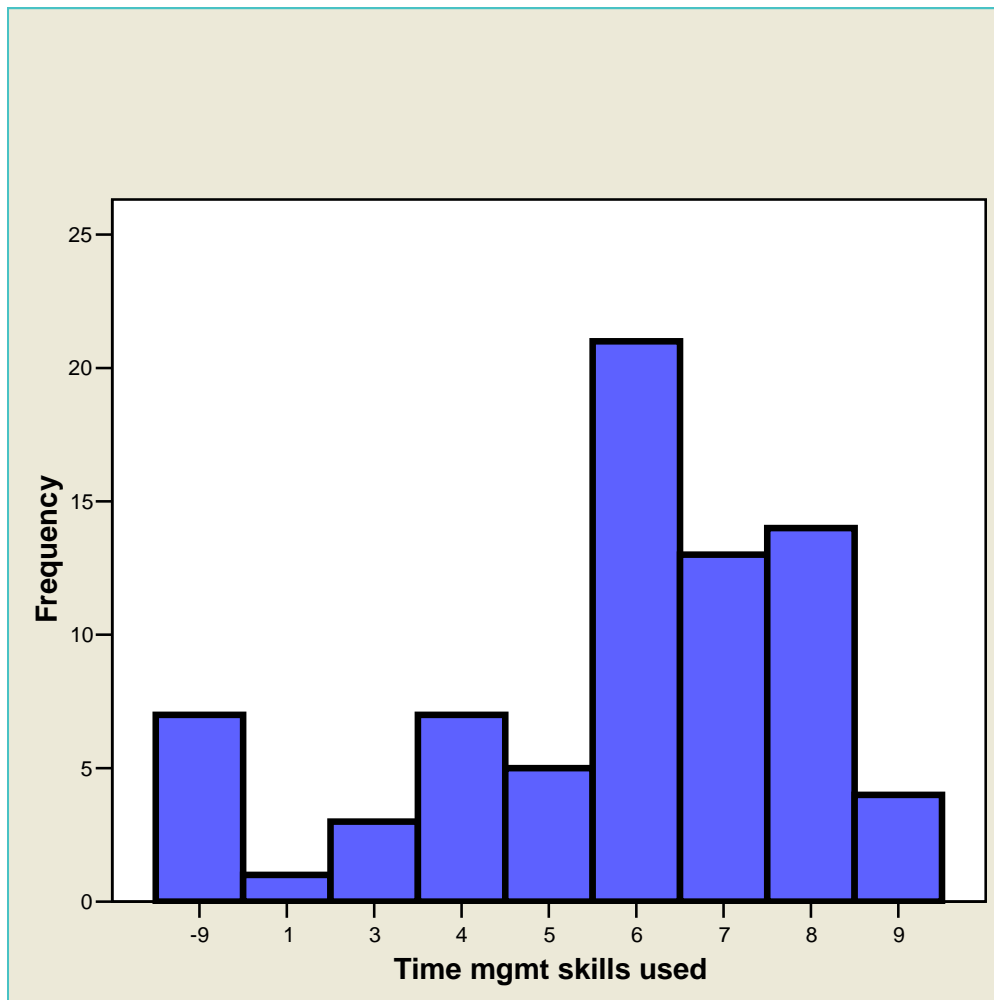


Figure 3: Evaluation of time management skills used by the Community Champions [Note: On this 1-10 scale 1 has been characterised as poor and 10 as excellent – The -9 value represents the non applicable responses]

Table 6 shows how much support volunteers received regarding particular projects. Limitation in responses should be addressed for this particular issue. As it would be expected volunteers responded positively to the question how they would rate the support they were given by the organising agency (not the volunteer office).

	Frequency	Valid Percent
Less poor	1	7.7
Very good	2	15.4
Towards excellence	1	7.7
Almost excellent	3	23.1
Excellent	6	46.2
Total	13	100.0

Table 6: Support given by the Organisation

However, it is noteworthy to mention that there was a particular 3 rate response (that means ‘almost poor’ performance) by a participant with the comment that: ‘this rating is for the community work we did for West Howe. They provided not enough details for us to do a good job. They also didn’t reply to our questions and in the end seemed not interested in the ideas we came up with’.

The limitations identified in the project were:

- Recognition of ‘over-promising’ and ‘over-selling’ the Community Champions project when at the beginning. This had as a result the rise of expectations for some of the Champions.
- Volunteers could not cope every time with the workload of the programme because of their student duties;
- There were also cases of misunderstanding from the students’ point of view regarding the work of other people they were doing with, sometimes because of the training they were given (From the interviews held with project coordinators).

As for future steps about the project one of the coordinators pointed out:

This is the million dollar question. I believe that we have to change the Champions from a programme of an award to something broader. [We might need] to test the idea of putting advertisements in a newspaper for the community to write in for projects. For example to say ‘students for hire – if you’ve got a need let us know and we’ll see if we can fix it for you’. Because one of the criticisms we’ve got is that there is not enough community involvement. And we’ve designed for this year to have more community

involvement ...So rather than recruiting 12 people to go on a programme for the whole year what we are going to do is asking the community for projects and make them Community Champion projects by using the MAD Day formula. And to be a Community Champion you will have to have done, to fulfil a special list of criteria. And also that means that anybody, any student or staff can become a Community Champion (From the interview of a project coordinator).

1) On a scale of 1-10 with 1 being poor and 10 excellent, how would you rate the success of the project: 8

Comments: Overall I think the project has been a success. I think that everyone involved enjoyed themselves. We didn't manage to do all of the activities that had been planned at the start of the year but all of the activities that were done, were done well. I also believe that the group has developed a strong team spirit and are always willing to help.

2) On a scale of 1-10 with 1 being poor and 10 excellent, how would you rate the success of the project: 10

Comments: Each single member of our group was committed to the project and got involved. So we had a lot of fun. The project itself was interesting because of the variety of tasks.

3) How would you describe the way the project(s) has been run as? Satisfactory

Comments: *Strengths:* Very good ideas, good connections within the community, very enthusiastic leaders

Weaknesses: Lacked a solid structure, unreliable timetable of events, unreliable training courses- did not always happen, limited interaction with other areas of the community

4) How would you describe the way the project(s) has been run as? Satisfactory

Comments: *Strengths:* Versatility in catering for everyone, both in terms of personal interests and dichotomies in physical and mental capabilities. Both the community and the individual members without exception, gained in some way from the varied experiences, yet enjoyed and remained positive about the programme.

Weaknesses: As a pilot scheme, some of the activities people were enthusiastic about had to be dropped. Also it would have been better to have had fewer activities on the programme, but in more detail.

Figure 4: Examples of opinions about the Community Champions project based on the completed evaluation forms and survey questionnaires.

Support given by the organisation

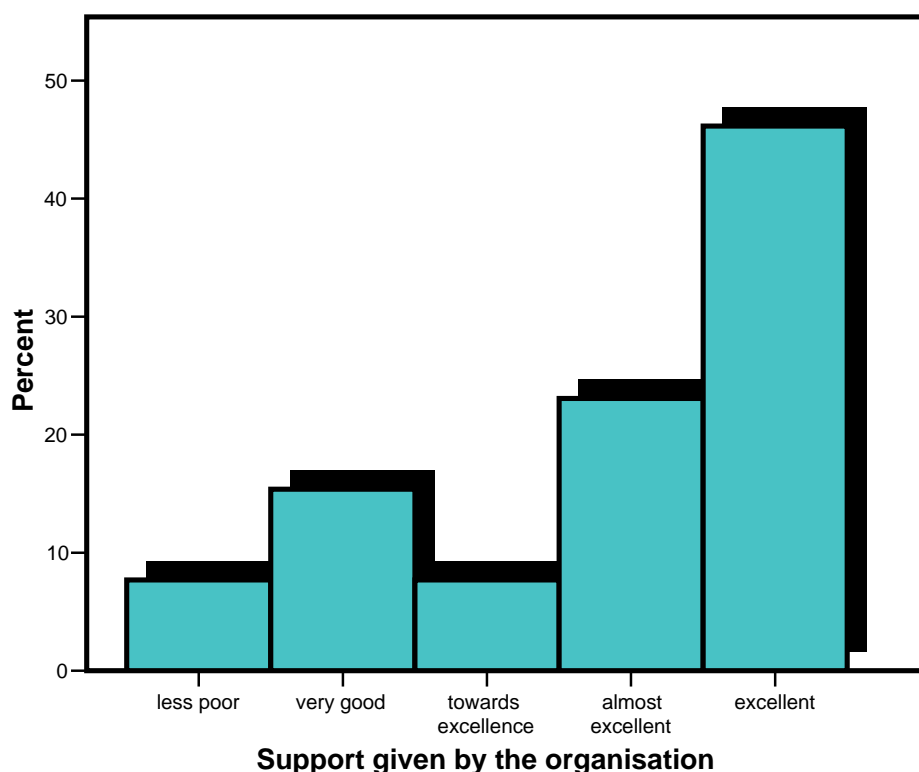


Figure 5: Support given by the Organisations that held the events

6.6. FRESH GANG/RECRUITMENT

The aims of the project were:

- To create a vibrant, entertaining CD-Rom which appeals to students;
- To ensure that this CD-Rom is e-mailed to Fresher' Students;
- To encourage recruitment of volunteers;
- To guide and advice students about a variety of activities.

(From the project's Overview)

The outcomes of the project related to the production and distribution of this CD-Rom as a first-stop information base for new students (7,000 of these CD-Rom were produced). Specifically the aim was to create interest in the areas of volunteering offered by the Students' Union and the University. The outcome was a cartoon based presentation on CD-Rom which has promoted the diverse work students can do for various charities and organisations. The CD-Rom has familiarised students with the brands associated with volunteering opportunities and has given them advice on what to expect and how to get involved. The

recruitment of volunteers has been through the use of The Hub website (From the project's Overview).

6.7. PR COMMITTEE

It was not clearly identified whether this subproject should be included under the remit of the HEACF project. This was because the PR Committee scheme is predominantly linked to the promotion of the Student Union work. However, the voluntary nature of the posts made it relevant to this report. According to the three volunteers who were involved the experience of volunteering for this particular project offered them opportunities such as:

- 'to work as part of a team';
- 'to learn how to write different types of articles';
- 'a excellent lesson in time management, team communication and delegation';
- 'confidence in talking to people'

(From the participants' volunteer Self-Evaluation)

'A slow start' to the project was the only non positive comment that was encountered for this project by one of the volunteers. They added however that after that 'now we've got the mechanisms in place to produce an effective communications programme for the student union' (From the participant's Evaluation on the project).

6.8. RAISING AND GIVING (RAG)

Raising and Giving is the charity arm of the University's Student Union. They raise financial support through: theme nights at the Old Fire Station; events such as Abseil, Duck race, and pub crawls; and raids, in town/around campus/neighbouring universities.

According to the coordinators of the HEACF project working with the Student Union in Round 1, RAG was able to offer 'increasing support to the RAG officers, assisting them with procedures, offering advice and introducing them to contacts within the charity sector' (Bowmer and Harrison, September 2004). This was possible as RAG total collection for 2002/2003 and 2003/2004 was £36,000. For example, during the annual RAG cheque giving ceremony in April 2004 cheques were donated to Tenovus, WellChild, The Fiona Appleyard Appeal and the Domino Appeal for a grand total of £10,579 (£2,500 more compared with 2003) (HEACF Task Group Meeting, 2nd March 2004: Minutes – Progress report HEACF project).

For some students volunteering was a true experience, as two student participants pointed out that they enjoyed volunteering because 'they met people' and 'it was

fun and they participated in events’. However, one of them pinpointed ‘more advertising’ of events as an area of improvement for the project (From the results of the survey conducted in autumn 2003).

6.9. SCHOOL GOVERNORS

The project was initiated as a working partnership between Bournemouth Education Directorate, J P Morgan and the HEACF project, which was entitled to organise celebration/recruitment events over 12 months for school governors initially in Bournemouth and Poole. The first event, which was organised in July 2003, resulted in the recruitment of 6 potential school governors (the Local Education Authority’s target for this year was 5 school governors). At the second event in October 2003 three more potential governors were identified (HEACF Task Group Meeting, 9th February 2004 Minutes – Progress report HEACF project). A third event was held in March 2004 in which 8 people expressed an interest in becoming school governors. Up to this point 5 people were confirmed as school governors. The project was considered as being an outstanding example of successful collaboration between a major private firm, an education institution and relevant government organisations. In addition, the project was recommended for inclusion in the CRAC guide to volunteering best practice (HEACF Task Group, 14th June 2004, HEACF Business Plan).

	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Event of July 2003						12	8
Event of October 2003					3	3	2
Event of March 2004				1	2	11	3
TOTAL				1	5	26	13

Table 7: School Governors’ events - Responses to the question ‘on a scale of 0-6 with 0 being poor and 6 being excellent, how would you rate the event?’.

The appeal the events had to their participants can be seen in Table 7 in which 13 out of 45 attendants found the event they were involved as excellent (rate 6). Additionally, 26 out of 45 attendants found the event they were involved rated as 5. Some of the comments made by participants regarding different aspects of each event included:

- ‘The information was so clear and useful, I stayed focused throughout’;

- ‘Very motivational, excellent demonstration of the benefits of good leadership’;
- ‘[The event] breaks down barriers and gives a friendly feeling to what can be a scary potential experience’ (From the feedback given to the events).

In terms of areas for improvement there was a suggestion that the scheme was not promoted enough and it should be taken further to include the general public as well as JP Morgan and the University (From the completed survey questionnaires).

6.10. SPORTS VOLUNTEER PROGRAMME

The programme initially began as an attempt for enabling second year sport degree students to further their coaching experience in 2003/2004. It has now well expanded by including a significant number of coaches willing to volunteer their time and services. In this capacity volunteers have the opportunity to assist in a wide range of sports, suited to their experience and expertise. A volunteer in sports coordinator was employed to assist with day-to-day running of the scheme. There were three events organised since the foundation of the scheme:

1. A ‘have a go’ sports day for children at Wallisdown, which was attended by over 70 children;
2. A taster climbing day for a local school;
3. An inter schools sports challenge for children from Bournemouth and Poole.

(The Hub, Summer 2005)

In terms of the numbers of volunteers that have been participating, it was mentioned that there have been about 25 to 30 sport based volunteers, who have supported the project. They mainly come from the second year of Sport Development and Coaching Sciences Degree at Bournemouth University. In addition, a similar number has referred to participants from the first year. As a result, for the first year of the programme’s implementation, that is 2003/2004 there were about 50 volunteers in coaching or helping in different events. It has been estimated that for 2004/2005 this number would probably be raised to 60 (From the interview with a project coordinator).

In terms of how far the project has reached its aims the same interviewee contended that:

I think the overall aim has been to make a one-stop shop for volunteers in sports. That’s the overall aim. ...And in this year [2004/05] we were able to address issues in a more positive way. So I really hope we can streamline the programme by linking sports and the particular university degrees and streamlining the programme by linking it with the local councils, e.g. Bournemouth Council and Poole Council and so any kind of local volunteer

organisation and get recognised. We are close to the Student Union of Bournemouth University as well.

Moreover, strengths and weaknesses of the project were identified as follows:

- In terms of strengths, there have been opportunities for volunteer coaches to get experience and based on this to increase their employability rate;
- This is has also been a strength for the university, as it provides the university with a variety of specialists in different type and styles of coaching;
- A weak area that needs improvement is advertising of the project not just for people who want volunteers but people who want to volunteer as well. As it was suggested by research evidence, this could be possible through local magazines, local council handouts, council websites, etc. Furthermore, a closer collaboration with the Sports Development & Coaching Sciences course can be considered as necessary.

6.11. STAFF VOLUNTEERING – MAD DAYS

MAD Days have been small-scale volunteering projects that have given the chance to participants to experience volunteering in their spare time. The slogan ‘making the difference in the local community’ has reflected the aim of the project to attract volunteers from students, university staff, friends and families. Reason for this has been the way university regards volunteering: ‘as a personal development opportunity that is critical to elements of the University’s strategic plan’. According, to the organisers no previous experience of volunteering or specific skills is required, only ‘a positive and willing attitude’. Nine one-day events have been completed between June 2004 and May 2005; 44 volunteers have been involved; and 13 volunteers have attended 2 or more MAD days (The Hub (Summer 2005)). In addition, a project representative pointed out that there have been about 8 people who constitute the core of volunteers. Four of those have been working for the National Trust and providing opportunities for MAD Days. In terms of average presence per event this can vary from 6 to 20 volunteers.

	Frequency	Valid Percent
Towards excellence	6	18.8
Almost excellent	7	21.9
Excellent	19	59.4
Total	32	100.0

Table 8: Rates of Success of the Staff Volunteering – MAD Days’ Project

Talking about the success of MAD Days one of the project’s coordinators talking about how far the objectives of the actual project have been transformed into actual outcomes pointed out that:

Yes, we do. We’ve got a core set of volunteers for several MAD Days as a result of going in one and enjoying it and spread the word. We now have volunteers that bring along friends. The actual MAD Day idea is well-known to all university now as a concept. Most people who even haven’t been know about MAD Days. And there is good positive coverage on the local media, we’ve got some very good articles e.g. Bournemouth Journal (From the interview with a project representative).

	Frequency	Valid Percent
Very good	2	6.3
Towards excellence	9	28.1
Almost excellent	4	12.5
Excellent	17	53.1
Total	32	100.0

Table 9: Rates of Achievements of Aims and Objectives – Staff Volunteering – MAD Days project

With regard to events that have been more distinctive than others the interviewee pointed out that arguably all the events are very equal because with every one the idea is ‘to make a difference’. For example, with the conservation orientated events, by clearing a place and make it tidy it is fairly visible to see the results at the end of the day. This was also evident from the Project Overviews, in which aims, objectives, and deliverable outcomes were all very well defined. On this question another project representative mentioned the RAG MAD Day as a good example of collaboration where rather than doing conservation or a clear up the team did a fund raiser. This was held in the centre of Bournemouth and there was community involvement. It was also a public relations’ exercise, as this let the community to gain an understanding on student matters. Furthermore, awareness and financial support for a local charity was raised.

From the evaluation forms that were completed after participation to the 9 events satisfaction about and approval of the project by the participant volunteers was explicitly expressed by an impressive 81.3% of the replies (including the ‘excellent’ and ‘almost excellent’ responses) (Table 8).

		Frequency	Valid Percent
Valid	n/a	3	9.4
	Very good	1	3.1
	Towards excellence	7	21.9
	Almost excellent	5	15.6
	Excellent	16	50.0
	Total	32	100.0

Table 10: Rates of Achievements of Outputs – Staff Volunteering – MAD Days Project

Similarly, regarding participants’ reactions on how far the aims and objectives of the project have been achieved (17 out of 32 or 53.1% thought that the event(s) they were involved in achieved their objectives). This can be seen in Table 9. A picture of how Success of Project can be clustered by Achievement of objectives and by Achievement of Outputs is portrayed in Figures 6 and 7.

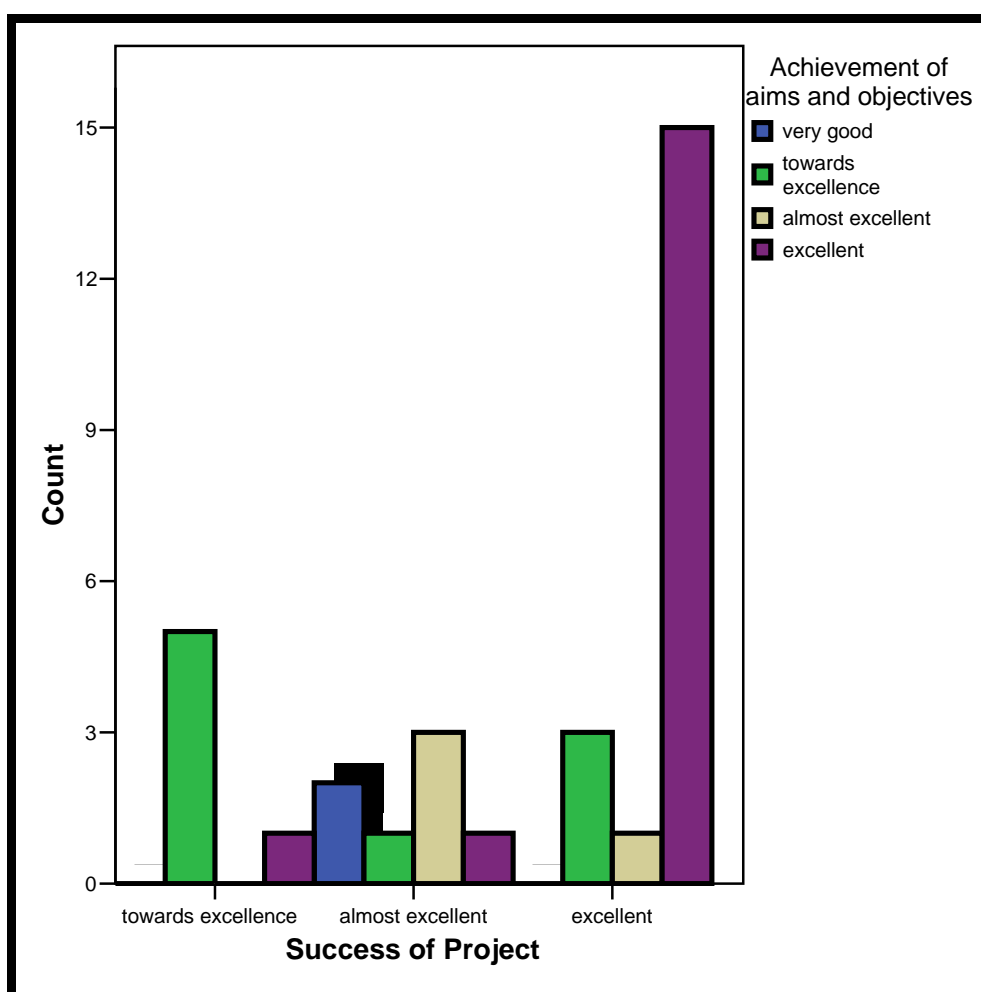


Figure 6: Graph of Success of Project clustered by Achievement of objectives

There were a few indications of thinking-about- again with regard to the replies to the question ‘To what extent the outputs of the project achieved its original objectives’ in comparison to the previous answers (Table 10). Specifically, 25% of the respondents found the events they were involved as...just ‘very good’ or ‘rate towards excellence’.

It is interesting to note the range of comments regarding answers on the success of particular MAD Days which nevertheless indicates a clear fashion of commitment by the participant volunteers. A few of them are given below:

- The morning’s work on clearing the pond was left unfinished which was a shame! (Regarding the Studland Conservation event);
- Good improvement to the garden areas (Re the Beech House event);
- It’s really fantastic to see what we have done when the job was finished (Regarding the Beech House event);
- I think the project achieved a great deal, although we did not clear the whole area that we were allocated (Regarding Hod Hill).

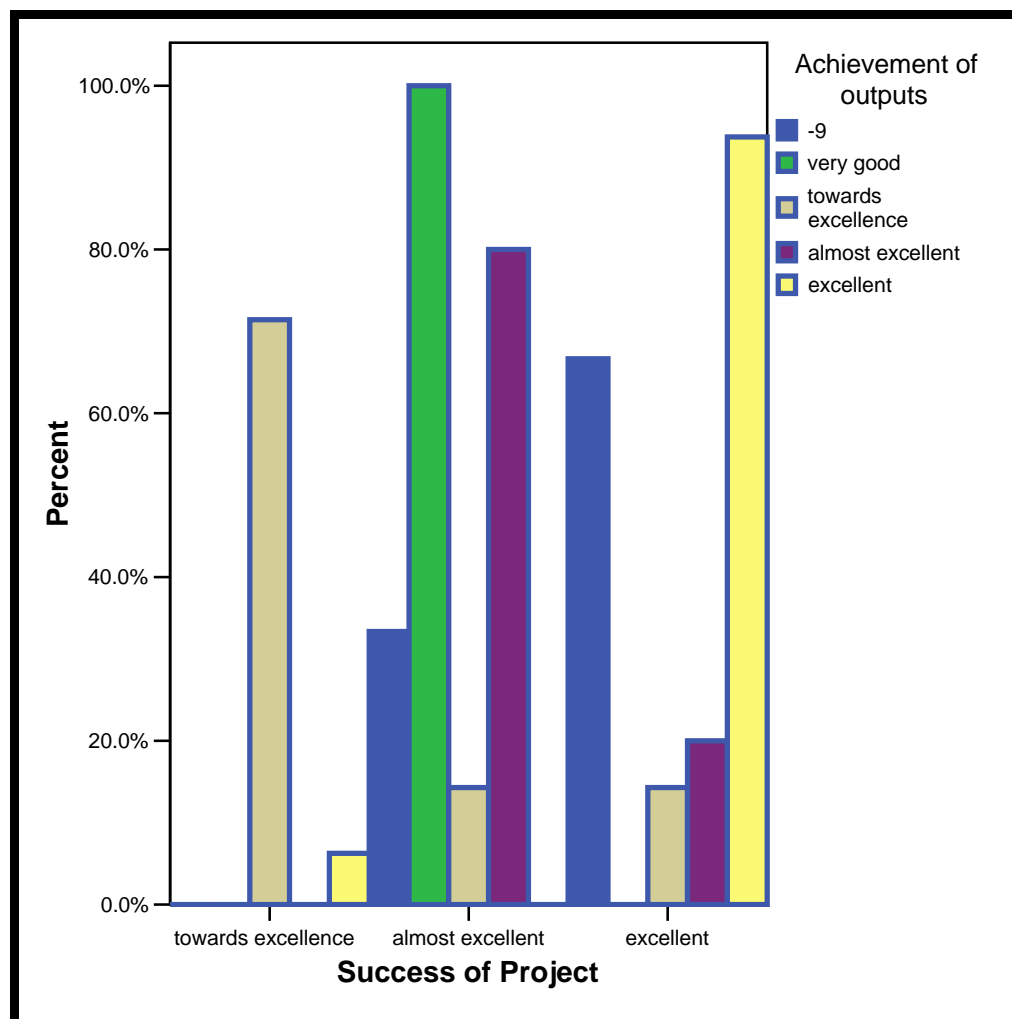


Figure 7: Graph of Success of Project clustered by Achievement of Outputs

With respect to the question on how supportive the organisation which organised the event had been to volunteers, again there is a significant degree of approval (65.6% thought that the support given was ‘excellent’ or ‘almost excellent’). The same applied to the question on how supportive the Volunteer Office was. In this case 71.9% thought that the support given was ‘excellent’ or ‘almost excellent’). These details can be seen in Tables 11 and 12.

However, there was a particular response which assessed the support given as ‘almost good’. In addition, further comments on the project identified the need for more and better guidance by the organisation, which held the event as well as the need for having access to more implementation tools that could be used for the occasion.

		Frequency	Valid Percent
	n/a	2	6.3
	Almost good	1	3.1
	Towards excellence	8	25.0
	Almost excellent	5	15.6
	Excellent	16	50.0
	Total	32	100.0

Table 11: Information/Support by the Organisation Holding the Event

With regard to limitations of the project its representatives suggested that there have been two areas, which need improvement:

- More human resources so events could be organised on a more regular basis (even once a week);
- Better ways of transporting volunteers to the places of activity. They agreed that there is room for improvement for both of these areas.

		Frequency	Valid Percent
	n/a	5	15.6
	Very good	2	6.3
	Towards excellence	2	6.3
	Almost excellent	3	9.4
	Excellent	20	62.5
	Total	32	100.0

Table 12: Information/Support by the Volunteer Office

6.12. THE CREDIT UNION

The project has been run by the Student Union with the aim to promote sensible use of finances by students. Loans are offered to people who are unable to gain credit elsewhere (HEACF Task Group Meeting, 9th February 2004 Minutes – Progress report HEACF project). The involvement of the HEACF project has been to help in the recruitment of students (in particular accounting and finance students) for assisting on marketing aspects. One suggestion has been for local schools to be approached on introducing savings clubs, a way for promoting thrift between young people (HEACF Task Group Meeting, 2nd March 2004 Minutes – Progress report HEACF project). According to a volunteer coordinator the project ‘has been at hold for some time and not much action has been done in the last year or so. However, it is hoped that it will improve in the near future’ (From the interview with one of the HEACF project’ coordinators).

6.13. THE HUB

The Hub is an online service matching students who want to get involved in volunteering with organisations who need them. It hosts opportunities from any local organisation that conforms to its code of practice, ensuring at all times ‘certain quality’ of volunteering. The service tries to match the skills and interests by volunteers with opportunities that exist in Bournemouth and the surrounding area. There are no particular skills that are normally required however some projects might make use of specific training, for example in web design. The project is not restricted to only British nationals but also to EU nationals and even to people with refugee status. There are also possibilities for disabled volunteers to be involved in all kinds of roles (The Hub, 2004).

In August 2004 the new volunteer data management system was launched. According to this system:

- Students can register their personal details and their areas of interest for volunteering;
- Organisations can register their volunteering opportunities;
- The system can match students and opportunities based on skills and interests with students able to apply for any opportunity they are interested in (Bowmer, and Harrison, September 2004).

Regarding particular numbers linked to the project:

1. Organisations registered:	69
2. Organisations approved:	69
(Internal Organisations 17	
(External Organisations 52)	
3. Volunteers registered:	141

(Volunteers fully registered 75
Volunteers approved for opportunities 72)

4. Current live opportunities: 42

The second phase of the project that has been planned to be launched in August 2005 and will include creation and development of a number of 'mini-hubs' with partnership colleges, and creation of training opportunities in addition to volunteering opportunities (The Hub, Summer 2005).

6.14. THE SCOUTS

HEACF has been collaborating with the scouting movement in Bournemouth, Poole and Christchurch to deliver county wide recruitment events. Such an event was organised by the Volunteer Support Office, Bournemouth University and representatives from local Scout groups at Starbucks in Borders' bookshop in Bournemouth to provide interested students with information about the Scouts and the opportunities available. The event was held on 19 October 2004. The event was organised by the Volunteer Support Office in terms of choice of venue, offer of refreshments and made available visual and written information.

According to local Scout groups the event was very well received and was marked as excellent in terms of organisation. Comments such as 'we have members that we did not have before' and 'the project achieved its aim 100%' are indicative. In terms of how much the aims and objectives of the project were achieved respondents felt that 'the event was held to timescale and quite well attended, considering the clash of dates' but also that 'it's too early to determine if the recruitment of Scout Leaders was successful'. Having said this, the respondents felt that the 6 recruits during the event would be involved into Scout Leaders' scheme. Regarding recommendations for changes the respondents suspected that it might have been higher attendance if the event did not clash with the Freshers Ball. They also thought that the event would re-run, either at a location like Borders, or in house at the university, to organise something similar for New Year [of 2005].

6.15. UK YOUTH PARLIAMENT

The HEACF has provided the UK Youth Parliament project with funding for the designing and production of a CD-ROM that would promote its activities. The aim of the Youth Parliament has been to give young people across the UK, between the ages of 11 and 18, the opportunity to be listened by a wide range of organisations both at the national and local level.

This production of the CD-Rom was achieved through an agreement between the UK Youth Parliament and the Bournemouth University Student Union that gave to the student union exclusive access to all Marketing, PR, product creation, and corporate opportunities regarding the UKUP national brand (HEACF Task Group Meeting, 9th February 2004 Minutes – Progress report HEACF project). The

process of producing the CD-ROM involved work by Chris Philips and 3 students from the Arts Institute whereas Jon Bowmer prepared the skills packs to be used from members of the Youth Parliament and Youth Councillors in conjunction with staff from the Centre for Public Communication and Research (Media School) (HEACF Task Group Meeting, 2nd March 2004 Minutes – Progress report HEACF project).

Other achievements through the collaboration between the UKYP and the student union involved:

- The CD-ROM devised by the HEACF team received widely-raised praise. It was widely distributed in the UK and was also used by the Bahrain royal family to 'promote democracy' in the country;
- A student designed poster was used by UKYP for a national recruitment campaign;
- A team of students in conjunction with British Telecom assisted in the writing and delivery of the national PR strategy for the UKYP annual sitting and ran the PR office at the event in July 2004;
- The HEACF team and UKYP delivered a paper profiling the UKYP at the Centre for Public Communication Research inaugural conference (The Hub, Summer 2005)

6.16. VICTORIA EDUCATION CENTRE

The project implemented at the Victoria Education Centre, a school for physically and mentally disabled children, had as its aim to assist students with their weekly tasks at the athletics club. The objectives were:

- Interaction with the children;
- Supporting the staff in activities by helping them to set up/pack up equipment and contributing in team working;
- Motivating the children in their activities and help them to achieve their targets (From the Project Overview).

In terms of the outcomes the project was expected to deliver these were linked with providing volunteers who are trained, police-checked and enthusiastic as well as providing the children with a link to the local community (From the Project Overview). Regarding the volunteering itself, one of the participants described 'development on people skills' and 'to be enthusiastic about everything' because 'the children inspire you to enjoy life' as the qualities they developed during working for this project. Additionally, they commented about the experience that 'just to say I've thoroughly enjoyed it, met some fantastic people and will miss it very much when I leave' (this person did volunteering there for 3 years).

7. CONCLUSIONS

Considering the four-year implementation of the HEACF project at Bournemouth University the project has provided an important foundation stone on volunteering not only within the university's remit but also within the local community in the Bournemouth area. The project has introduced and maintained volunteer culture to the institution whilst creating positive relationships amongst the parties involved e.g. university departments, members of university staff, students, private firms that operate locally and members of the local community.

The importance of changes in the university's volunteering the project has introduced towards quality volunteering was clearly evident in the research findings. According to a member of the steering group:

I think the project has changed and evolved quite a lot. Initially we were very ambitious in terms of numbers and soon became clear that recruitment needed to be much more targeted at those who were really motivated to do volunteering. We also had difficulty recruiting people over 50 because the student mature learner population was quite small. We looked then at recruiting from the staff and my understanding now is that with the experience of the last three years the project has changed quite considerably and focus much more on specific areas.

In addition, the research evidence shows that the HEACFs positive attributes have exceeded the negative ones. In this respect, the most important strengths of running the particular subprojects are listed as follows:

- Projects such as School Governors and MAD Days have had very successful campaigns in recruiting from staff and the community;
- Areas that have been particularly successful are the one-off projects e.g. the MAD Days or one-day Community Champions events. These seem to suit the students' workload and difficulty in making long term commitments;
- The Volunteers in Sports programme on the other hand has been particularly effective in recruiting and sustaining volunteers. This indicates a mixture of different ways for success depending on the programme;
- In terms of lessons that could be drawn, the students' union and as a consequence the student volunteers seem to have learnt a lot about best practice in engaging in volunteering programmes. Furthermore, there has been an expansion in the number of volunteering events that Bournemouth University students participate to;
- University staff seems to have become more aware of volunteering opportunities than in the recent past. What has made the difference in this is that the relationship between the university and the community has significantly changed because Bournemouth University students and staff have been involved in local clubs, local projects, and local voluntary organisations e.g. as Millennium volunteers, Youth Parliament and a whole

range of projects that have raised the profile of the university outside the campus;

- The projects under HEACF have been to a certain extent very innovative including a very wide spread of different projects;
- There has been development of student volunteers into jobs as a direct result of them being involved in the projects;
- Partnership working between the university, the local community, and local businesses has been significantly increased;

Areas for improvement include:

- The pace of recruitment has not been consistent. This was partly due to lack of communication between the parties involved especially in Round 1;
- Evaluation of the projects under HEACF has not been adequate especially with regard to Round 1. There have been positive steps in project evaluation taking place in Round 2 e.g. evaluation of MAD Days events. However, further improvement is necessary especially in terms of consistency in evaluation;
- Certain confusions on roles and responsibilities have not allowed a lot more of voluntary sector involvement from the beginning;
- There has been lack of evidence on recording volunteering activities especially for Round 1. This has been reduced in Round 2 however there is still space for improvement.

An essential part for the uninterrupted running of the project has been played by the finance and administration staff of PACE who have been responsible for supporting the introduction and maintenance of the HEACF project at Bournemouth University since the late 2001. Along with this, people from PACE have worked in allowing the different parties (university staff, student union, local voluntary sector, and local private sector) to liaise towards the successful development of the project. An important part of this activity has been dedication in financing the project through the HEACF being funded by the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE). In addition, the contribution by the project coordinators, members of the Student Union of Bournemouth University (SUBU), and members of the Institute of Health and Community Studies (IHCS) should be also noted in this report, as they have worked hard in developing and sustaining volunteer activity through the HEACF project. To this extent, they have also been able to explore possibilities for maintaining particular projects taking into account that project funding expires in 2006.

Maintenance of particular subprojects and the consequent financial cost is a crucial issue for the HEACF Project. Through the research process some considerable

approaches were suggested that could potentially change the map of volunteering in Bournemouth if they are to be implemented. The most significant ones include:

1. To identify through a review process (by including relevant sources such as this evaluation report) which of the currently run projects can be characterised as value-for-money, whether a project has been successful both in terms of student participation, reaction of recipients, and obviously actual costs;
2. To maintain projects by reviewing the budget of next year's and, identify and establish the most appropriate financial steps for a funding strategy post 2006;
3. To maintain the projects by working in partnerships with the local community such as the Bournemouth Borough Council, and community and voluntary organisations in the town;
4. To establish a form of cooperative sponsorship. This could be possible taking into account that graduate recruiters could potentially be a good source of income, as volunteer projects particularly tend to contain types of students that graduate recruiters can be interested in. At the implementation level this could be possible if the Student Union in collaboration with the Careers Service would identify which graduate recruiters could be interested in sponsoring volunteering programmes. In addition, the Student Union could co-develop with the graduate recruiters some of the key skills development through volunteering;
5. To maintain HEACF particular projects via direct sponsoring. This might take the form of collaboration between the HEACF team and other organisations such as volunteering agencies;
6. To maintain particular projects such as the Volunteers in Sports project through funding by relevant university departments. For example, in this case the Sports department could sponsor the Volunteer in Sports project.

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9. APPENDICES

Appendix 1

HEACF			
As in 01 December 2003			
	<i>2003/04 Funding</i>	<i>2003/04 Spend to Date</i>	<i>Balance</i>
Income 2003/04	-122,215		
Under spend	- 30,709		
Total Income	- 152,924		
Student Union staff and activities	-80,000	0	-80,000
Student Mentors Training	-17,215	0	-17,215
Refreshments/meeting costs	- 794	0	- 794
PACE academic costs	-16,580	14,200	- 2,380
PACE administration costs	- 5,000	0	- 5,000
Travel	- 500	0	- 500
Printing	- 2,126	0	- 2,126
Totals	- 122,215	14,200	-108,015

Table 13: HEACF Project – Income and Expenditure as in 1st December 2003

Source: HEACF Task Group Meeting, (23rd October 2003) Minutes

Appendix 2

HEACF ACTIVITIES		
	<i>2004/2005</i>	<i>2005/2006</i>
Administration	5,000	5,000
Dissemination/Launch	3,000	1,500
Recruitment CD-Rom	3,000	0
The Hub	1,525	0
Community Champions material	0	0
Communication Strategy	3,000	2,461
Accreditation	500	700
Total	16,025	9,661

Table 14: HEACF Project – Activities 2004/5 as amended in 27/04/2005 (HEACF Task Group Meeting, 06 September 2004)

Source: Financial planning phased September 2004 produced by Jon Bowmer, Volunteer Co-ordinator for the project

HEACF SALARIES 2004/05	
<i>Job Title</i>	<i>Salaries + On-costs</i>
Volunteer co-ordinator	£27,050
Volunteer support worker	£22,461
Total	£49,511

Table 15: HEACF Project – Salaries 2004/05

Source: Financial planning phased September 2004 produced by Jon Bowmer, Volunteer Co-ordinator for the project (HEACF Task Group Meeting, 06 September 2004)

HEACF TOTAL BUDGET REQUEST 2004/05	
<i>Budget Item</i>	<i>Costs</i>
Project costs	£16,250
Salaries	£49,511
Under spend	£14,750
Total	£80,511
BUDGET ALLOCATION/REQUEST SHORTFALL	
<i>Budget Allocation</i>	<i>£39,522</i>
<i>Budget Requested</i>	<i>£80,511</i>
<i>Difference</i>	<i>(£35,989)</i>

Table 16: HEACF Project – Total budget request and shortfall 2004/05

Source: Financial planning phased September 2004 produced by Jon Bowmer, Volunteer Co-ordinator for the project (HEACF Task Group Meeting, 06 September 2004)

Appendix 3

HEACF PROJECT EVALUATION
(VOLUNTEER)

PLEASE COMPLETE THE FOLLOWING EVALUATION DOCUMENT FOR YOUR HEACF VOLUNTEER PROJECT. FOR REFERENCE THE ORIGINAL PROJECT OVERVIEW DOCUMENT IS ATTACHED TO THIS FORM.

PROJECT TITLE:- _____

ORGANISATION NAME:- _____

YOUR NAME:- _____

1. On a scale of 1 – 10 with 1 being poor and 10 being excellent, how would you rate the success of the project?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Please comment on your response:- _____

2. On a scale of 1 – 10 with 1 being poor and 10 being excellent, how would you rate the extent to which the project achieved its aim and objectives?

Aim

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Objectives

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Please comment on your response:- _____

3. On a scale of 1 – 10 with 1 being poor and 10 being excellent, how would you rate the extent to which the outputs and outcomes (deliverables) of the project achieved its original objectives?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Please comment on your response:- _____

4. Was the project delivered in accordance with the proposed timeline?

If NO, please give reasons:- _____

5. On a scale of 1 – 10 with 1 being poor and 10 being excellent, how would you rate the information/support you received from the organisation during the project?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Please comment on your response:- _____

6. Would you be interested in volunteering with this organisation on future projects?

If NO, please share your reasons (your feedback is important to us so that we may continue to develop and improve our volunteer programme):- _____

If YES, would you be interested in repeating this particular project?

If NO, please share your reasons:- _____

If YES, would you recommend any changes? (Please provide details):- None that I can think of!

7. On a scale of 1 – 10 with 1 being poor and 10 being excellent, how would you rate the information/support you received from the Students' Union Volunteer Support Office during the project?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Please comment on your response:- ___

8. Would you be interested in volunteering with the Students' Union on future projects?

If NO, please share your reasons (your feedback is important to us so that we may continue to develop and improve our volunteer programme):- _____

Thank you for taking the time to complete this evaluation.

Appendix 4

HEACF PROJECT EVALUATION
(ORGANISATION)

PLEASE COMPLETE THE FOLLOWING EVALUATION DOCUMENT FOR YOUR HEACF VOLUNTEER PROJECT. FOR REFERENCE THE ORIGINAL PROJECT OVERVIEW DOCUMENT IS ATTACHED TO THIS FORM.

PROJECT TITLE:-_____ :

ORGANISATION NAME:-

1. On a scale of 1 – 10 with 1 being poor and 10 being excellent, how would you rate the success of the project?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Please comment on your response:- _____

2. On a scale of 1– 10 with 1 being poor and 10 being excellent, how would you rate the extent to which the project achieved its aim and objectives?

Aim

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Objectives

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Please comment on your response:- _____

3. On a scale of 1 – 10 with 1 being poor and 10 being excellent, how would you rate the extent to which the outputs and outcomes (deliverables) of the project achieved its original objectives?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Please comment on your response:- _____

4. Was the project delivered in accordance with the proposed timeline?

If NO, please give reasons:- _____

5. How many volunteering opportunities were filled as a result of the project?

6. On a scale of 1 – 10 with 1 being poor and 10 being excellent, how would you rate the suitability of the volunteers to the project?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Please comment on your response:- _____

7. On a scale of 1 – 10 with 1 being poor and 10 being excellent, how would you rate the information/support you received from the Students' Union Volunteer Support Office during the project?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Please comment on your response:- _____

8. Would you be interested in repeating this particular project?

If NO, please share your reasons:- _____

If YES, would you recommend any changes? (Please provide details):- _____

9. Would you be interested in working with the Students' Union on future projects?

If NO, please share your reasons (your feedback is important to us so that we may continue to develop and improve our volunteer programme):- _____

Thank you for taking the time to complete this evaluation.

Appendix 5

HEACF PROJECT OVERVIEW

Project Title:

Project Summary:

Aim:

Objectives (SMART*):

Recruitment strategy:

Deliverables:

Timeline:

Number of volunteering opportunities:

Reporting/Evaluation plan:

Contact for more information:

* SMART = How Specific the targets are, Are the targets Measurable, Are the targets Achievable, Are the targets Realistic and Are the targets Time-bound

Appendix 6

**HEACF PROJECT – COMPLETION
REPORT (TEMPLATE)**

Executive Summary

Background and rationale

Aims and objectives

Evaluation:

- i) **Marketing/recruitment strategy**
- ii) **Deliverables**
- iii) **Timeline**
- iv) **Number of volunteering opportunities**
- v) **Volunteer(s)/organisation**

Conclusions

Recommendations

Next steps

Appendices

Appendix 7



**EVALUATION OF THE BOURNEMOUTH HEACF SCHEME –
SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE**

Note for respondents: We are currently evaluating the delivery of the Higher Education Active Community Fund (HEACF) in Bournemouth. HEACF has funded the project you have been participating in. Taking part in this evaluation is voluntary. The only commitment on your part is to reply to this questionnaire about your views on the project you have been involved in. Your views will offer us invaluable insights on how the particular project has been managed and what changes could be planned for the future. Your responses will be completely confidential and your right for anonymity will be protected throughout the research process.

A. ABOUT YOU

Question 1: What gender are you? (Please tick as appropriate)

Male	Female
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Question 2: How old were you during your involvement in the project? (Please tick as appropriate)

0-18	18-25	25-45	over 45
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Question 3: If you were working for Bournemouth University at the time of your participation, which category best describes your work? (Please tick as appropriate)

Academic Staff	Administrative Staff	Support Services
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Question 4: If you were not working for Bournemouth University at the time of your participation, which category best describes your work? (Please tick as appropriate)

Working for the Community/Voluntary Sector	Other Occupation	Student

B. ABOUT THE PROJECT

Question 5: a) What project have you been involved in? b) When have you been involved in the project? c) What has been your role within the project?

Response:

5a)

5b)

5c)

Question 6: Is this the only volunteering that you have undertaken? (Please tick as appropriate).

Yes go to Question 8

No go to Question 7

Question 7: a) What other project(s) have you volunteered for? b) When have you been involved in the project(s)? c) What has been your role within the project(s)?

Response:

7a)

7b)

7c)

Question 8: How long (Please tick as appropriate)

	Less than a 1 year	1-2 years	2-4 years
Project 1			
Project 2			
Project 3			

Question 9: How often have you taken part in a volunteering activity? (Please tick as appropriate)

	Weekly	Monthly	Every 3 months	More than 3 months
Project 1				
Project 2				
Project 3				

Question 10: a) Have you benefited from volunteering? b) If yes, in what way?

Response:

10a)

10b)

C. YOUR OPINION ABOUT THE PROJECT

Question 11: How would you describe the way the project(s) has been run as? (Please tick as appropriate)

	Highly satisfactory	Satisfactory	Not satisfactory	Not at all satisfactory
Project 1				
Project 2				
Project 3				

Question 12: How would you describe the way the project(s) has been run against the following criteria? (Please tick as appropriate)

		Highly satisfactory	Satisfactory	Not satisfactory	Not at all satisfactory
Have you been well motivated towards satisfactory delivery of the project?	Project 1				
	Project 2				
	Project 3				
Were you given clear instructions during the delivery of the project?	Project 1				
	Project 2				
	Project 3				
Have you been satisfied with the training skills offered?	Project 1				
	Project 2				
	Project 3				

Question 13: In your opinion what have been the main achievements of the project(s)?

Response:

Question 14: In your opinion what have been the strengths and weaknesses of the project(s)?

Response:

Strengths:
Weaknesses:

Question 15: Would you consider volunteering in the future? (Please tick as appropriate)

Yes	Possibly	No	I don't know

Question 16: Do you have you any other comments about the project(s) or volunteering in general?

Response:

--

Thank you for taking part

February 2005

Appendix 8

Interviews that were conducted for the evaluation of the HEACF Project at Bournemouth

	PARTICIPANT	CONDUCTED ON
1	<i>Senior Manager</i>	27-Apr
2	<i>Senior Manager</i>	18-Apr
3	<i>Coordinator of Individual Project funded by HEACF</i>	29-Apr
4	<i>Coordinator of Individual Project funded by HEACF</i>	25-Apr
5	<i>Coordinator of Individual Project funded by HEACF</i>	21-Apr
6	<i>Coordinator of Individual Project funded by HEACF</i>	20-Apr
7	<i>Coordinator of Individual Project funded by HEACF</i>	13-Apr
8	<i>Coordinator of Individual Project funded by HEACF</i>	12-Apr
9	<i>Coordinator of Individual Project funded by HEACF</i>	12-Apr
10	<i>Coordinator of Individual Project funded by HEACF</i>	04-Apr
11	<i>Project funded by HEACF</i>	31-Mar

The above form an archive

Appendix 9



EVALUATION OF THE BOURNEMOUTH HEACF PROJECT – INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Note for interviewees: We are currently evaluating the delivery of the Higher Education Active Community Fund (HEACF) in Bournemouth. HEACF has funded the project you have participated in. Taking part in this evaluation is voluntary however your views will offer us invaluable insights into how the project has run in order to plan activities for the future.

The interview will be approximately twenty minutes long and with your permission, will be recorded for transcription purposes only. Your identity will be kept confidential according to research conduct rules.

QUESTIONS

The following questions are linked to the type of issues we will cover in the interview, but any other views you may have can also be discussed.

Question 1: Which project have you been involved in and what your role within it? How long have you been involved in the project?

Question 2: What, in your opinion have been the objectives of the project? Have these objectives been translated into tangible outcomes (e.g. variety of volunteering choices offered; numbers of volunteer opportunities created; numbers of potential volunteer opportunities; increase in volunteering activity; targeting non-participating students, staff, and other volunteers; increase in inquiries; positive coverage in local media)?

Question 3: What in your opinion have been the strengths and weaknesses of the project?

In particular, please make a brief assessment on the following:

- Do you feel that volunteers have been adequately motivated in completing the project?
- Have the tasks allocated been clearly identified for every volunteer?
- Has the project had the ability to meet training needs for its volunteers?
- Could you see evidence of sustainability in running the project in the future? And how?
- Has been any type of dissemination of good practice regarding the project (e.g. sharing experience with other universities)?
- **(where applicable only)** Has the project had the ability to meet projected costs?

Question 4: In your opinion what has been the impact, if any, of the project to university and local community? Can you give any specific examples?

Question 5 (where applicable only): What has the HEACF funding been paid for? Is there any alternative way for continuing to fund the project after the HEACF funding is completed?

Question 6 (where applicable only): How would you see evaluation of the project being implemented?

Question 7: Any other comments/suggestions about the project(s) will be more than welcome.

Thank you for agreeing to take part

February 2005

Appendix 10



May 5, 2004

John Bowmer,
Students Union,
Bournemouth University,
Talbot Campus,
Fern Barrow,
Poole,
BH12 5BB

Head Office
Bargates Court
22 Bargates
Christchurch
Dorset
BH23 1QL

T: 01202 703597
F: 01202 483171
W: www.twas.org.uk
E: m.denny@twas.org.uk

Dear John,

We were delighted to receive our cheque from the RAG officers the other night and have enclosed our formal receipt number 11434 for their records. I would be very grateful if you would be kind enough to pass on our sincere thanks to all the RAG officers and committee for their kind help and support for our appeal. It has been very much appreciated by everyone involved in the new school project and we would be delighted to show them round so they can see where their money is going if they would like to come over some time. They simply have to call me and I will arrange it.

We would also be grateful if you could pass on our thanks to everyone of the Leisure Marketing students who raised money for us. The film premiere event was superb and I know made a very significant contribution to the amount we received. They are a very talented bunch.

My thanks also to you and the team for all your help and support for what we are doing, that also has been very much appreciated.

I look forward to talking to you again very soon.

Best wishes.

Yours sincerely,

Mike Denny
Community Fundraising and PR Officer

Patron - Sir George Meyrick Bt FRICS

'developing services for people with autism'

