

What the reviewers said about *Ages of Voluntarism*

Charlotte Clements, *Reviews in History*, no. 1226.

For policy makers, examining the various ways that the sector and state have interacted and formed partnerships might inform how government seeks to influence the voluntary sector in the future. The *Ages of Voluntarism* does not offer ready-made policy, but a set of examples and precedents from which a number of different directions could be indicated. It also demonstrates how the sector mobilises and adapts to anything which central and even local government might care to throw at it, including spending cuts. The lesson for policy makers is clear, that despite numerous attempts by the state to influence and perhaps control the sector, voluntary action will always reconfigure itself to work independently as well as in partnership with the state, with the flexibility and diversity to do both and much more. It will endure and change, just as these articles show it has done for the last hundred years.

Georgina Brewis, *Voluntary Sector Review*, 2012.

Together, the chapters in this volume make a strong case for the ability of voluntary organisations in Britain to continually adapt and reinvent themselves when faced with changing social, economic and political circumstances. Moreover, the chapters provide a set of very useful case studies on neglected areas of voluntary action history. . . . The *Ages of Voluntarism* provides a series of essays which will be useful not only for historians but also essential reading for researchers of the third sector in Britain today.

George Campbell Gosling, *Contemporary British History*, 26:2, 2012, pp. 255-256

. . .the real strength of this book is its tight focus on its core theme: the continuous yet changing contribution of voluntarism to civic participation in modern Britain. It ensures that anyone with an interest in today's 'Big Society' debate — whether from historical, social policy or political perspectives—will find this book essential reading.

Oliver Blaiklock, *Twentieth-Century British History*, 2012

These essays make a vital contribution to the growing historiography of Britain's voluntary sector in the twentieth century and, in so doing, raise a number of important questions for proponents of the recent 'Big Society' programme.

Martin Earley, *Economic History Review*, 63:3, 2012, pp. 1184-5

. . . interesting, fresh, and often original collection.