

# SMEs as a Resource for Volunteering

Tom Levitt

Author and Consultant on Cross-Sector Working  
*United Kingdom*

# An idea of scale

£350 million  
US\$600m

The turnover of Manchester United, the world's fourth richest football club



The turnover of just 15 UK charities (of 160,000, i.e. 0.01% of them)

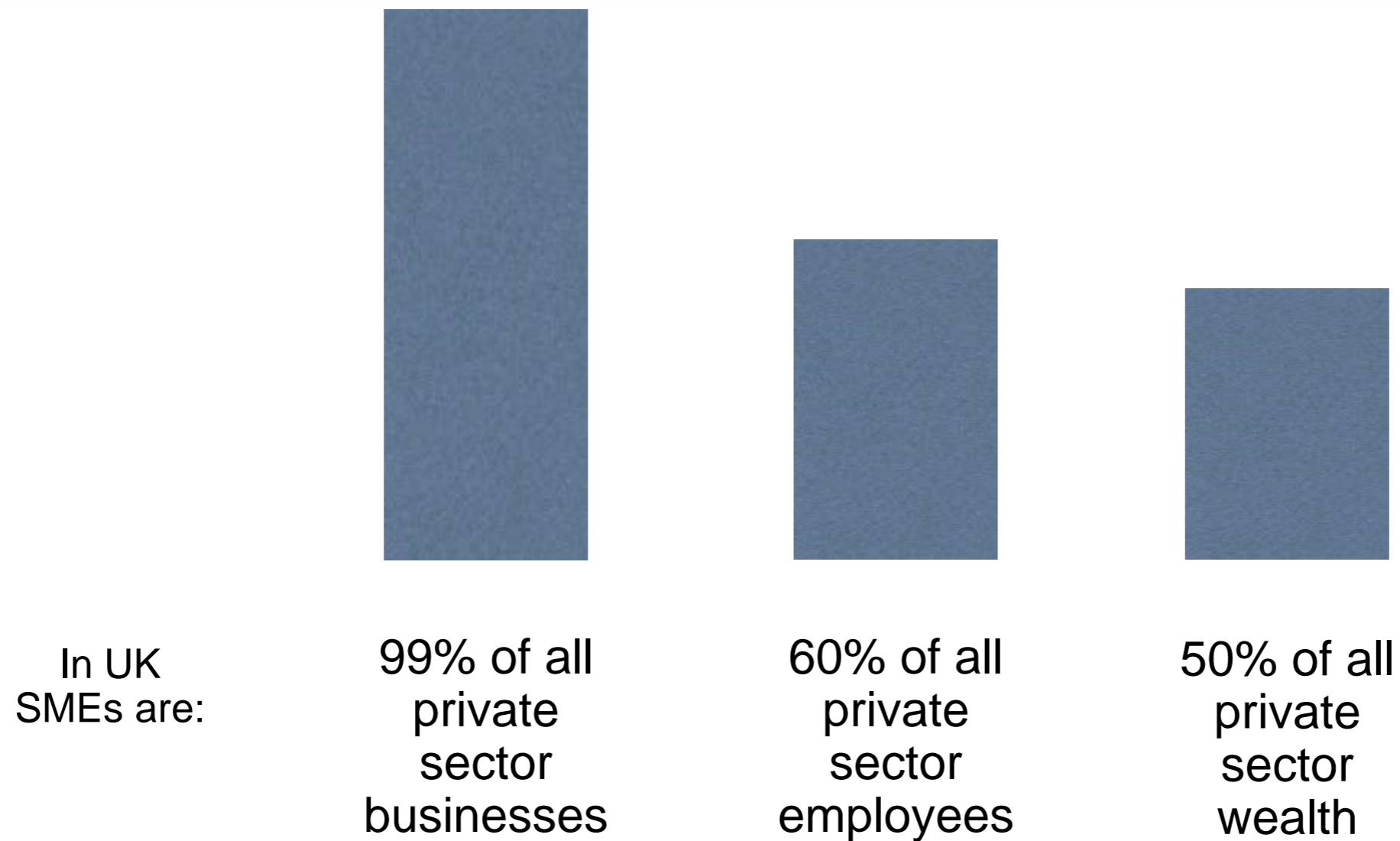


The turnover of just **ONE** medium sized Tesco store



*80% of all charities have a turnover of under £100,000*

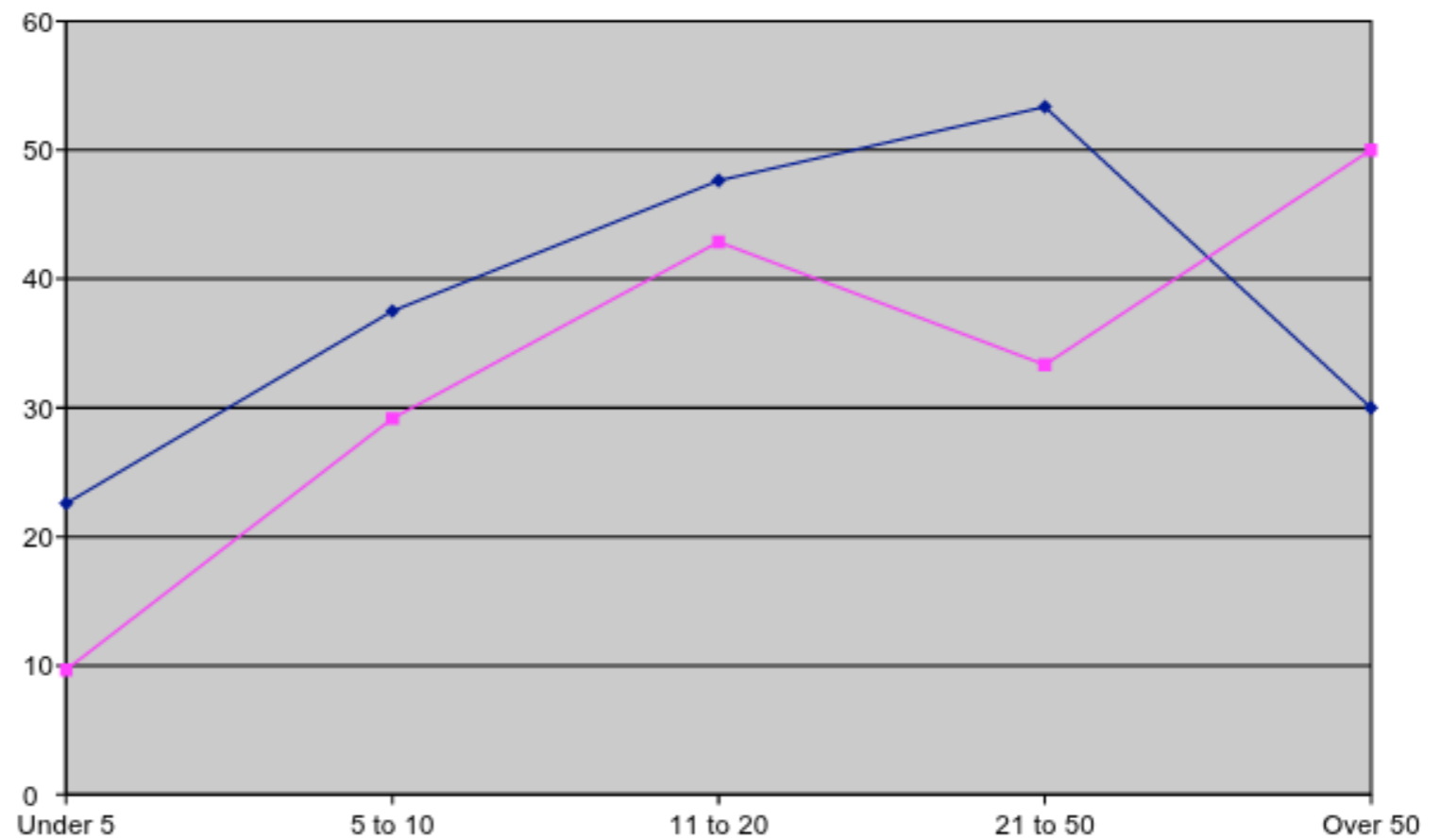
# The Private Sector



*...but SMEs are a virtually untapped resource for the voluntary sector*

# Time vs Skills Volunteering

Incidence in  
SMEs in  
Bradford and  
York  
(Levitt, 2012)



Company size (employees)

Pink line - time volunteering

Blue line - skills volunteering

# SMEs do engage with communities

But in ways which are...

- reactive, not proactive
- ad hoc, not strategic
- not called 'CSR'
- not related to business case.

# SME attitudes

- More than half think it's **RIGHT** for business to engage with the community
- Half say they **COULD** do more
- Only a fifth say 'none of our business'.

# Barriers to SME engagement

- Shortage of time and other resources?
- Inadequate knowledge
- Lack of good practice exemplars
- Not a priority for leaders
- Experience of 'the begging bowl'.

# The business case for community engagement

*Is as strong for SMEs as it is for corporates...*

**Reputation**

**Innovation**

**Partnerships**

**Compliance**

**Employee engagement**

*Reduced sickness time off*

*Improved productivity*

*Greater loyalty*

*Attract higher calibre*

*Develop new skills*

*Longer tenure*

*Team spirit*



# SMEs have resources

Facilities

Tools

Surpluses

Skills

Equipment

Training

Waste

Space

Time

...and money

# Thank you for your time



?

Tom Levitt

Author, 'Welcome to GoodCo', Gower 2014

[www.sector4focus.co.uk](http://www.sector4focus.co.uk)

[sector4focus@gmail.com](mailto:sector4focus@gmail.com)

[@sector4focus](https://twitter.com/sector4focus)