

Sports Volunteering Research Network

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Office for Civil Society

The Big Society – *The role of the Office for Civil Society (OCS)*

Supporting Civil Society to be involved in the Big Society, by:

- Making it easier to set up and run a charity, social enterprise or neighbourhood group.
- Making it easier for the sector to work with the state.
- Getting more resources into the sector.

The Big Society – why?

The Prime Minister, 18 May 2010

- “You can call it liberalism. You can call it empowerment. You can call it freedom. You can call it responsibility. I call it the Big Society..... The biggest, most dramatic redistribution of power from elites in Whitehall to the man or woman on the street?”

The Big Society – what?

Big Society = Empowered communities +
Increased social action + Opening up
public services.

The Big Society –how?

- Not just government ! However Government has an enabling role.....

Empowering communities

- Localism Bill.
- Releasing spending data.

Opening up public services

- Mutual's.
- DWP Work Programme and DfE Free Schools.

The Big Society –how?

Promoting Social Action

- Community organisers and community first.
- The Giving White paper and new funding and encouraging civil servants to volunteer.
- National Citizen Service – for 16 year olds.

The Big Society – volunteering.

Opportunities

- Removal of barriers/ red tape.
- Bigger focus on volunteering.
- Some new forms of funding.
- Open to new ideas – technology and reciprocity

The Big Society – volunteering.

Challenges

- Less funding overall.
- National vision vs local implementation.
- Reduction in volunteering levels since 2005.
- Measurement.

Questions



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