

Mentoring for new Migrants

by TimeBank

“ The nation’s commitment to volunteering is often seen as something “typically British”; volunteering was put at the centre of the successful London bid for the 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games. A recent survey suggested that 59% of the population had given some sort of formal volunteering help to an organisation in the last year. ”

Extract from page 4

About the Author

TimeBank tackles social issues by finding ways for people to give their time that inspire them and match their lives.

We don't just tell people volunteering is a good idea, we make sure it really is. We find ways for people to give their time doing things that they want to do, that suit how they live and that address the needs of the world we live in.

In the last year we did this through creative and powerful partnerships with the public, private and voluntary sectors. These partners give us access to wider audiences and ensured that our volunteers were able to make a social impact.

www.timebank.org.uk

About the Review

The Prime Minister has asked Lord Goldsmith to carry out a review of British citizenship. In particular:

- To clarify the legal rights and responsibilities associated with British citizenship, in addition to those enjoyed under the Human Rights Act, as a basis for defining what it means to be a Citizen in Britain's open democratic society;
- To consider the difference between the different categories of British nationality;
- To examine the relationship between residence, citizenship and British national status and the incentives for long-term residents to become British citizens; and
- To explore the role of citizens and residents in civic society, including voting, jury service and other forms of civic participation.

Over the course of the Review, we will be publishing a series of pamphlets to draw out new ideas and to stimulate discussion.

This is an independent Review and each pamphlet represents the views of the author.

You can find out more about the Review at www.justice.gov.uk/reviews/citizenship

Introduction

This pamphlet explores how volunteering, and mentoring in particular, can give individuals an active role in defining what citizenship means in modern day Britain.

It considers ways that Britain's strong culture and tradition of volunteering could be harnessed to provide simple and clear mechanisms for current British citizens to play an active role in welcoming new citizens to their community and helping them to integrate. Drawing on the knowledge that TimeBank has gained through five years experience of running Time Together, a refugee mentoring scheme, this paper discusses how the principles of mentoring refugees could be applied to a new scheme enabling existing communities to play an active role in welcoming new migrants to their communities.

Importantly, the paper looks at the two way nature of integration and explores the way in which aspiring citizens can enhance their own integration by volunteering in their local communities.

The paper will firstly consider Britain's history as a diverse country and a willing commitment by UK citizens to build good societies, which includes welcoming diversity and integration. This is illustrated by our cultural commitment to volunteering.

Secondly the paper explores the specifics of how volunteering harnesses this willing commitment to create good societies. In particular we shall consider the power of mentoring both as a way to realise an individual's commitment to social change and more specifically as a tool for integration. We will consider the experience and learnings from Time Together as a way to illustrate the potential of mentoring for integration.

Finally we will draw together the learnings from Time Together and apply these to consider the potential role of volunteering and mentoring for new migrants.

Diversity and volunteering

“Britain is by far
- and I mean by far
- the best place in
Europe to live if you
are not white”

Trevor Philips 2006

Britain is a highly successful diverse society. Compared to other European countries (such as France) we have historically coped with difference in its various forms without having to explicitly commit to nation building. An element of this success has been Britain’s historic ability to absorb foreign habits, skills and people, even as it shouts

them down. We are a magpie nation, quick to absorb and profit from foreign influences of all shades. It is very difficult to imagine a Britain not touched and shaped by the arrival of people, ideas and flavours from overseas.

This diversity is underpinned by a set of values - commitment to the rule of law, of tolerance and politeness towards others, freedom of speech and respect for all faiths that do mark us other from other European nations. These values are embodied in uniquely British institutions such as the NHS, the BBC, our democratic institutions and our flourishing voluntary sector.

Britain also has a long and proud tradition and culture of volunteering. The nation’s commitment to volunteering is often seen as something “typically British”; volunteering was put at the centre of the successful London bid for the 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games. A recent survey¹ suggested that 59% of the population had given some sort of formal volunteering help to an organisation in the last year. 39% had volunteered on a regular basis (at least once a month). Over the longer period of the last five years, 68% of those surveyed had given formal help in some way. The estimated economic value of volunteering in the UK is in the region of £39 billion a year.

The last decade has seen unprecedented levels of Government support for volunteering. The investment in a national volunteering database, making 2005 the year of the volunteer, and the establishment of organisations such as TimeBank and V underpin the Government’s commitment to volunteering, and engender a culture where volunteering and community involvement is the norm rather than the exception.

The emergence of new social movements such as the Make Poverty History Campaign (one in three under 25 wore a MPH wrist band) and We Are What We Do (who have sold over a million copies of “Change the World for a Fiver”, a manual for everyday action) and the profound shift in public opinion about climate change (89% declare themselves concerned about the environment²), suggest that British society could be said to be reliant upon a “willing commitment” to one another and to the world we share and shape.

¹ Helping Out, A National Survey of Volunteering and Charitable Giving, Cabinet Office 2007

² IPC Green Matters research October 2007, from greenormal.blogspot.com

This commitment to each other includes formal and informal volunteering but it is bigger than that. It embraces all our everyday behaviour as citizens, consumers, neighbours, employers or employees.

The phrase “willing commitment” reflects a different way of considering what is at stake in volunteering, separate from either “rights and responsibilities” or “social responsibility”. “Social responsibility” implies obligation, being told what to do, and in some iterations gets close to condescension towards the “needy and deserving”. We either grudgingly “accept” or “escape” responsibility. By contrast, we make the willing commitment because we are freely motivated by the vision of a better world - the “good society”- and we respect a “moral settlement” recognising that we all need help at some time in our lives and we all have something to give.

This commitment is part of a long British tradition of inventive philanthropy, which underpins all the great advances in the public domain and is part of the vital infrastructure of our society. It is a kind of “social utility” as vital and basic as gas and electricity. In other words, volunteering represents Britain’s commitment to building good communities that include a willingness to actively welcome diversity. Mentoring for new migrants brings together the emphasis in our culture on diversity as well as the tradition of volunteering.

From commitment to action: new forms for volunteering

TimeBank is a national volunteering charity. Established in 2000 its aim is to tackle social issues by developing ways for people to give their time which inspire them and match their lives and have a clear, tangible social impact.

At the core of TimeBank's work is a respect and recognition of an individual's willing commitment to have a positive impact on their communities. We realise that it is our responsibility to find ways for this individual commitment to become action, and this often needs the creation of tailor-made volunteering that fits within the modern world.

We have established projects such as Big Arts Week which placed almost 2000 artists and creative professionals into their local primary school to complete a week-long creative project. Our youth programmes build on students' interests and concerns in order to make the citizenship agenda relevant and meaningful to young people by enabling them to create projects about the issues that matter to them. We have been particularly successful with a number of mentoring schemes that have been shown to have a significant and positive impact on the lives of people recovering from mental illness, dealing with learning difficulties and struggling to access mainstream opportunities.

The power of an individual mentor

The emergence of the idea of a "willing commitment" is particularly illustrated by the increasing popularity of mentoring as an intervention. Mentoring has been defined as "a one-to-one, non judgemental relationship in which an individual voluntarily gives time to support and encourage another. This is typically developed at a time of transition in the mentee's life and lasts for a significant and sustained time."³

Mentoring is, at its simplest, the gift of time, of being there to support and give advice and wisdom of experience when it is needed.

The power of such one-to-one approaches is that they can be a way of reaching out towards and providing support to those people who are often hard to engage and help adequately via conventional approaches. The one-to-one principle also provides flexibility (for both parties) and allows the mentoring to be personalised to the needs of the person being mentored.

For the mentor, it represents a unique opportunity to use their spare time in a positive way which also enables them to see the impact that they are having. Volunteering as a mentor is, to paraphrase Ghandi, a way of "being the change you want to see in the world".

³ Active Communities Unit, Home Office

Time Together: Mentoring as an integration tool

The above illustrates that volunteering, and specifically mentoring, has a powerful potential to realise an individual's willing commitment to change the world. The very nature of mentoring suggests it is particularly effective at supporting an individual in transition and bringing two people together who may be very different but have something of benefit to offer each other. In this way we can begin to explore how mentoring could work as an integration tool.

An example of mentoring being used successfully in this way is TimeBank's Time Together scheme. Time Together is a nationwide scheme that matches refugees in one-to-one mentoring relationships with local volunteer mentors. Mentors support, encourage, and motivate their mentees as they seek to achieve their goals in language, employment, education, and socio-cultural integration. After training, mentors and mentees commit to spending a minimum of five hours a month together for a period of one year. The aim is to help mentees settle into a new life in the UK and to enable mentors to gain a better understanding of the lives of refugees, building bridges between communities. The mentees on the scheme are supported and encouraged to find a volunteer placement during their time on the project to help with their integration journey. Many of the obstacles on this journey stem from being in a new, unfamiliar country and apply as much to new migrants as to refugees.

Time Together was set up and developed by TimeBank in 2002 in response to a Government White Paper that recommended the provision of mentoring schemes to help refugees integrate in the UK. Originally established in London, Birmingham and Glasgow, the success of these three projects enabled TimeBank to work with the Immigration and Nationality Directorate of the Home Office (now the Border and Immigration Agency) to put mentoring at the centre of "Integration Matters", the 2005 National Strategy for Refugee Integration. This enabled us, in April 2005, to secure funding from the Home Office and HM Treasury Invest to Save Budget to expand Time Together nationwide.

There are now 24 projects running across the UK, managed and supported by a central team based at TimeBank and delivered on the ground by a coordinator in a local partner organisation with a strong track record in working with volunteers.

Why people get involved: Expectations of mentoring

To further investigate how mentoring supports integration it is worth briefly considering why people get involved in the mentor and mentee relationship, using Time Together as a case study. This begins to draw out the detailed aspects of mentoring as a tool for integration.

Mentees

At the beginning of their involvement in Time Together, mentees' expectations of mentoring are largely practical. Mentees expect help with their English, with finding a job, and someone to help familiarise them with their local area and with UK culture.

“Someone who helps you according to what is your need...Someone who can help you to change things, because sometimes you are confused, giving you advice and show you the way.”

Professional mentees aspiring for jobs in medicine, engineering and accountancy, tend to hope their mentor will provide networking opportunities. Some mentees also seek friendship to enhance their social life and in some cases to combat depression.

Mentors

In a recent survey of mentors on the scheme⁴, 75% of respondents signed up to be a mentor on the scheme because they felt that people who are new to the country should be made to feel more welcome. This once again highlights the willing commitment of UK citizens to strive for a good society that is integrated and welcoming.

Mentors are divided in terms of their mentoring expectations. Some clearly envision support-orientated mentoring, a business-like relationship in which goals are outlined and pursued and the mentor will provide advice on accessing opportunities, services and support, whilst also improving their English, their knowledge of UK culture and their local environment.

“To be able to help others develop themselves and experience a better quality of life than they currently have.”

Other mentors expect the relationship to be both less structured, and more socially focused. They look forward to a more mutually beneficial relationship in which there will be an exchange of knowledge, experiences and ideas.

“Time Together sounded perfect as I wanted to do something different...I recall walking into university and everyone seemed quite similar and all are very similar at work. I thought it would be interesting to meet someone with a very different background.”

While all relationships include a little of both, generally pairs either focus on social integration or goal-centred activities related to employment or education.

⁴ TimeBank monitor survey October 2007

Measuring the impact of mentoring on integration

In July 2007 TimeBank published *Changing Lives*⁴, an independent qualitative evaluation of Time Together. Specifically, it is a longitudinal study of the impact of mentoring on participants' levels of integration. The study examined the programme and its impact from the perspective of refugee mentees and volunteer mentors themselves.

This research provides qualitative evidence suggesting a willing commitment from mentors to build integrated communities that mentoring provides an ideal vehicle for. It also illustrates how the specific needs of newcomers to the UK with a long-term commitment to becoming British citizens are effectively met by mentoring.

Confidence

“She just give me courage to do everything; to not be afraid, to have a courage to do everything”.

“[My mentor gave me] personal confidence and how I can meet people and talk to people, how can you go to visit English families...best thing for me. Even if I don't meet [my mentor] anymore...I really happy for that.”

An increase in overall confidence and motivation was the chief, and often life-changing, benefit of the most successful matches as confidence is a powerful asset in all areas of integration. The belief mentors expressed in their mentees and in their capacity to qualify for a course, find work or follow a particular career path, had a significant impact on the mentee's confidence. The mentor became someone who validated their worth as individuals capable of making a genuine contribution or worthy of being addressed as an equal.

“[Mentoring] builds confidence in a mentee. You come to see yourself as... big, black...you tend to feel a bit inferior, so to speak...But if you are interacting with a Westerner, a white one for that matter...Once I gain confidence in talking with you, being seen with you in a public place, it builds confidence that one requires. I begin to appreciate you as a person just like me. I no longer see that you are white, or whatever.”

Mentees were made to feel better able to interact, do the things they need or choose to do, to deal with ethno-racial and other social differences. Accessing public services, finding a job, applying for a place at college or university, approaching organisations to volunteer, engaging with strangers and attempting to make friends – all of these key activities which Time Together and other agencies associate with refugee integration⁵ demand that the individual feels entitled and confident in their own self-worth.

⁴ *Changing Lives* Tanya Murphy and Lea Esterhuizen 2007

⁵ See for example *The experience of integration: a qualitative study of refugee integration in the local communities of Pollokshaws and Islington*, Home Office Online Report 55/04 Alastair Ager & Alison Strang, 2004

When mentors encouraged their mentee to play an active role in choosing activities or places to visit, this also helped to develop confidence in making their own choices.

“She was very kind, understanding and she always ask me what I want...she can also suggest. So, she was letting me free to choose. It’s not because she’s a mentor, she says ‘We should make like this’. No. She was giving me the opportunity.”

Mentors were also a ready source of knowledge and practical support about anything and everything – knowing that help is at hand in a bewildering and sometimes unsympathetic new world provides an invaluable boost to overall well-being.

“It’s just like having a friend somewhere, whom you can count on anytime.”

“It is good just to have somebody. If anything happen, for example, if he is closely person, he can know about this.”

English language

“My mentor is the only person with whom I talk in English. I live in my community. With my friends here, we won’t be speaking in English! With her, we meet every week and I get the chance to practice my spoken and hearing English. It really helps me.”

An improvement in English language was a key benefit. Mentees who were learning English found that they made greater progress thanks to time spent one on one with their mentor. As one mentee put it, the mentor is the ideal person to practice English with because he is more likely to have patience.

“Just going to college is not enough. I need someone, like a friend or a mentor. When I go there, his job is to be with me. Some people if you don’t speak English [well], they get bored.”

Employment

Securing employment was a goal for most of the mentees. Mentee professionals and graduates are badly affected by having to accept ‘taking a step back’ in terms of their career progression. Mentees from this group seemed gratified when they did manage to get through the first few hoops and start to make their way into their chosen professions. ‘Non-professional’ mentees tend to simply want to find a job. They were often more successful earlier on than in the case of professional mentees or those with clear career aspirations who took longer to access employment in specific areas.

While mentors are not in a position to find jobs for their mentees, in several cases they successfully helped their mentees achieve better knowledge and access to the job market and prepared them for the pressures of the job application process. As well as improved English language which aids employability, mentors enhanced their mentees’ employment prospects in the following ways.

Learning about job application processes

Mentors helped with CV writing and the completion of application forms. One mentee described how his mentor had helped him understand the application process and hence engage more confidently with prospective employers.

“I was kind of angry when they asked me to come for a second interview, because I was thinking it’s not reasonable...why are they asking me to come...?And [my mentor] said, ‘No, no, this is common in this country. They might ask for you three times.’”

Without the reassurance of the mentor in the case above, the mentee would have been left with the misconception that a second interview was a sign that the mentee had failed to meet expectations in the first interview. Getting to understand the culture of work and what to expect when trying to access work was an invaluable contribution made by mentors to the lives of mentees.

Increasing self-worth

Given the hurdles refugees face and the demeaning attitude with which many agencies treat them, coupled with often long periods out of work, it is not surprising that even the most qualified and experienced individuals begin to doubt their professional ability. Mentors played a crucial role in helping to rebuild self-esteem. They reassured the mentees of their abilities and tempered disappointment when rejections came.

“The biggest thing is that she taught me to knock on every door, not to be reserved, that I am capable of doing anything. I have started to believe in myself. Sometimes, we look at the newspaper and I pass over some jobs. I say: ‘I could not do this’. She says: ‘YES YOU CAN!’ It is a huge asset to me”

Creating realistic goals

Conversely, some mentors played a role in tempering unrealistic expectations. In these cases mentors worked with their mentees to develop short-term attainable goals that could be built upon later. For example, seeking work experience in the chosen field, before seeking a paid job. Or in the case of a doctor, to be willing to accept care assistant jobs rather than medically qualified positions in order to be able to start the process of family reunification.

Understanding UK culture

“I’ve come to appreciate the British culture. She’s helped me understand the different accents; she’s made me have a good understanding of British history.”

When trying to settle into a new country, a refugee needs to acquire a tacit knowledge of what people commonly expect in different situations and what is meant by different gestures. Mentors were able to help their mentees to understand these subtler dimensions of life in the UK, and in certain cases to avoid misunderstanding others and being misunderstood themselves.

Many mentees gained insights into what could loosely be described as ‘British culture’: certain of the customs and social practices mentioned were stereotypically British – such as the drinking of tea, the British monarchy, and time keeping.

“She is someone who is very punctual. That I think, besides talking about it, her own punctuality to appointments has really had an impact on me. You will come to understand what it means in Britain when one says, ‘Let’s meet at one o’clock’. It’s one o’clock. It’s not five past one.”

“On the first day at work, I wanted to say hello to everyone, and she said ‘you don’t need to do that! It is nice, but...you just sit there and they will come and introduce you to other people themselves.’”

Knowing the local area

Without knowing where to go and how to make the best of the environment in which mentees found themselves, settling in can be very difficult. Mentors made a significant contribution here.

“I didn’t know a lot of places in the area, even if I stay for 20 or 15 years. She really show me a lot of places, and I really felt like I enjoy my time with her”

“She gives me the confidence [to go to places]. You get confidence if you go first with a local person. You can feel alien, lost. Put-off. It may be largely white or only whites. It takes a little while. You want that confidence.”

This particular benefit of mentoring is arguably the most accessible to all mentoring pairs. The process whereby the mentor introduces the mentee to different places of interest in their local town fulfils several functions simultaneously. Mentees gained better knowledge about the local area, and consequently greater access to the local leisure activities and places of historical or cultural interest known to the mentor. This knowledge also gave newcomers a greater sense of belonging, introducing friends and family in turn to the local environment.

Getting to know local places of interest also gives the pair meaningful time together which is less pressured than sitting face-to-face in a meeting room or café. Time spent exploring local attractions has an external focus, while also literally emphasising a common ground between mentor and mentee – the local area in which (in most cases) both parties live.

Access to public services

“[The main way a mentor can help a refugee] is dealing with social services... sometimes people don’t get help, not because they don’t want to, but because they don’t know they are entitled to it.”

Many mentees described learning where to go to get the services and support they needed, as well as to access other facilities in which they have an interest, as a significant benefit of mentoring. The mentor was often the first port of call when a problem arose.

“When my kids came to the UK, my mentor helped me find a school.”
“[I helped him with] understanding the financial system and the repercussions of financial decisions. Like the credit agencies and the credit system. Or the importance of being on the electoral roll.”

Moreover, in a couple of cases, where mentees suffered neither from a lack of confidence nor from language barriers when engaging with public sector agencies, mentors coached their mentees on optimal approaches, and thus enhanced their mentees’ effectiveness in accessing services.

“He understands now the need to manage your own case and to keep diaries. He now photocopies his letters and docs. He understands that you have to follow things up.”

The impact of mentees’ volunteering

A key element of Time Together is enabling mentees to volunteer for a local community group. About half the mentees on the scheme have volunteered thanks to the support of Time Together. Volunteers usually found the experience to be worthwhile as it enabled them to gain valuable work experience, obtain references or prove their worth to potential employers, or simply improve their communication skills and meet new people. All of these elements are key to the integration process.

Due to the challenges of finding employment in chosen areas, volunteering can also help a mentee enjoy feeling valued by making an active contribution in a workplace even when this is unpaid. Being part of the volunteering charity TimeBank, Time Together is in a unique position to help mentors and mentees access volunteering opportunities.

Bridging communities: A two-way process

Integration is a two-way process and mentoring, through its mutually beneficial approach, can facilitate this two-way learning between mentor and mentee, helping to bridge communities. Indeed, it was clear from our sample that mentors also gained a lot from their experience.

“When we see each other, there is a great big smile and great big hug. And we have a lovely time. You could not ask for better! As his children [recently arrived] learn to speak English, I shall enjoy speaking with them too.”

One of Time Together’s aims is to promote a greater understanding of the experiences of refugees in the UK and many mentors felt that they had learnt a lot in this regard, even passing this on to friends and family.

“I’ve found that there is so much ignorance amongst other people about immigration and refugees. I think mentors can speak to other people to help tell people about the experiences of refugees.”

Many mentors also found the experience of providing practical help to another individual most rewarding. Interestingly some of the most successful mentors often undervalued the more intangible impact they had on the lives of mentees through friendship and moral support.

“I have enjoyed my time. But I could not write down a list of achievements that I have with my mentee.”

So while mentees were very clear on the benefits of having a mentor including soft outcomes such as increased confidence, mentors were less aware of the significant value they were adding. Significantly, mentors also described personally benefiting from the cultural exchange and friendship.

“I have been helping my mentee with quite practical things, but he has been sharing things about his culture as well. So it has been really good for me...it is kind of an exchange.”

Lessons from time together: A welcoming country

One of the most striking findings to come out of the study was the number of mentors who were the first British person that the mentees had spoken to outside of a transactional setting.

The success of Time Together shows that the one-to-one nature of mentoring schemes has a unique ability to facilitate an exchange of knowledge and experience, and of fostering greater understanding of different cultures. It gives individuals a role and stake in a more integrated society.

When asked, those people who took part in the scheme as mentors were driven by the idea that they wanted to show that Britain was a welcoming country, and that they had as much to learn from other cultures as newcomers did from them. The opportunity to help someone who was a refugee was a driver but not as central to them as welcoming someone new.

Also, 53% of mentors wanted to learn about other cultures. When asked recently in a survey what a mentoring scheme for newcomers to Britain regardless of their status should focus on the majority of respondents thought the most important thing a mentor can do is to make someone new to this country feel at home and welcomed.

Time and again, mentors talk about the one-to-one nature of the relationship. It is this ability to establish real connections between cultures, based on friendship and a shared commitment to learn from each other, that is at the heart of the success of the scheme.

Likewise, by supporting and enabling mentees on the scheme to find volunteering opportunities, the scheme gives refugees a setting where their skills and experience are valued, at the same time as providing valuable experience of UK working culture and of our culture of volunteering and the importance put on the willing commitment we make to each other.

The potential role of volunteering and mentoring for new migrants

The success of Time Together shows there is a willingness amongst a section of British people to play an active role in welcoming those new to the UK. The success is due at least in part to it tapping into an unspoken willing commitment of British people to help others. Mentoring is a simple and effective way to harness and apply this willingness with practical results for society as a whole as well as the individuals involved.

The experience of refugees who have volunteered also suggests another, broader role for the voluntary and community sector in the development of modern citizenship.

Citizenship mentoring for new migrants

It is our view, based on TimeBank's experience with Time Together and the benefits that it creates, that a mentoring scheme matching UK citizens with new migrants who have started the journey towards gaining British citizenship should be piloted in a number of locations across the country to test mentoring in different migrant populations.

The mentoring relationship should be based on a small number of "citizenship goals" jointly agreed by mentor and mentee. Experience from Time Together of working with refugees suggests these are likely to include:

- **Improving English language skills:** having a native speaker to practice with is one of the best ways to develop a deeper, more comfortable command of the language and its idiom, which in turns simplify day to day interaction with the host community
- **Understanding UK Culture:** as with language skills having a personal local guide to the complexities of life in modern Britain is a highly effective way of gaining a better understanding of the social and cultural norms that we take for granted
- **Accessing local knowledge:** an understanding of local issues and services plays a key role in the integration process. By gaining an understanding of the locality new migrants will become less dependent on services and networks from their home country
- **Getting to know local people:** it is startling how little interaction new arrivals to the UK have with the local community. A mentoring relationship represents a clear, concrete way of establishing relationships between people from different communities, building the knowledge, experience and social capital of both mentor and mentee.

New migrant volunteering programme

Time Together has shown the positive impact that enabling refugees to volunteer has had on their understanding of UK culture and of the importance of volunteering and making a willing commitment to your local community. We think that there would be value in making it simpler for new migrants to volunteer as part of their citizenship journey.

Based on TimeBank's previous experience of supporting people into volunteering for the first time, we think that there is value in establishing a number of pilot schemes that will bring an understanding of how to provide support to individuals who are in the process of achieving citizenship.

The schemes should be focused on helping new migrants into volunteering as well as on building the capacity of volunteering organisations to utilise, to the best possible advantage, the skills and willing commitment that new migrants may be able to make.

Conclusion

This paper has argued that the success of the Time Together nationwide mentoring scheme suggests that there is value in investigating what role both mentoring and volunteering in general could play in supporting new migrants on the route to citizenship and ensuring that this route helps to build a shared sense of belonging to the UK.

The success of the scheme is at least part based on the project's ability to tap into the social utility that is Britain's culture of volunteering and civic engagement. As Lord Goldsmith's Review begins to develop its recommendations it should have in mind what we have termed a willing commitment, which is central to many people's sense of being British, and develop ways to give current British citizens a role and a stake in supporting the integration of those newcomers who want to make a commitment to living in the UK for the long term.

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