



**Participating as a Host City Volunteer:  
perspectives from those involved in the Glasgow 2014  
Commonwealth Games**

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## **Acknowledgements**

This research was conducted for the Glasgow Commonwealth Games Legacy Research partnership by a team of researchers from the University of Strathclyde, led by Robert Rogerson who is research coordinator for the partnership. The initial survey was designed and administered by Glasgow Life with the second survey and interviews being conducted by the researchers.

We are grateful to all the Host City Volunteers (HCVs) who participated in the survey, and in particular to the 27 individuals who gave up their time to provide insights to their experiences before, during and after the Games. This report includes the views expressed by all those who took part, including specific comments they offered. The HCVs volunteers formed an important role in helping the hundreds of thousands of spectators and visitors who came to Glasgow between 23 July and 3 August 2014. We hope that this report reflects their experiences and their opinions, and that it will assist Glasgow Life as it embarks on the next phase of its Host City Glasgow programme, as well helping to inform future event organisers who seek to bring together a team of 'city ambassador' volunteers.

## Introduction

As part of the XX Commonwealth Games in Glasgow in 2014, nearly 1,100 people from across the city were brought together by a team of staff at Glasgow Life<sup>1</sup> to be Host City Volunteers (HCVs). These HCVs had roles during the Games assisting the public to find their way around the city centre and to Games venues, and to help provide them with information about Glasgow. For all of the volunteers, this was a new role, and for some this was their first experience of being a volunteer.

The research from which this report draws was conducted by a small team from the University of Strathclyde which explored the motivation to be involved, participants' expectations of the role and their sense of preparedness, and then during and after the Games, the experiences they had as HCVs. To gain this insight, the research involved three elements:

- An analysis of a pre-Games survey completed by most of the HCVs when they had attended their first training session
- This was augmented with a post-Games survey completed by a sample of these volunteers online and by post.
- In addition, a set of interviews with 26 individuals were conducted by the team, tracking their experiences before, during and after the Games<sup>2</sup>

The HCV form the first part of a three year volunteer development and community engagement programme – Host City Glasgow – which adds to the Games volunteer experience through the planned development of a flexible learning programme entitled *Altogether Glasgow* and designed to encourage more people to get actively involved in cultural and sporting opportunities in the city.

This research is significant therefore for a number of reasons.

First, the study offers important insights into the success of the HCV element in its own right, as an 'ambassador' project designed to help support delivery of the Commonwealth Games in the city. For the participants, this was their point of reference, and the insights they offer provide valuable lessons on how to support them in this role, what they gained from being a HCV, and what they felt their contribution was to making Glasgow's Games the 'best ever'.

Second, in the context of the wider Host City Glasgow project and the city's legacy ambitions for volunteering and community engagement, the research provides some potentially useful insights into the needs for training and development of volunteers, and from the experiences of the HCVs what aspects need to be included in the *Altogether Glasgow* learning programme.

And thirdly, as one of several groups of volunteers having roles during the Games in Glasgow, this study forms part of a wider research project exploring the Games experience and impact on volunteers involved in Glasgow in different capacities – as those volunteers recruited to assist in the organisation and delivery of the event (the Clyde-siders); as members of the cast performing at the Opening and Closing Ceremonies; as Queen's Baton Relay bearers in advance of the Games; and as staff from the City Council who had the chance to undertake different roles linked to the Games. This therefore provides the opportunity to compare the results from the Host City Volunteers with the other groups, the results of which form the basis of a separate report.

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<sup>1</sup> Glasgow Life is a charitable organisation responsible for the management of sport and culture in the city of Glasgow on behalf of Glasgow City Council. They had responsibility for the organisation of the Host City Volunteer programme.

<sup>2</sup> Further details of the method used can be found in Appendices 1 to 3.

## **1. The headline findings**

The volunteers found it to an overwhelmingly positive experience, with 89% (179 respondents) satisfied overall with their role as a HCV, and 95% indicating agreement that they had been proud to have been a HCV.

The best things about the experience were 'meeting people' (78%), being part of Glasgow (50%), as well as helping people, the atmosphere of the city, and being part of the Games

15% of respondents indicated that they had a disability and the inclusive and supportive environment of the teams helped them to feel valued and raised awareness of their contribution to the Games

15% of the respondents had not previously been involved in a volunteer capacity and each of them found the experience positive enough to suggest that they would volunteer at another event in Glasgow if asked and 88% that they would get involved in a local community event if asked.

The HCVs were motivated to get involved by the unique opportunity provided by the Commonwealth Games and the opportunity to socialise/have fun through meeting people but also by the role providing an opportunity to learn more about or impart existing knowledge of Glasgow. In turn their aspirations included acquiring new skills or experience, gaining confidence in themselves and adding to their social networks or generating memories with others.

The 'light touch' training associated with the pre-Games preparation was appropriate in instilling a sense of pride and confidence in the volunteers, and most commented that it was suitable in delivering the essential elements of the role during the Games. More specific information relating to venues and location either at training or during the Games would have helped some HCVs.

The development of teams was supported by training and by most team leaders, but some of the team leaders lacked the expertise, knowledge and managerial experience to help support all members of the teams.

The failure to recognise the contribution of the HCVs at the Closing Ceremony and more generally by other Games bodies beyond those involved in Glasgow Life meant that many HCVs felt their role was devalued, especially in comparison with the Clyde-siders who were frequently mentioned.

## **2. The Host City Volunteers: some background essentials**

### Event volunteering

Few large events are held nowadays without drawing upon the support of volunteers, whether that be assisting in registration and entry, helping with security, or ensuring that spectators and participants are offered to support to enjoy the event. Indeed, such 'event volunteering' has become a significant industry in itself, requiring a high degree of professional organisational skills to recruit, train, schedule and oversee the 'army' volunteers that are important to deliver of an event. For the Commonwealth Games in Glasgow such an approach was evident with the recruitment of 12,500 Clyde-sider volunteers by the Games Organising Committee, Glasgow 2014 Ltd. Similarly, a group of more than 3,000 volunteers were brought together to have a specific role as the cast for the

Opening and Closing Ceremonies for the Games. At one level, the HCVs were also recruited and organised as a team of event volunteers, with specific roles provided and training given to support these roles, and with a professional team (from Glasgow Life) organising schedules and rotas to ensure that the ambassadorial and welcome roles were fulfilled.

A different form of event volunteering

But the HCV project was also different. Research into ‘event volunteering’ has shown that for the most part these roles are time limited and task focussed, with emphasis on the delivery of a role at the event rather than on the volunteer and their development. In the context of a periodic or unique event such as the Commonwealth Games, such a focus is understandable as the volunteers are part of a wider organisation created to deliver a successful event. Although each volunteer may gain some role specific experience, there is a growing critique of this type of volunteering as providing a restricted legacy. In this context, the limited focus within event volunteering on seeing the volunteer’s role in an event as part of their volunteering development has been highlighted. The HCV and associated Altogether Glasgow programmes sought explicitly to address this, focussing not only on developing training and schedules which accommodated individual volunteer needs but also viewed the HCV role as part of longer-term volunteer journey for each of the HCVs,

Recruitment

Unlike the recruitment of the Clyde-siders<sup>3</sup>, the HCVs were not invited to participate in the role through an open public call. Instead, a more targeted recruitment strategy was adopted with the intention that under the programme a more proactive approach would maximise opportunities for local people to feel connected with, and play an active part in, delivery of the Games. This strategy also sought to encourage those groups under-represented in the cohort of Clyde-siders – disabled people, older people (over 60 years) and those living in deprived wards in Glasgow – to participate.

Under this approach, existing networks which had connections with local communities and with the priority groups were approached, asking them to encourage individuals to apply. Along with the Glasgow Life Area Teams, the HCV team worked in conjunction with local networks and community partners, including third sector membership groups such as Glasgow Disability Alliance, Enable Glasgow, Volunteer Glasgow, and Age Scotland and with other public-sector organisations (e.g. Jobs & Business Glasgow, Glasgow City Council Social Work Services supported employment programme, and Social Work Services looked after & accommodated children’s services).

The evidence from the interviews with a selection of 27 HCVs suggested that this approach worked well to reach into and through existing networks (see table below). Whilst a few applied on their own initiative, responding to media and adverts, the majority considered the role by personal recommendation and connections. Most of these were with groups, but in a few cases were less direct, with friends and family providing an important additional impetus to be involved. As one HCV noted “I completely forgot about it until later on they {friends} sent a text out to us.” And for several, they joined along with friends from within the same organisation.

*Recruitment organisations for the interviewees*

Glasgow Ramblers	Momentum Skills pathway	Advert passed on by friend
Scottish Refugee Council	School assembly	HCV team (as friend)
Glasgow Ambassadors	Bridges programme	Volunteer at Emirates

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<sup>3</sup> The Clyde-siders were the Games volunteers recruited and trained by the Organising Committee Glasgow 2014 Ltd to help support them at sporting venues and other Games locations.

Glasgow Life Walk Leader	Young Scot	Community worker with Gypsy families
East End Walking Group	Organising Committee	Local Housing Association
Community group in local library	Glasgow Life staff (relative)	Public announcement in media
Local deaf community		

To be eligible, participants had to live, work, study, or already volunteer in Glasgow city and be 16 years of age as at 1 January 2014. Applicants were prioritised if they had membership of one or more of three identified target groups.

### Roles

The role of Host City Volunteers was to assist with wayfinding and general information for spectators and visitors to the city during Games-time (including information on: games venues; event times; transport links; the 2014 cultural programme; as well as other city attractions and amenities). They were allocated locations in groups deployed along Active Travel Routes, within the high footfall thoroughfares within the city centre, and around the three 'live zones' (Glasgow Green, Merchant City and Kelvingrove Bandstand). In some locations, such as George Square and closer to some of the Games time sporting venues, the HCVs were complementing the support provided by the Clydesiders.

Consistent with the overall ethos of assisting volunteer development, the Glasgow Life organising team sought to achieve a balance between meeting the requirements of the roles to support the Games and offering opportunities for HCVs to experience different aspects of the event atmosphere and acquire new knowledge about the city. Striking a balance between such needs was not easy. The shifts required by each HCV were considered more accessible as they were over shorter time periods than the Clydesiders and each HCV was moved around the city to given them a chance to experience some of what were perceived to be more 'glamorous' (eg close to the Festival 2014 sites) and busy locations (eg in George Square and railway stations).

Although the intention was that HCVs were in areas where high numbers of public attendance and most likely areas for demand from the public for information and advice was most likely, the experience of the HCVs indicates that at times they were in locations which were very quiet, with few people and little demand for assistance. At other times and in other locations, their support was necessary and in high demand, and most HCVs had opportunities to be located in different places across their shifts.

### Organising the volunteers

Glasgow Life was responsible for the planning and implementation of the HCV project - this included the recruitment, training, deployment, and recognition of volunteers. As part of the overall funding, staff from Glasgow Life were allocated to work full time on the project. Additional funding support was provided by the Big Lottery Fund and Glasgow City Council. In addition facilities managed by Glasgow Life were used for training and as check-in hubs during the Games for the HCVs. Training was provided in June and July for all the volunteers, and consisted primarily of role expectations, basic information on the city and preparation for the task. The initial survey conducted immediately after the training sessions indicated that this met the volunteers' needs, providing a good understanding of their expected role as a HCV, with more than 90% agreeing that they were 'ready to go'.

### Beyond the HCVs

The HCV project was designed to form the first part of a wider Host City Glasgow programme which is planned to run from Dec 2013 until Dec 2016. Its aim is to enable Glasgow's communities to engage better with the delivery of future major event opportunities, building on the experiences from the Commonwealth Games and supported by a programme of flexible learning, citizenship, and volunteering. The programme intends to achieve the following outcomes:

- Increased learning opportunities for Glaswegians to understand, develop and sustain local and city-wide concepts of identity and civic pride;
- Increased awareness of and engagement with the city's cultural and sporting assets;
- Increased uptake and active participation by Glaswegians in volunteering and delivery opportunities associated with major cultural and sporting events.

### **3. Report context and structure**

The remainder of this report is structured to offer a profile of the survey respondents who were involved as Host City Volunteers, as well as an assessment of the insights each respondent has provided. This report is divided into sections covering 4 main areas:

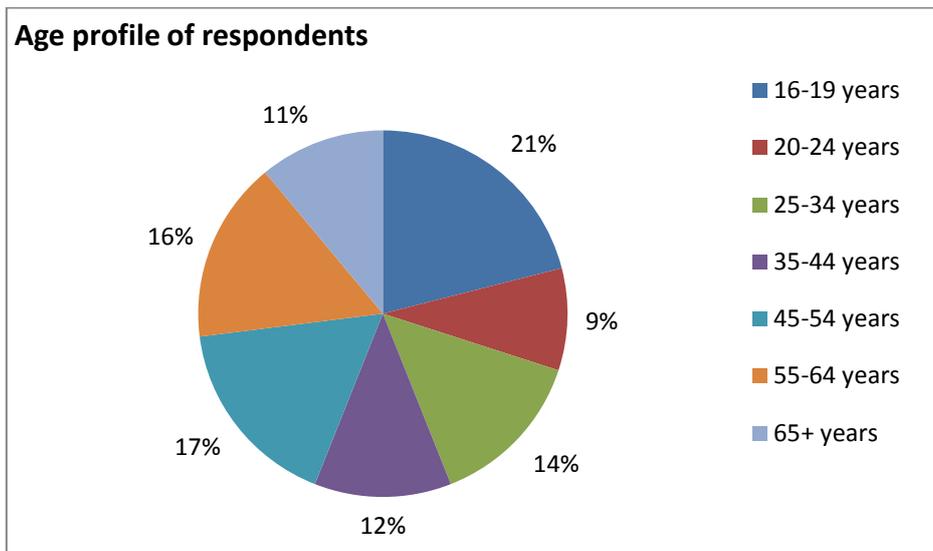
- A profile of the survey respondents, in terms of their demographics and their previous experience as volunteers (sections 4 & 5)
- an analysis of the key drivers or motivations for them to have applied for and participated in the roles and their aspirations associated with their role as a HCV (section 6)
- an assessment of their experience during the Games (sections 7, 9 & 10); and
- a review of what they believe the impact of the Games role has been on them and their aspirations for the future (section 8).

The final sections of the report reflect on the comments made by HCVs to suggest how their experience could be enhanced (section 11) and how these could contribute to future improvement in the programme and to the wider Host City Glasgow project (section 12).

Throughout the report, comments made by individual respondents are shown in italics. An outline of the surveys and interviews used in this study is provided in Appendices 1 to 3 and in Appendix 4 a selection of individual case studies based on the experience of the 26 people interviewed is provided to illustrate specific examples of the conclusions drawn from the surveys.

### **4. The Host City Volunteer respondents**

In total 838 respondents took the opportunity to complete the initial survey and from these 208 volunteers also participated in the second post-Games survey. This represents about 75% of all the HCVs who took part in this role during the event. However, this is not a stratified sample, with respondents selecting both to contribute and to indicate what information they would provide. As a consequence, the results here do not claim to be representative of all HCVs although the high return rate offers some confidence that the insights are applicable to most people involved in the programme.



The age profile of the respondents to the survey suggests a spread across all age groups, And a dominance of females (64%) over males. It was significant that 125 respondents (15%) indicated they had a disability or provided a description of such a disability, which is three times the proportion reported for the Clyde-siders and for the Games Makers for the London Olympics in 2012.

The age profile of the respondents to the second survey indicated a higher proportion in the middle and older age groups (with the 45-54 group forming 24% and 65+ years forming 19%) and a corresponding reduction in younger respondents.

## 5. Reaching out to new volunteering communities?

As indicated, a key aim of the HCV project was to provide opportunities for people in communities who might otherwise be under-represented in other Games related volunteering schemes. The approach taken to reach out to these groups meant that existing networks based largely on volunteering or around community social networks meant that it was less likely that non-volunteers and disengaged members of groups would be encouraged to be HCVs. This was borne out from the evidence in the post-Games survey. Of the 177 respondents who replied to the question asking about their current involvement as a volunteer, only 26 (15%) had no role as a volunteer. For the remainder, their roles as volunteers were mainly within organisations focussed on sports and exercise or health, welfare and disability.

## 6. Why get involved?

Research conducted by the team at Strathclyde with other volunteers connected with the Commonwealth Games has asked specifically why people volunteered, revealing the different

motivations for taking part. For many of those who took part in the cast as Ceremonies Volunteers performing at the Opening and Closing Ceremonies the primary motivation was to “participate in the excitement of the Games”. For those who were volunteers as part of the Queen’s Baton Relay the motivation was different as they were nominated but the sense of honour to be part of the Games was important as was the sense of recognition by communities for their existing volunteering.

The surveys of the HCVs did not ask specifically about motivations, but during the first interview conducted prior to the Games with the 26 HCVs, we explored with them their motivations to be a HCV and also their aspirations on a personal level associated with the role.

As the table below illustrates, although there were some differences in the way they expressed their motivations, they grouped under three headings. First the unique opportunity provided by the Commonwealth Games has motivated many of the interviewees to get involved and several had already applied for other roles (including Clyde-siders and ceremonies volunteers) in order to have the chance to participate in some way with the event. Second, like many other volunteer groups around the Games the opportunity to socialise/have fun is a significant driver, although in the case of the HCVs this was perhaps more explicitly about meeting people. And third, uniquely to the HCV role, is the opportunity of learning more about or imparting existing knowledge of Glasgow.

<b>Motivation to be a HCV – views from the interviews</b>	
1	Primarily I think my object is to meet other people ... it’s not really about doing something good or charitable
2	I just wanted to explore and feel the Commonwealth {Games}
3	To be part of the community, to get involved and basically see what’s happening about the city
4	I kind of like sport and when the opportunity arose I was thinking ...to represent the city I was born in
5	I just wanted to be part of it {The Games}
6	I’ve seen in the last Commonwealth Games in Edinburgh and I won’t see any more, not in Scotland anyway
7	Looking forward to participating
8	Seems like a good thing to do, bit of fun, nothing else to do over the summer
9	I’m interested to work with people.... {and} to improve my language
10	I’m good at interacting with people...also I need stuff for my University application and volunteering and all that goes well when doing personal statements
11	You only get one chance to do it... so any way to be a part of it and help out
12	To get experience of being a team leader... I think it’s an absolute once in a lifetime opportunity, so may as well grab it while it’s here
13	I love the city... I’m heavily a fan of any international event...in my previous work I managed volunteers
14	I’ve done a number of volunteer assignments before... starting with the Special Olympics
15	I have 20 years’ experience ...giving them more lessons and training... so I took the leaders form
16	I wanted to be part of it {Commonwealth Games} and I think the role of volunteer suits me well
17	To meet other people and basically to enjoy... to get a little more confidence as well
18	I’m here to work for ten months in Glasgow ...so I decided to do that to...have an experience because I’m working in the field of events ... to spend time and meet new people ... just enjoy what is going on in Glasgow

19	I've been volunteering for about 40 years... I do know Glasgow so I want to show Glasgow off
20	it's a once in a lifetime chance for me... so I just felt it was a great opportunity to do something, to be part of it ... I'm quite honoured I think to be able to tell people about the city that I live in.
21	judging how well the Olympic Games went... they did say what a brilliant thing to do it was, and, I'm a person who likes to get involved in things, so, suited me to do it, and I work part time, so, I have the opportunity to do it without a commitment, because it is only a short period of time
22	Because it's the Commonwealth Games and it's coming to the city I live in and, I don't know whether it'll ever happen again and it just seems too good an opportunity
23	for the people we are volunteering with [people with learning disabilities], it is a great opportunity to raise awareness to general public that people with learning disabilities do have something to contribute, you know they can be valuable members of society
24	to give an opportunity for them {people with disabilities} to be important in something, you know, as real Glaswegian to be excited about, as a chance for them to get a buzz, be involved, raise their profile, raise awareness among the general public about
25	to build confidence in myself, meeting new people and get involved in the Commonwealth Games
26	Because I couldn't get to {into} the Clyde-siders, so I like the idea that HCV, it wasn't as strict as the Clyde-siders, it was a bit flexible

These motivational drivers were also reinforced by the aspirations which each of the interviewees had in relation to their HCV roles. For many the emphasis was set in terms of personal benefits, including acquiring new skills or experience which would assist them in their career or other volunteering roles, more confidence in themselves and in one case helping them to recover from mental and physical traumas of the recent past. For others their aspirations were more sociable linked with the opportunity to meet and communicate with people, add to their social networks or generate memories with others. Often this involved looking beyond themselves and any personal gain, and in the case of interviewee 16 this was made explicit in the sense they aspired to 'give back' to others through the role.

<b>The HCVs aspirations – insights from the interviews</b>	
1	Meet a lot of really nice people.... probably find out a lot more about Glasgow as well.
2	I want to be more... I spent so many years here but I'm still like an outsider because I was bust with the family and the children
3	Develop new skills. Just understand people better... meet people you would never normally come in contact with
4	Fitness and health, as in mentally and physically
5	Meeting different folk
6	I will get folk from other countries hopefully asking for information on how to get to this venue or that venue
7	Meeting new people...it also keeps me busy from the routine which I had when I was unwell
8	Well it's a bit of practise volunteering, 'cause I want to do a bit more... I've not really done much before

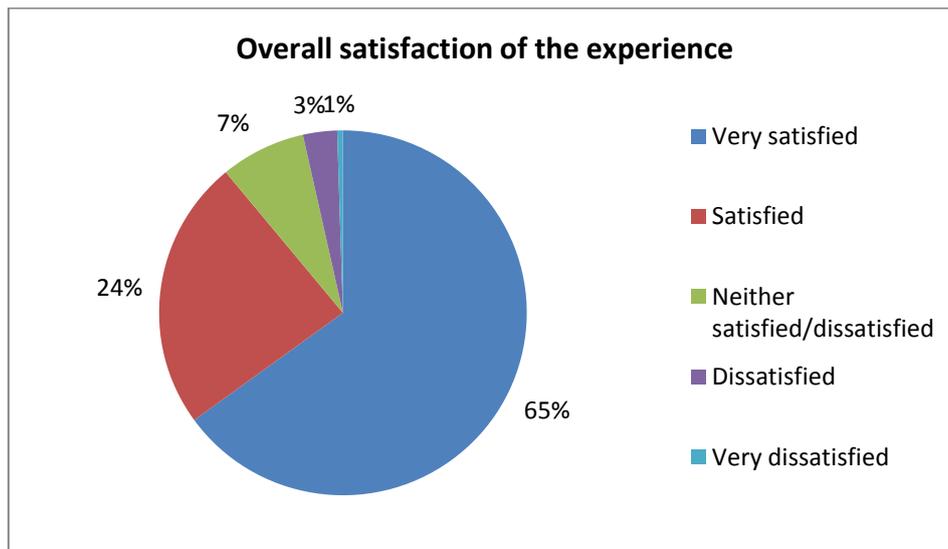
9	Actually to know the places, because I'm new in this community and in the UK, I've only been here less than 8 months, so to know the places I think is good
10	I'm going into the theatre at university, It's more about sort of the confidence and all that, to be able to speak to people, almost to be able to make somebody's day
11	Sort of just a boost in confidence really, I don't really interact with like, people outside friend-zones much... I'm quite shy, so this is something a bit different to kind of help with that, and feel I can talk to other people more.
12	to get experience of being a team leader
13	I'll get to know more people and I'll add more people to my network... I'll know more about Glasgow, and I'll have a chance to see and explore activities and entertainment, things that I wasn't able to when I was working before ... and I still have a passion to inspire people. So if I walked away inspiring the groups that I'm going to meet in doing something with their lives... that's good
14	I want to meet people!
15	I just want to keep busy
16	I think for me it is not so much what I would get but it is about giving back ... I've been lucky enough ... I've got a good job and things like that and I just think is time to give something back to the city.... Seeing that people are really happy and directed in the right direction, that's enough for me, just to be part of it
17	I hope to get more skills, more skills working with people, and working with different cultures as well
18	Fun time ... yes, nothing special, just, nice memories ... when you don't know something is interesting to discover it
19	I've never been in a city while a big event like that is going to happen, and being part of it I think is going to be really interesting, and fun, and really nice memories
20	Just the fact of seeing people smiling, getting to know people, telling the different places of Glasgow where you can go
21	I think just meeting the other people
22	Seeing new people, enjoying these visitors coming to the city and helping finding their way around, for me that gives a big sense of satisfaction
23	Because I'm a team leader I'm getting the opportunity to actually manage people even if this is a short amount of time, I'm getting to manage diverse groups which I think would help me, personally and professionally, so for me is getting an experience that you wouldn't normally get
24	Self-esteem.... It's also a way to create a social network for them, to meet new people
25	the feeling that you do have something to contribute
26	I want to meet and talk to lot with different new people coming into Glasgow

Overall the motivational and aspirational insights offered through the interviews underlined the often individual reasons people had to become HCVs. Whilst themes such as 'taking part in the event', 'socialise/have fun' or 'personal development' capture the essence of the views of most of the interviewees, the evidence here is of more complex interweaving of elements which have drawn them into the role of HCVs.

One of the strengths of the HCV programme has been the ability to appeal to this range of volunteers, enabling them to see benefits of different forms to be achievable through the shared experience of being a HCV.

## 7. A positive experience

The overwhelming view of HCVs responding to the second survey (post-Games) was that their role was a positive experience which engendered high levels of satisfaction. More than 89% (178 respondents) judged their overall experience to be very satisfactory or satisfactory rating this as 6 or higher on a scale of 10 (very satisfied) to 1. Indeed only 7 respondents (4%) identified their Games-related role experience as unsatisfactory overall. In addition, 95% indicated that they had been proud to be a HCV with only 3 respondents disagreeing with the sense of pride in the role.



For this large majority of respondents, the descriptors that were frequently used to capture their enthusiasm were 'unforgettable', 'fantastic' and 'enjoyable', and these were summed up in comments provided by the survey respondents as:

*"A most exciting and unforgettable experience, I am so glad that I was chosen, and had the opportunity to be involved in such a momentous occasion, one which isn't likely to occur again, at least, for many years, if at all."*

*" it was an honour to have been part of an amazing event. People do make Glasgow and I'm proud to have been a part of it. We were the heart and soul of the city "*

*"Thoroughly enjoyed the experience, made me so proud to be a Glaswegian"*

and the overall sentiment for many was captured by one respondent who stated:

*"I have had such a fantastic experience volunteering as a Glasgow city host!. I have gained many skills and knowledge about Glasgow. These fond memories which I have gathered I will continue to share. Thank you very much for the opportunity!"*

Amongst the very small number (7) of HCVs whose Games' time experience was viewed as dissatisfactory, explanations indicated that their rating reflected a sense that the role did not meet

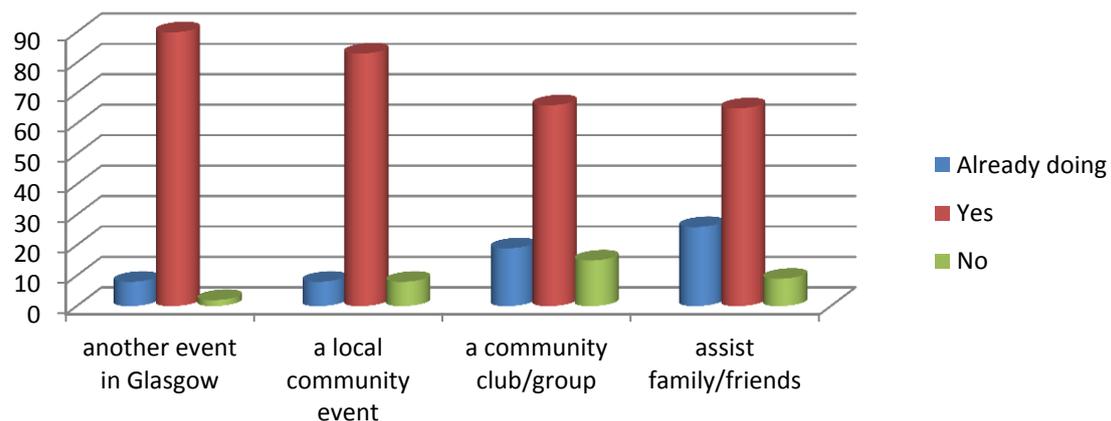
expectation (2 respondents), they had too little information to make the role work for them (3 respondents), and the poor attitude of the public or other volunteers to them (2 respondents). In each case however they identified positive aspects, including those that helped shape other HCVs' experience to be more positive (see below).

## 8. Having a volunteering impact

One of the key goals of the Host City Glasgow project – and indeed a desired legacy outcome from the Commonwealth Games as a whole - has been the desire to increase involvement in volunteering within communities and groups. The second survey (post-Games) explored with the HCVs the likelihood that having been involved in the role their volunteering patterns might change. Each respondent was asked to consider whether, if offered the chance to get involved as a volunteer, they were more or less likely in future to assist with events, community clubs or family.

Across all respondents who responded to the questions, the vast majority signalled their desire to continue to volunteer in future events (83%) and in their community (66%).

### Willingness to volunteer in future if asked



Significantly, for those who had indicated that they were not already involved with local volunteering, the experience of being a HCV was equally positive. Of the 26 people (15% of all respondents) in this category, everyone indicated that they would get involved with another event in Glasgow if asked, and only 3 signalled that they would not do the same if the event were more locally and community based. Such intentions were largely based around the positive experiences in the HCV role.

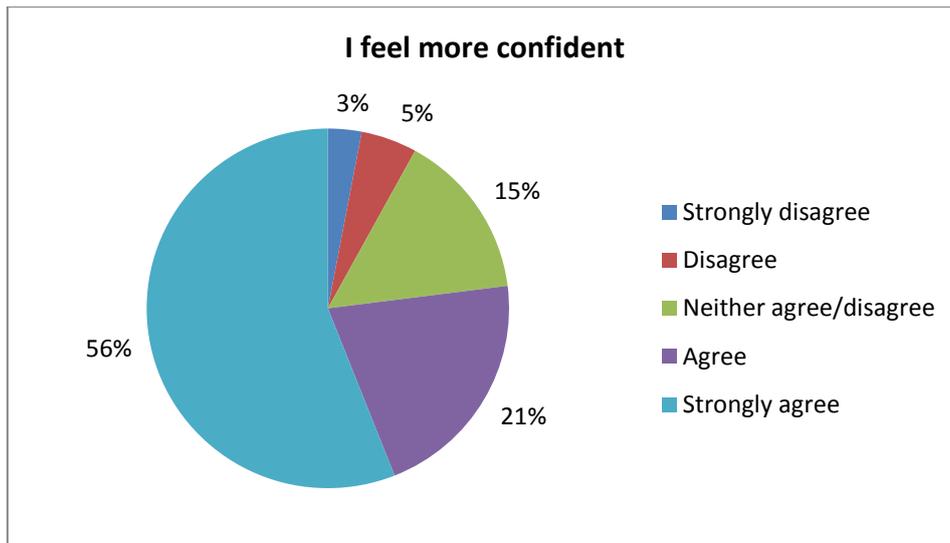
## 9. Getting it right 1 – the best aspects of the experience

Every respondent to the post-Games survey provided comments on what for them individually were the best aspects of the overall experience as a HCV and with only 2 exceptions everyone was able to identify three elements they included in the 'best' list. Of the more than 600 comments, the vast majority reflecting on the active aspects of their role – in meeting people, in helping people, in being part – or of the connection with Glasgow, with new friends and with other volunteers. In contrast to this strong emphasis on the experiential aspects, there were very few comments on the organisational and process aspects of the role.

The most cited positive aspects were ‘meeting’ and ‘people’ (163 of the 208 respondents included this) and ‘being part’ of Glasgow (105 respondents) and the city. As the word cloud below illustrates, the other commonly cited aspects were around novelty, volunteers, and visitors.

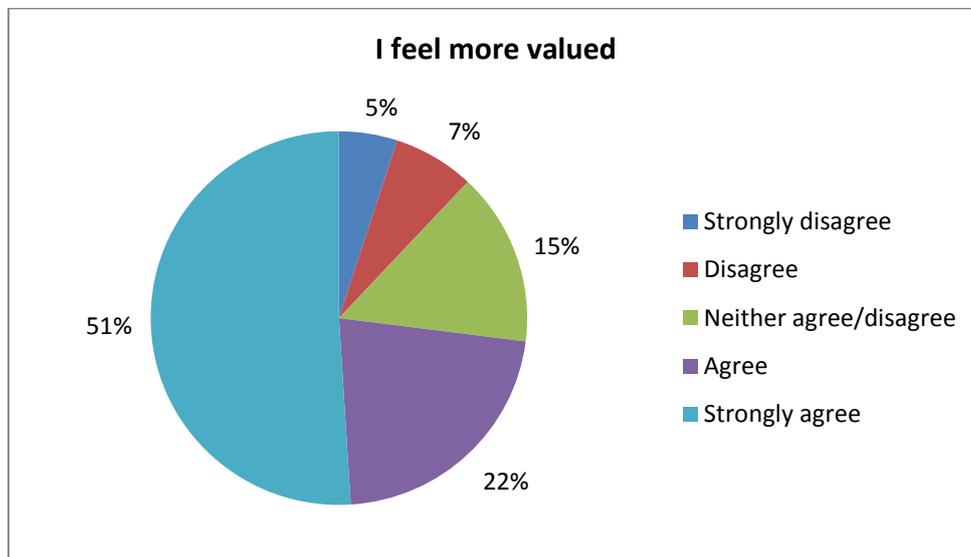


Beyond these aspects which together covered most of the comments made by the HCVs, there were a small number of other dimensions, less frequently cited but which for individuals were identified as important. Some of these reflected the best aspects for them personally, including “gaining confidence in my own abilities” which for 14 people was boosted and for one person this came about as “wearing the uniform gave confidence when speaking to strangers and visitors to the city”. This bolstering may have been mentioned by only a few people, but the surveys indicated being a HCV had helped many volunteers to feel more confident about themselves.



As the figure above indicates, more than three quarters of respondents in the second survey felt that they were more confident having been a HCV.

Similarly, the survey highlighted that across the 208 respondents, there was a feeling that they were more valued as individuals, with only 12% disagreeing with this. The comments made by respondents helped to express this feeling being valued in different ways. For some, this was the knowledge that they could help - *“felt important as I was able to help people”* – whilst for others the benefit was *“working in a team and enjoying fun with members of the team”*.



And there were other more unique aspects which helped to make people’s experience positive. One respondent’s highlights included:

*“meeting “Booby” aka Gavin Mitchell from “Still Game” three time... Meeting Ashleigh Nelson’s sister at Central Station. Ashleigh was in the England 4x100 women’s relay and won bronze.... {and} David Grevemberg and his family meeting me in Glasgow Green.”*

For another HCV the best part was *“being picked up and hugged by a South African guy after their big hockey win. He remembered me helping them earlier.”*

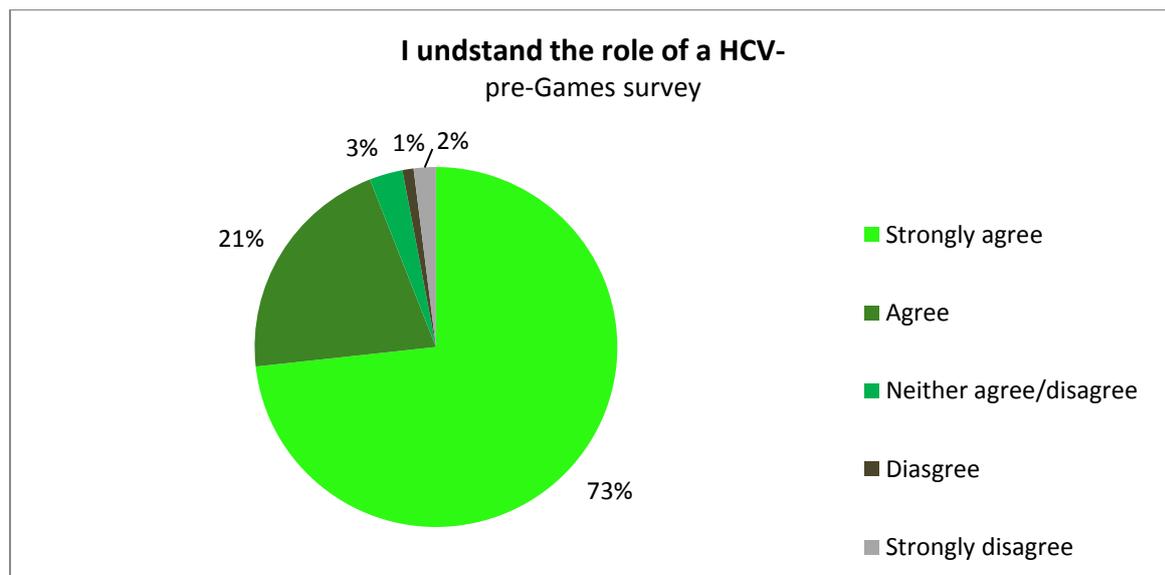
More typically, the experience was one of new opportunities that helped change their horizons – *“Seeing parts of Glasgow I had never been to”, “getting to know my own city better” and seeing people with disabilities being able to volunteer”.*

## 10. Getting it right 2 – the best parts of the training

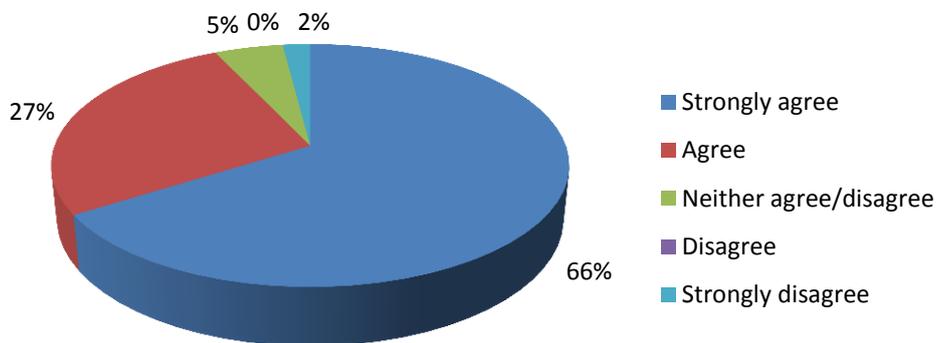
Preparing the volunteers for their role during Games time was inevitably going to be a balance between a ‘light touch’ approach and a programme which aimed to develop well-equipped volunteers. The adoption of the former approach by the HCV team was both a conscious one reflecting on the nature of the HCV role and the diverse experience brought by the volunteers themselves. It was also a programmatic one, reflecting the limited time and resources available to support training and the desire not to extend the commitment in time required from the volunteers. The light touch approach therefore sought to ensure volunteers had sufficient knowledge, information and confidence to approach the role with a positive attitude and then learn specific aspects as the role unfolded.

On balance this approach worked well. Three indicators highlight that the training provided was viewed by HCV respondents as ‘sufficient’ for them to start the roles feeling confident and proud of their roles, that during the Games they felt supported to acquire additional training and support as they felt necessary, and on reflection after the Games were able to identify many good aspects to the training which allowed them to feel so positive about the overall HCV experience.

The initial survey conducted immediately after training session asked the 838 respondents to identify how strongly they agreed that they now understood the role and expectations of them as HCV. As the figure below illustrates 3 in 4 agree strongly and only a small proportion (3) disagreed.



### Are you 'ready to go'?



Similarly in advance of the Games, the majority of respondents also indicated that they felt 'ready to go' and be a HCV.

The experience of the HCVs during the Games – both those who were interviewed and the respondents to the second survey – also underlines the appropriateness of the support available to the volunteers.

The third indicator of the value of the training to the volunteers – and the ultimate test – was a strong sense after they had fulfilled their roles that the training had included many valuable and positive elements. With each of the 202 respondents in the second survey being asked to identify up to three 'best' aspects of training, 433 comments were provided by 162 HCVs. These comments were broadly divided into three areas: those reflecting on the specific content of the training; those that focussed on the process; and more general comments about the benefits.

#### a) Training content

For more than 40 respondents the value of the training session included the acquisition of new knowledge – about the city, about the venues and locations, and about the role. The provision of the information booklet, variously described, as seen by more than half of these HCVs as useful and helped to give them a sense of preparation and confidence as they found it assisted them in answering questions. And this was reinforced by the FAQs for a dozen respondents. The health and safety component – or as several respondents commented *“being told more about what to do in certain circumstances”* or *“informing what to do in various situations that might arise with the public”* - was also well received and helpful, although as noted *“(text missing?)”*

#### b) The process of training

Although attracting fewer comments, there were some insights into the value of the training being fun - *“having fun”, “relaxing”, “keeping motivated”* - and comments about the expertise of the training staff, all positive. Indeed, it was a balance between enjoyment and comfort that those training were knowledgeable which led several respondents to indicate that the process was *“an inclusive opportunity to everyone whatever their abilities”* and was *“engendering a feeling of being part of the larger whole”*.

#### c) Benefits from training

Whilst training also provided benefits to some of greater awareness of the roles, reassurance and confidence that they could do the role, the benefit of training lay less in the content and more in the

opportunity to meet people. With more than a quarter of all respondents mentioning it, they valued the chance to meet the staff and team from Glasgow Life and in particular other volunteers. Reinforcing one of the motivations for the HCVs to get involved in the role, a recurring 'best' part of the training was the first chance to meet others, to learn together about roles, to get to know others who they were going to 'work' with, and "working together in teams".

And thus overall the view provided by the survey respondents was that the approach taken to training worked very effectively – instilling the appropriate level of confidence and understanding that was required to encourage individuals to be proud to be a HCV; a suitable balance between enjoying meeting others and gaining essential knowledge, and developing the support that was needed by the HCVs in carrying out their roles. This is not to suggest that all aspects were perfect (see 11 below for some of the criticisms of training and possible improvements) but to reflect that for most of the HCVs involved in this research, they felt a suitable balance was achieved that meant they fulfilled their roles and felt satisfied they had been suitably trained.

## **11. Areas for improvement**

The above analysis points to the generally very positive outcome for most of the HCVs and to their pride in having a role within this once in a lifetime event. However from the surveys and the interviews it is also clear that for the HCVs a number of aspects of the organisation, the experience and the impact have had some impact on their overall feeling of satisfaction in a 'job well done'.

In the post-Games survey, respondents were asked to identify up to three aspects of the overall experience which they felt were 'worst' and also to provide similar assessment for the training provided in advance of the Games.

### Training as Host City Volunteers

It is indicative of the overall positive assessment of the training that 40% of respondents to the post-Games survey did not identify any aspect to comment upon as 'worst' and only 50 people (25%) provided three areas of criticism. And also importantly in advance of the Games, respondents to the initial survey felt overwhelmingly happy with the level of training.

However, despite their initial sense of being well prepared, the comments made by respondents cluster around a few areas which could be improved in relation to future volunteering schemes. These related primarily to:

- The provision of more specific information and knowledge in terms of the location of events
- More development skills required for the role
- Greater emphasis on team building
- Improving the quality of team leadership and team building

#### a) More information, greater knowledge

This aspect was mentioned by more than half of the respondents who made comments, and typically the comments made related to the challenges experienced in their role in answering the questions and queries asked, and their own sense of frustration that they did not have sufficient insight and in-depth knowledge to respond satisfactorily. Comments such as :

*"There should have been more street knowledge given, some volunteers were quite unprepared and didn't know Glasgow"*

*“better information on the areas you were working in”*

*“Knowledge of bus routes and timetables”*

*“knowing some insights about games and schedules”*

were typical, but perhaps this ‘worst’ aspect was most aptly summarised by the view of one respondent that:

*“The overall training was far too general and left us, particularly at the beginning, struggling with questions to do with venues, transport, and other detailed enquiries.”*

In addition to this there were comments on the lack of practical information required to undertake the role itself, including “Knowing with more advanced notice where we would be working”,

#### b) Development of skills

Alongside the comments on information, a dozen respondents noted that they felt the training session provided limited development of skills required for the role. Three examples were offered to illustrate this:

*“more examples of kind of questions I might be asked”*

*“How to approach strangers when offering leaflets, maps and information”*

*“preparing people for navigating around the areas in which they will be working in, as they may not know the area well”*

As one respondent summed up this sentiment,

*“I feel more importance could have been attached to the volunteers' skills - there did not seem to be any sense of allocating us to where we would be best suited”*

#### c) Building teams

Recognising that the HCVs were organised into teams, a range of comments were made about the desirability for greater development of teams and the organising of the groups as units. Some respondents noted the need for more of this in the training session but others offered specific advice:

*“team building activities to have been more inclusive (building a team with the person sitting next to you wasn't exactly difficult)”*

*“More time to socialise with fellow colleagues” and “More interaction to get to know people”*

*“small groups with team work games etc”*

Such development would also assist in addressing other concerns including the desirability of support for those who had not volunteered before (*“a mentor with them for a day would have been better”*) and more opportunity to be able *“support volunteers working with fellow volunteers with disability (seen or unseen)”* and foster greater interaction within groups (*“balance older volunteers with younger volunteers”*).

d) Improving team leadership

As noted above, the skills and capability of the team leaders was a significant factor in shaping aspects of the overall experience for some HCVs. Comments were provided too about team leaders in relation to training – both from those who were involved as such and from other HCVs. Most of the comments focussed on the expectation that team leaders should have had more experience and knowledge than the rest of the team. Typically therefore comments indicated that to achieve this:

*“More consistent Team Leader training - as this impacted on the Host volunteer”*

*“Some training specifically for Team Leaders as I felt quite uncertain during my first few shifts”*

*“Think the team leaders should have received more training and been based in one area so they could know what is around them”.*

The overall experience

Each of the 202 respondents in the post-Games survey were encouraged to provide up to three elements which they felt represented the ‘worst’ aspects of the experience. To ensure that each person actively considered this, a response was required to proceed to the next stage of the survey. Even so, 29 people indicated that they wished to identify nothing under this category, and a further 26 provided only one comment and 33 only two comments. As one person commented *“nothing – not even rude people or the rain dampened my spirit”* whilst a few others stated *“everything was good”*.

As might be anticipated given the different weather conditions experienced in Glasgow during the Games, this was the most mentioned element of the HCVs’ roles with most commenting on the rain, some on the heat, but others noting *“on the whole we were very lucky”*.

More significant as a lesson to be learnt, the second most mentioned aspect was the time spent by the HCVs in quiet locations where few people passed. For some this led to boredom and for others instilled a *“feeling rather helpless in certain quieter locations”*. As one commented *“I had a shift on the High Street where we have very little to do”* and another based at the Mitchell Library felt the shift was *“pointless”*. Most however felt that this was an underuse of their time and amongst those who had this experience there was also a sense of frustration that they could not take initiatives to move to other locations where their time and resources could be better utilised. In part related to this, more than a dozen respondents felt that shifts were too long to stand in one location without any activity.

Other organisational factors were also highlighted by smaller numbers of people – the quality of the snack and food (although as many respondents indicated that they were grateful of the food and

water), the sense of disorganisation at times in organising shifts and in particular the late provision of information on shift locations.

More generally however there were comments made about the selection, training and skills of the Team Leaders by nearly 20 respondents, with many indicating that *“some team leaders didn’t know what they were doing”* and *“lacked previous volunteer management experience”*. For most the absence of guidance or advice, and at times the presence of the team leader, left them uncertain about how to make decisions. On the other hand, those who had been team leaders also noted the number of HCVs who were late or did not turn up, or felt they lacked enough information to help support the team. One Team leader for example, felt that *“I wasn’t always told about the special needs some of my team members had ... I could have helped people more if I had some information beforehand”*.

And perhaps indicative of the overall sentiment of the responses were comments made by three respondents each of whom had raised the issues mentioned above – *“2 weeks was too short”*, *“it had to end”* and *“It was over too soon”*.

#### Other improvements: recognition

Across the surveys there was an absence of much comment on the uniforms (in contrast to other volunteers at the Games who were more critical of their attire) and indeed having to wear a uniform was viewed positively. It helped to generate a sense of pride, to provide identity as a team, and one respondent noted to give them confidence to overcome their natural reserve in dealing with people.

Whilst this provided recognition in the role, the main criticism in this respect was the lack of formal acknowledgement of the HCV contribution by others beyond the HCV team. There was praise for the recognition within the programme and by the Glasgow Life/HCV team, but what irked many of the respondents was the lack of similar appreciation in other contexts.

In particular, the lack of recognition by the OC and those involved in the Closing Ceremony was noted across the surveys and interviews. The comments mirrored those of other volunteering groups who felt that only the Clyde-siders were acknowledged in the formal vote of thanks by the Games and Glasgow officials with neither the Glasgow 2014 Ltd or the City Council representatives mentioning the HCVs in the Ceremony.

Typically, comments made highlighted these aspects of recognition:

*“The city volunteers were almost a second class to the Clyde-siders, not fair”*

*“Lack of recognition by the press and organisers. It was all about the Clyde-siders”*

*“HCV’s struggling to gain recognition as Glasgow 2014 and GCC’s emphasis in press/tv mostly on Clyde-siders and gave the impression that the 15,000 CS’ s were the only volunteers of importance”*

*“Complete lack of recognition of the role and work done by Host City Volunteers by anyone other than the Host City Volunteer organisers”*

*“Lack of acknowledgement at the closing ceremony for HCV”*

*“No recognition - not just HCV but all the other volunteers that weren't a Clyde-sider”*

## **12. Ensuring learning from the HCVs at the Games – some recommendations**

Bringing together a group of volunteers in the relatively short period of time available to the HCV team that reached out into the target groups inevitably was going to be challenging. The use of existing networks and partner organisations was relatively effective in ensuring the profile of the HCVs included many from these groups. The support provided of these groups and the wider HCV team was supportive, encouraging and appreciated by those involved and all assisted to ensure for the vast majority of HCVs the overall experience was positive and gave them a sense of pride in the role.

The overwhelmingly positive experience for the volunteers was testimony to their enthusiasm, their commitment to make the most of the opportunity, and the time and effort of the HCV team to support them in their roles. Although not everyone's experience was entirely positive, the criticisms provided – mainly in a constructive way – offer important insights into how relatively small changes could improve the experience for the volunteers and the effectiveness of the project as a whole. In giving the HCVs a voice, this report has sought to illuminate some of these points.

This final section takes this learning and presents a set of broader recommendations which seek to balance improvements specific to the event programme and to the wider Host City project.

### **Recommendations for the HCV project**

- The approach taken to recruit targeted groups across the city through existing networks was effective in reaching out to many of these groups. However, in so doing it failed to reach many first time volunteers and instead the HCV programme drew heavily on existing volunteers. More time and resources may in future have to be allocated to use networks within other partner organisations to reach and support those who have not previously volunteered to become engaged in a HCV type project. For those with no volunteering history suggests that the support mechanisms in the HCV team enabled their first experiences to be positive and encouraged them into future volunteering.
- The transformation of the volunteers into a ‘team’ is most likely to be achieved by appealing to the volunteers’ main motivations for involvement. Alongside being part of the event, the desire to have fun and enjoyment, to socialise and meet new people, and to feel some self-fulfilment is important. The HCV training team recognised this but not all the team leaders were effective in taking this forward during Games time. Greater training of the team leaders in their supporting role should be considered in future.
- Recognition of the time commitment made by volunteers and the potentially limited amount of time available to volunteer was acknowledged in the shorter and more flexible shift patterns of the HCVs. This was appreciated by volunteers, and comparison made with the less flexible approach for Clyde-siders. This approach enabled most of the HCVs interviewed to participate and longer shifts would have excluded several who had other commitments
- The overall positive experience of the HCVs provides a strong platform to ensuring a volunteering legacy from the project. Although an already committed group of volunteers, the HCVs were encouraged by their experience as part of the Games to be more involved in volunteering in future. Retaining this enthusiasm will require providing in the near future

opportunities for all HCVs to continue to volunteer – and for mechanisms to be set up to ask them to participate.

- Much greater recognition needs to be given to the volunteers for their role and contribution within the context of the wider event. At a minimum this needs to be of a similar level to that provided to other volunteers associated with the Games and to be made publicly to the volunteers at the end of the Ceremonies or Games. The HCV team's own approach to providing recognition within the HCV project was positive and well received but the HCVs were part of the Games and this was not sufficiently acknowledged.

### **Recommendations for Altogether Glasgow programme**

The focus of this research has been on the HCV project specifically but as the above suggests there are potentially wider lessons to be learnt that might assist in the development of the Altogether Glasgow programme which seeks to extend training of volunteers as ambassadors for the city into the future. With its focus on longer term training and development, the Altogether Glasgow project will provide the opportunity to move away from the short-term and role focussed approach that underpins event volunteering to date.

This contrasts with the HCV project and therefore learning from this is perhaps limited to a few key areas – about recruitment and motivation, about the provision or training, and the nature of the roles available for those who attend and complete the Altogether Glasgow programme. This report concludes by drawing out some lessons from the experiences of the HCVs in each of these three areas.

- Recruitment and motivation – most of the HCVs were motivated to get involved because there was an opportunity to participate in a unique and special event in the city and many were recruited because they were approached personally. In the absence of such a specific driver and a personal approach, it is unlikely that many would have participated. This evidence reinforces the attraction of event volunteering, as it offers a time limited and focussed contribution to a much larger project. The challenge faced by the Altogether Glasgow programme is to identify equivalent motivational drivers and to develop a recruitment approach which encourages individuals to feel invited.
- Training and personal development – the HCV project included a light touch training programme lasting only a few hours and it was evident from the first survey results that for most of the HCVs this met their (initial) expectations and there was little appetite for further training at this stage. However, as they began to fulfil their roles deficiencies in their knowledge and in training provided were evident and there was greater appreciation that more training would have been of assistance to some. The challenge in developing a longer training programme is making the participants feel that the training is valuable. The HCV experience suggests that practical dimensions are required to raise awareness of the value of the training and an appreciation of their own individual needs.
- Volunteer roles – one key dimension of the positive experiences of the HCVs was that their roles were clearly articulated and defined from the start. Expectations (by each volunteer) were realistic and the overall experience largely met expectations. This was relatively easy to achieve when the volunteers roles were known from the start and the approach to volunteer management designed to meet such need. In the absence of this, and more typical of general volunteering, there is a need to find ways in which expectations of roles/opportunities are shared.

## Appendix 1 : Research methods

This research was conducted between July 2014 and September 2014 and included two questionnaire surveys and face to face interviews. Together these explored how the HCVs felt about their role as a HCV, about Glasgow and about themselves as well as capturing their experiences of the role during the Games. The intention was to provide insights into their expectations and aspirations for the role and after the event as future volunteers.

The first questionnaire survey was design and administered by Glasgow Life and handed to each of the HCVs as they completed their training session in early to mid July 2014. Almost all were completed at the time and the survey was designed to capture their sense of preparedness for the role, including knowledge and confidence. 838 people completed the survey, representing 78% of those who had a role as a HCV. As part of this, each was asked if they were willing to participate in subsequent research and 628 indicated their willingness and these formed the population for the second survey.

This post-Games survey (details in Appendix 2) was devised by the research team in consultation with Glasgow Life and sought to identify the overall experience in the role as HCV and their intentions in relation to future volunteering. Some of the questions were shared with comparable research on other Commonwealth Games volunteers, enabling cross-referencing in terms for example of their existing volunteering roles. This survey was made available online (although hardcopies were provided by request) and an invitation to complete was sent by email to each of the 628 HCVs who had expressed a willingness to take part. 208 completed the survey, a response rate of 33%.

In addition to the surveys, 26 people were contacted in advance of the Games to request their involvement in face to face interviews with the research team before, during and after the Games. The selection of these interviewees was in consultation with Glasgow Life and represented a cross-section of HCVs in terms of age, ethnicity, disability and previous volunteering experience. An initial sample of 30 people was approached, with 4 declining the invitation. In each case the interview was semi-structured and the HCV was encouraged to shape the conversation. All (with one exception) was recorded – the one was recorded in note form by the researcher.

The first interviews were held prior to the start of the Games on July 23 at venues across the city which were convenient for the interviewee with most being conducted at the location from which they had to pick up their HCV uniform. The initial interview (see Appendix 3 for the schedule used for the three interviews) focussed primarily on their motivation to be involved and their expectations of the role, but the conversation closed with insights on how at this stage they saw the role assisting (if at all) in their volunteer journey.

The Games time interviews were arranged on a personal basis with each HCV and most were held shortly after the end of a shift. The location thus varied but primarily were held in cafes and city venues selected by the HCV. The focus on this interview was on the experience of the event and the role, capturing the detail of their individual experiences. Some of the interviews took place after only 1 or 2 shifts, whilst others had completed a few more shifts as HCV.

The post-Games interviews were held within 2 or 3 weeks after the end of the Games (ie mid to late August 2014). They were designed to encourage reflection of the HCV experience, the role and expectations, as well as some discussion on future plans.

## Appendix 2 – Post-Games (second) survey

### *Your role as a Host City Volunteer during the Commonwealth Games*

Q1 Please indicate how you found your role as a Host City Volunteer?

Please move the indicator to show your score. 0 = very unrewarding and 10 = very rewarding

\_\_\_\_\_ Rewarding role for yourself (1)

\_\_\_\_\_ Rewarding to be part of the Games (2)

\_\_\_\_\_ Rewarding to be part of Glasgow (3)

Q2 What would you say were the BEST things about your time as a Host City Volunteer? (please list up to three)

Q3 What were the WORST things about your time as a Host City Volunteer? (please list up to three)

Q4 Overall how satisfied were you with your overall role as a Host City Volunteer?

\_\_\_\_\_ 0 = very dissatisfied and 10 = very satisfied (1)

### *You and the Glasgow Commonwealth Games*

Q5 Please use the scale below to indicate your view on each of these statements having been a Host City Volunteer, with 0 =strongly disagree and 10 = strongly agree

\_\_\_\_\_ I am proud to have been a Host City Volunteer (1)

\_\_\_\_\_ I know more about Glasgow having been a Host City Volunteer (2)

\_\_\_\_\_ I feel more connected to Glasgow (3)

\_\_\_\_\_ I have more pride in Glasgow having been a Host City Volunteer (4)

\_\_\_\_\_ I feel more confident having been a Host City Volunteer (5)

\_\_\_\_\_ I feel more valued having been a Host City Volunteer (6)

### *The Host City Volunteer training*

Q6 What were the MOST HELPFUL or USEFUL aspects of the Host City Volunteer training (please list up to three)?

Q7 And what aspects of training would you like to have been improved? (please list up to three)

### *Yourself as a Volunteer*

Q8 Please indicate if you have been involved as a volunteer with any of the groups listed below?

- hobbies/social club (1)
- sports/exercise groups (eg as coach, assistant) (2)
- local community group (3)
- groups for children/young people (4)
- adult education groups (5)
- groups for older people (6)
- environmental/wildlife groups (7)
- health, welfare, disability groups (8)
- political groups (9)
- trade union groups (10)

- religious groups (11)
- musical groups (12)
- book club (13)
- other (14)
- not involved in any groups (15)

Q9 Thinking of the future, if offered would you get involved as a volunteer in:

	Yes (1)	No (2)	Already involved (3)
Another event in Glasgow (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
a local community event (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
a local community group or club (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
assisting family/friends (4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

*About You*

Q10 Are you

- Female (1)
- Male (2)
- Prefer not to say (3)

Q11 What is your age group?

- 16-19 years (1)
- 20-24 years (2)
- 25-34 years (3)
- 35-44 years (4)
- 45-54 years (5)
- 55-64 years (6)
- 65+ years (7)
- Prefer not to say (8)

Q12 Do you consider yourself to have a disability?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)
- Prefer not to say (3)

Q13 Please add any further comments in relation to your role as Host City Volunteer

## **Appendix 3 - Host City Volunteers - Research interview Schedule**

### **Interview 1 – pre-Games**

**Purpose: to explore motivations for involvement with Host City Volunteers (HCV) and their volunteering histories.**

Structure/topics:

I am interested to know what made you decide to be a Host City Volunteer

- Why did you want to be part of the HCV programme?
- What (or who) encouraged you to do this? Did you join the HCV on your own or with others?
- What additional support (if any) has helped you to be part of the programme? Did you ask for these?
- What did you hope personally to get from being a HCV?

(Previous experience)

- Have you been a volunteer before – in any setting?
- Are you involved with a role in your local community? What role(s).
- Are you involved as a carer in your family?

We are planning to meet with you during the Games, so it would be good to hear from you what you hope to experience from being part of the event.

- What do you think will be the most exciting part?
- Is there any part you are not looking forward to?

Once the Commonwealth Games are over, how do you think you might use your experiences as a HCV?

### **Interview 2 – Games time**

**Purpose: to gain insights on how the experience of being a HCV is impacting on volunteering (ie generating a legacy)**

Structure/topics:

Tell me a little about the role(s) you are having as a HCV?

- What are the most exciting parts? What made these parts exciting?
- Are there any part(s) that were not as good as you expected? What made them so?
- What would you do differently to improve this?
- Overall has the experience so far been as good/better or worse than you expected?

As the training provided before the Games helpful now that you are involved?

- Have you learnt more about Glasgow?
- Do you feel more proud to be Glaswegian as a result of being involved as a HCV?

Looking ahead after August 3, how do you think you might use your experiences as a HCV?

### **Interview 3 – post-Games**

**Purpose: to identify what volunteering has occurred after the Games and how the experience is shaping plans for the future in terms of volunteering (legacy)**

Structure/topics:

Looking back to the Games and your time as a HCV:

- Do you have good memories? What stands out for you as the best moment(s)? Do you talk about it much with your friends and neighbours?
- Was there anything that you found bad about the experience? Why did you feel this?
- Would you want to get involved again if there were another chance to be a HCV? What sort of event... or does that not matter?

Has the experience encouraged you to be a volunteer in another way... perhaps in your local community or family? If so, what have you found rewarding in this role?

What support (if any) would help you to take on future volunteering roles?

If not, are you planning to take on such a role? What would encourage you to do so?

## Appendix 4 – Some HCV case studies

Male A

### **“good experience, met some new people, thumbs up!”**

A senior school pupil who was initially keen to be a Clyde-sider but when the HCV programme was announced at school took the decision to go along and see. No previous volunteering experience but had assisted family in caring and had been on Adventure Scotland courses.

**Pre-Games expectations** – uncertain and limited to “Probably just... meeting loads of weird and wonderful people” but got excited when trying on the HCV uniform for the first time.

**Games time experiences** were described positively, although over the 4 shifts there were many quiet times. The highlight was assisting in George Square where there interaction with others, including Clyde-siders and OC staff.

His initial apprehension in talking to people, and not know answers to questions disappeared over the shifts. In the role, he learnt that even if he did not know the answers to questions like ‘ which bus to take to xx’, he could be helpful by pointing out the correct bus stop and how to find out information on the bus. Over the four days, his confidence grew – especially when he realised that we was helping people and others could not – “I thought the Clyde-siders would know directions, but they were all from London! So they didn’t really know anything about where things were”. As he summed up the experience “towards the end, after I’d spoken to loads of people it was like ‘ I can at least try to help people’. I should be able to find someone that can answer”

His **highlights** included:

“talked to athletes and all that. Met Billy Connolly! 3 Jamaican athletes and one from New Zealand”

“Towards the end of the (second) shift, one of the head Clyde-siders came up to me and said right somebody gave me these earlier, they couldn’t make it to the events, and he gave me 3 tickets for swimming and two for athletics at Hampden!”

**Post-Games reflections**

The HCVs: “the people I was working with as well, all quite friendly and good jokes and all that! Helped pass the time when there weren’t many tourists about, it was good to be able to sit and talk to the other volunteers.”

Myself: “I feel much more comfortable, like approaching strangers.”

Female A

### **“I know my community, how they do things”**

A recent migrant to Glasgow, she is struggling with English language and for her the role as HCV offered a chance to “learn more about people, and to improve my language. So actually if you’re out talking to people, it improves your language. You can know different kinds of people, how do they behave. This is the best way to do it.” She volunteers with a food bank in her local community and finds this a way to be part of a community.

**Pre-Games expectations** – the role as primarily a means “to volunteer or to do something in such big Games, to be involved” but was also a chance to be able to say that she has done something for Glasgow and learnt about the city.

**Games time experiences** met expectations with a sense that she was involved in something “well organised, {and} what they’ve done with us has been very professional” which helped to give her confidence. Although language barriers were an issue, the more difficult issue was her (initial) very limited knowledge of Glasgow but was comfortable referring questions to other members of the team as well as the team leader.

Overall, during the Games, she summed up the role excitedly “Oh yes, I am happy to see different people, because I like to work with people”.

Her **highlights** included:

The lovely team leader and “I got on well with the rest of the team... very positive”

“I have learned a lot, because I didn’t know that street... {and} I hadn’t been there before or gone along the street. I’ve been to new places”

#### **Post-Games reflections**

The HCVs: she enjoyed the interaction with other HCVs, learning about “Scottish customs”, about places and gaining confidence in the use of English language – “even my listening skills are better now.”

Myself: “I like to work with people, and now I’m focusing on studying nursing, and you have to work with and interact with people, so we have to know and understand the community. I feel much more comfortable, like approaching strangers.”

Male B

### **“knowing that you’ve done a worthy cause”**

Already involved with volunteering under a Glasgow Life programme, he was keen to get involved with the Games, and had attended a first audition to be part of the cast for the Opening Ceremony. The HCV role however suited his fitness level better and he was encouraged by a volunteer coordinator to apply to the HCV programme. As a long resident of the city, he saw the role as a chance to give back some his knowledge during the Games.

**Pre-Games expectations** were split between those involved meeting people – “speaking to people from other areas and different countries” – and a chance to change perceptions of Glasgow, especially the east part of the city. He hoped that the HCV role and the Games “certainly will open the horizons for Glasgow and its city dwellers”.

**Games time experiences** were a blend of very positive aspects and some which he felt could have bene improved. He enjoyed the interaction with the public, offering assistance at Glasgow Green and feeling that he was helping out others in the HCV team, including supporting the (younger and less experienced) Team Leaders. However, “I was expecting more people” and he found that there were too many helpers in the area – “It’s overcrowded with volunteers you know” – to be effective. he also found some interaction with the public difficult – “sometimes I felt like a bit of a fish out of water” – but recognised that this was part of the experience.

His **highlights** included:

“I’m meeting members of the public... an all-round feel good factor”

“Nothing makes me more proud than people coming out of the Games with a bit of happiness on their face.”

#### **Post-Games reflections**

The HCV role was enjoyable and he was proud to be part of the event and the city but the overall reflection was of doing “the best of my capabilities” without a sense of euphoria. He would do it again!

Myself: “I feel a lot better now than what I did, you know, a number of years back.”

Female B

**“it was much more than I expected it to be”**

A long term volunteer, she has been involved with previous sporting events in Glasgow. She was asked by a friend (who had not previously volunteered) to consider the HCV role. For her the motivation was an opportunity to use her knowledge and experience – “for me it is not so much what I would get but it is about giving back ... I just think its time to give something back to the city”.

**Pre-Games expectations** were limited to “just seeing that people are really happy and directed in the right direction, that’s enough for me, just to be part of it”.

**Games time experiences** more than lived up to her expectations – “So far has been absolutely better than expected it has been an amazing experience, very good, lots of people from all over the world ... all really good, it was excellent” and even more enthusiastically “, absolutely brilliant and as I said I’ve done volunteering from over 20 years, so I’ve done ... special Olympics, I was at different venues, but this is way up ... it has been amazing”. In contrast to other sport event volunteering, she found the atmosphere of the HCV programme very different, “really good at the same time ... more interacting ...people are just quite happy to stand and talk about sport, their experience and different things”

Her **highlights** included:

“the atmosphere, and just the team working ... everybody just got together and just worked together and has been a huge success as far as I’m concerned”

**Post-Games reflections**

The HCV role: “I made new friends, I gained a lot of more knowledge about what goes on during the Commonwealth Games”. But she found the selection of some of the Team Leaders difficult to understand as “had never volunteered before” and lacked leadership skills.

Myself: “I’ve applied yesterday for the Ryder Cup, I do the International Badminton {and} we’ve also been asked if we want to help out at St George square when the Christmas festivities is on, so, every weekend is probably taken up with volunteering which is great”.

Female C

### **“it was just a great experience”**

Now retired, she is involved with a number of local community volunteering projects, seeing her role as volunteer as a means to be occupied.

**Pre-Games expectations** were expressed as “the excitement ... being out there, meeting all these different people, not knowing, you know, who you’re going to meet, what questions you’re going to be asked ... just there to be, in the middle of it ... something I can leave to my family, like ‘I’ve done this’” but with a quiet confidence that she was ready to meet the challenge of the role and looking forward to having new company to assist.

**Games time experiences** surprised her with the enthusiasm of the HCVs, the role and the city: “Absolutely amazing, absolutely amazing, it’s been buzzing, is all I can say, just buzzing, the excitement, It has been marvellous”. Although “standing around can be very tiring” she found the excitement of the city infectious “everybody is happy, they all looking forwards to whatever [is happening], I think it’s just seeing the amount of people ... it’s brought a huge boost”.

Her **highlights** included:

“the atmosphere, and the team working ... everybody just got together and just worked together and has been a huge success as far as I’m concerned”

#### **Post-Games reflections**

The HCV role: for her the chance to meet with others was a real benefit “it doesn’t matter whether you don’t know the other volunteer but they are here in friendship, chat, you know, that’s fine everybody is in happy mood, quite enjoying, you know, the excitement of it”. And for her “the organisation has been amazing”.

Myself: “I think I feel that I’ve been part of something that, you know I’ll probably never see again, I’m quite proud to be part of it, so, I feel a bit different, I think , again, just it was good to be able to prove you know the city, and maybe I know a wee bit more that what I did”.

**“I’m just delighted that I had an opportunity to do it”**

As a novice volunteer, but an active person, she was keen to get involved with the Games in city, but could not commit the time required for other roles. Her motivation to be involved was built around her pride in the city, especially its cultural facilities and its international reputation. She took the initiative to apply independently of any organisation.

**Pre-Games expectations** were focussed on “seeing new people, enjoying these visitors coming to the city and helping find their way around” and “I think the city wants to be shown in a very strong, positive way to the world and this will, I hope, bring, it will have a legacy”. In contrast to many other HCVs, she does not express any expectations of the role itself.

**Games time experiences** consequently surprised her. Although “I’m really really happy there’s a wonderful buzz in the city, probably even better than my expectations”, she found herself being more proactive in the role than she imagined, caught up with the enthusiasm around her. “... I’m asking people how are you, how you doing, do you need to have any information, I’m doing that rather than waiting for people to come to me”.

Her **highlights** included her other HCVs:

“the guy was an asylum seeker that I was with yesterday and I thought he was brilliant, I learn so much from him that I didn’t know about Sudan ... and then the girl I was working with was retired ... she was telling me about her life and what she was doing ... but I like that, I like chatting with different people. so it was good”.

**Post-Games reflections**

The HCV role: “I absolutely was thrilled with the diversity of them, the fact that there was a lot of people from other ethnic minorities which you can see, and, and also that there were a lot of people with disabilities, and with their helpers as well, I just thought that was brilliant”.

Myself: “loads of good memories, probably mostly to do with emotion ... meeting different people from different places. ... I just loved the way that a woman of my age was able to interact with a very young person, an asylum seeker guy, and ladies women that were from different background cultures than me”.

Female E

### **“being a deaf a person and doing it, I think I achieved it”**

She is deaf and had never been involved as a volunteer and although interested in the Commonwealth Games coming to Glasgow felt reticent about being involved as she is shy. In a bold decision, she applied to HCV programme as a new opportunity – “it’s really for experience and confidence for myself “. Looking forward she had a sense both of excitement and nervousness about her ability to fulfil the role.

**Pre-Games expectations** were expressed as “I really don’t know what to expect, I don’t know what the experience would bring ... obviously it’s the first time volunteering so... we’ll see how it goes” but with the hope that as a HCV “I want to meet and talk to lot with different new people coming into Glasgow”.

**Games time experiences** provided the supportive environment that she hoped she would find. “Oh it’s been really exciting ... I’ve learnt a lot, we need to learn quickly because ... I felt a little bit strange, I didn’t get a lot of information, just the maps ... where everything was so you can get people advice, but the people weren’t angry and anxious about, they were all very patient ... people have been good to me, they’re always smile and happy so it has been great”. She found the role supportive and well supported, and enjoyed the interaction with people – “really dealing with different people, different sports events. to see everything that is going on ... meeting new people”.

Caught up in the midst of the role and the experience, she found reflecting on the highlights and benefits difficult.

#### **Post-Games reflections**

The HCV role: “First I would say starting out was quite bad, just because of the confusion I didn’t have much experience, I was just told to go and doing it, I went straight to the job, I wasn’t sure what to do first, eventually I got the idea and I’ve got up to the rest of the volunteer group ... it took me a time to grasp the situation”. However, by the end of the HCV roles, she had “a lot of good memories ... and it makes me really happy I did it”.

Myself: “It definitely developed during the CWG, that experience itself, it just gave me so much confidence, more understanding in myself, you know, [and knowledge in the sport’s area] that I can pass to grandchildren and nieces and nephews, I never understood that before that so it definitely encourage me to do more”.

Female F

**“nothing really life-changing”**

As a volunteer and paid employee involved in sport events internationally, she was motivated to be part of the HCV programme more out of curiosity - “I’m here to work for ten months in Glasgow but I don’t know many people in the city, and it’s not my city, I’m not in love with Glasgow, so I decided to do that to do something in the weekend during the Commonwealth Games and have an experience because I’m working in the field of events so it’s always a good thing to see how it works in other companies or other associations, organisations”.

**Pre-Games expectations** were expressed in terms of “fun time”, “special memories” and a chance to discover what Glasgow is like during the event.

**Games time experiences** were worse than expected and dampened (despite the enthusiasm around her) by the lack of information and commitment. She expressed that as “from my point of view it was too boring ... maybe because of the fact we didn’t have too much information to handover so we were just waiting, we couldn’t be proactive and we couldn’t go to people being exciting about because we didn’t know about what to be excited”.

They also found it difficult to feel part of the event “people are happy to see us when they have some questions, but I think it is hard for people to see that sometimes we are here and we can help them, because, you know, We don’t have the Commonwealth Games uniform, so we have something with ‘host city volunteers’ but it doesn’t mean a lot ... it’s like you are not part of the Commonwealth Games so why I should ask you”.

**Post-Games reflections**

The HCV role: with their experience of events, she was more negative about the HCV role “the training was not really useful, to be honest, because it was more about ways of acting, like, common sense things... but we didn’t get like, information about events, games properly, roads closed”.

Myself: “the main positive thing for me is that is going to help in in my job because it’s what I’m doing ... organising events and having many people together so I could really see how it was working, how people were interacting to each other”.