

# Volunteer Management and Volunteering for all

## Welcome to handbook 4 of the Volunteer Development Handbook/Toolkit

The aim is to provide tested resources for supporting the development of a robust and compliant volunteer management programme. These resources have been compiled to complement **Handbook 1** and we hope that they are a useful addition to the checklists.

The aim of all the handbooks is to provide a set of tools that will support the development of volunteering programmes in a sustainable, achievable and **strategic way**. This should make it easy to assess what stage your volunteering programme is currently at, as well as offering guidance towards developing a strong volunteering programme.

The handbooks are based on the **Cotswold Canals Connected volunteer development strategy** - a vision for volunteering along the Stroudwater Navigation canal that can be applied to any organisation involving volunteers.

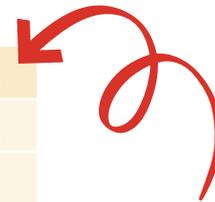
**Handbook 4** continues with three sections: volunteer management, 'all volunteering: being inclusive' and an **Appendix** of the handbook.

Please use or adapt the tables included to fit your needs.



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## 4.1 VOLUNTEER MANAGEMENT

When we talk about volunteer management here in the broadest sense, this encompasses all the engagement you have with a volunteer – from the early planning and recruitment stages, through onboarding, training, and ongoing support, right up to a well-managed exit. Regular reviews of all stages ensures that these processes work for both your organisation and your volunteers.



### Roles and responsibilities

Volunteer management is a very broad topic and you are likely to have several people involved with different aspects.

### Volunteer management roles and responsibilities RACI chart

Responsible – Accountable – Informed – Consulted

	Role w	Role x	Role y	Role z
Marketing				
Recruitment				
Induction				
Supervision				
Training				
Exit				

Please note that each of these can be split up into different tasks that might be carried out by different people, so you might want a corresponding RACI for each.



The standard was developed with leading volunteering agencies and forms the basis for good practice. Even if you are not considering undertaking the accreditation process, we recommend you have an awareness of the standard. Find out more here: [Home - Investing in Volunteers](#)

## Planning and evaluation

Good planning makes sure you have thought of all aspects of involving volunteers in a specific project and have everything in place to make it a success for your organisation and an enjoyable experience for your volunteers.

Follow this website link for useful info on projects and volunteers:

[An introduction to our volunteer projects - Volunteer Centre Sutton](#)

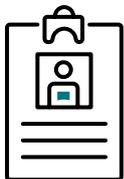


Volunteers should not be seen as **a replacement for salaried staff**. Their needs, wellbeing and safety must be a priority when thinking about creating or updating volunteer opportunities. *Volunteers want to benefit from giving their time, e.g. through social interactions, gaining skills or physical activity.*

## Role descriptions

There are several reasons why you should have role descriptions for **all your volunteer roles**. They include:

- They will help you work through the detail: what the role entails, what skills you need, what you can offer and what support and resources you need to provide (e.g. DBS check, PPE)
- Informing the narrative used for marketing the role
- Provide clarity for volunteers and a clear understanding of tasks and expectations, and help them decide if the role is right for them
- Help to inform the induction and training needs
- Support you in case of any issues further down the line, e.g. if you need to have a conversation with the volunteer about their attitude or behaviour



Make sure that the role description is written with volunteers in mind. It is **not a 'job description'** i.e. a contracted and salaried role.

Volunteer role description template and guidance:

[Volunteer Management Toolkit - Volunteer Centre Sutton](#)

## Evaluation

It is important to evaluate your volunteer programmes. There are different ways to do this which don't have to be onerous.

- **Informal conversations** with volunteers at different stages of their volunteering journey.
- **Polls** – to gather feedback and thoughts in a quick and simple way.

Volunteer **surveys** are usually longer and more in-depth and therefore require more time and thought to set up and analyse.

For a good overview: [The Ultimate Guide to Writing Better Volunteer Surveys - VolunteerPro](#)

Sports England resources for volunteer surveys:

- Volunteer survey guidance: [volunteersurveys-v6-25-01-18.pdf](#)
- Bank of sample questions: [sample-questions-final.pdf](#)

## Marketing

In this context, marketing refers to where and how you promote your volunteering opportunities. It's a crucial consideration, as it largely shapes who your volunteers will be.



There is a separate section for recruitment which deals with the processes for when a potential volunteer contacts you. Both marketing and recruitment are interlinked, as are other aspects of volunteer management.

How can you get your volunteers to spread the word? They are your most effective advocates and it is a good idea to try and encourage them to **tap into their networks**. You could ask them to forward or repost a social media post, put something in a WhatsApp group or display a poster on their community noticeboard or in their local supermarket.

## Contact details

Make sure your contact details are up-to-date. Use an **email address** linked to your organisation (rather than a private email address).



Some people do not have easy access to the internet or do not use email, so it is good practice to list a **telephone number**. If you don't have a dedicated phone for your organisation, consider using a second SIM card, so that you can better distinguish between private and work calls; also set clear boundaries at what time the phone gets answered, so that you can protect your wellbeing.

## Audience

Successful businesses know who their customers are and how to speak to them; the same applies to voluntary organisations. When thinking about a new role – or advertising an existing opportunity – consider who you need in terms of skills, attitudes and time availability.

The 'Digital marketing tips for volunteer coordinators' ([march-2025-notes-digital-marke](#)) recommends to determine who exactly you are trying to attract:

- Retired professionals with time?
- Students wanting experience?
- Parents with a few spare daytime hours?

Create a simple **"volunteer persona"** — name, age, goals, values, interests, lifestyle. Use this to guide your tone and messaging.

You can look at your existing pool of volunteers in a similar way; there might be a clear **profile** emerging of a 'typical volunteer'.

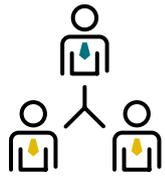
Go to [Volunteer Practice - Volunteer Scotland](#) for some useful recruitment ideas.

### Clear communication

Being clear about what you are communicating is key to successful recruitment. Charity Comms offers a comprehensive guide with useful examples, practical tips and links

[Accessible communications: A starting point for fostering more inclusive comms | CharityComms](#)

Giving thought to the clarity of your communication, such as choosing an easy-to-read font and steering clear of jargon, will help potential volunteers understand what you require.



### Inclusive recruitment

In your organisation, there may be a range of different volunteering opportunities that will suit a variety of people. Consider **highlighting roles which are flexible** in regard to time commitment and/or location that might speak to a different audience. It might attract a different type of volunteer, e.g. those with physical or mental health challenges. It could be, that members of the public mainly associate your organisation with practical work outdoors so you might want to highlight other opportunities such as office or home-based roles.

As part of your consolidation or experimentation stage, you might like to consider **linking up with local organisations** and NHS services to offer volunteering for their beneficiaries. These could include NHS mental health guides, social prescribers, veteran support groups, those supporting care leavers or employment guides. Have open conversations with professionals and potential volunteers about any support needs and be honest in your assessment if you can meet these needs.

You can also post opportunities here:

[Gloucestershire's Inclusive Online Space: You're Welcome Gloucestershire](#)

Barnwood Trust offers funding to support organisations *'who work alongside, create opportunities for, and are passionate about creating positive change for disabled people and people with mental health conditions'* [Grants for you - Barnwood Trust](#)

### Design of recruitment materials

The design of your recruitment materials needs to **speak to and grab the attention of your audience**. Try and be consistent with your message, tone and branding (e.g. logo, colours, font) so that people **recognise you instantly**.



There are different tools available to help with graphic design, even if you are not a graphic designer. Canva is an easy to use tool that allows you to create posters, leaflets, presentations, social media graphics and much more. Everyone can create a free account; registered charities, CICs and others can apply for a free Pro account which gives access to all templates, photos and other features and you can save your organisations brand elements. There are helpful tutorials as well.

[Home - Canva](#)

## Online recruitment



### Website

A good starting point is to make sure that your website and its volunteering page(s) are **up to date**, including your contact details. Your website is a valuable asset and gives potential volunteers a first glance into your organisation's aspirations and culture.

Here are some things to include on your volunteering page(s):

- General overview of what's involved
- Benefits
- Testimonials from current volunteers
- Photos of people carrying out tasks
- Videos (e.g. the volunteer video you were gifted by CCC)
- Contact or registration form
- Specific roles you are recruiting for, including role descriptions and application forms (if applicable) – this could be linked to the corresponding description on Go Volunteer Glos

You might want to look into **search engine optimisation (SEO)** – including key words on your website so that you can rank higher in Google (or other search engine) searches.

### Social media

Social media platform algorithms change. Unless you have a paid comms officer, you will struggle to keep up, so choose the one **platform that works best** for you and is frequented by your target audience and stay proactive. Post **regularly** to **engage** your audience. Bear in mind that your social media channels also fall under your **safeguarding** and code of conduct protocols so any content needs to be **monitored and managed** to comply.



Paid advertising can be useful to reach people in a certain locality or with certain interests.

### Newsletter

A newsletter is an **effective way** to communicate with volunteers, beneficiaries and/or the wider community. There are dedicated **platforms** that support the management of newsletter lists in accordance with GDPR, e.g. Mailchimp, Brevo or MailerLite. They can generate sign up forms that you can include on your website and social media channels, helping you generate new sign-ups without any more work for you.

### Volunteer recruitment platforms

There are spaces dedicated to **advertising** volunteer opportunities, e.g.

- Go Volunteer Glos – run by Gloucestershire VCS Alliance: [Go Volunteer Glos](#)
- Reach Volunteer – for skills-based volunteers and trustees: [Reach Volunteering](#)
- LinkedIn: [Post jobs | LinkedIn for Nonprofits Resource Hub](#)
- Glos Jobs: [Gloucestershire Jobs](#)

You might also be able to share volunteering opportunities in **local networks**, e.g. Know Your Patch, or Gloucestershire VCS Alliance for trustee vacancies.

**Recruitment via physical materials and in person**

Other ways to advertise other than online and two templates to build on:



- Flyer
- Poster, e.g. on parish noticeboards, libraries, supermarkets
- Stall at local fairs and events
- Press release
- Parish magazines and free local magazines
- Radio

**Your types and places of advertisement**

Type of marketing	Place or business	Contact name	Contact details	Comments	Who is responsible?	Done?
Poster on noticeboard						
Website						
Social media						
Network						

**Events you attend to promote opportunities**

Event	Date	Contact	Who is responsible?	What are you going to do?	What resources are needed?

**Recruitment**

**Recruitment process**

Your volunteer recruitment procedures should be appropriate to the role, easy (for both your organisation and the applicant) and fair. The idea of the process is for both sides to get to know each other.

### Basic recruitment requirements

Give some thought to the type of volunteering role you are recruiting for. **The time and effort** taken to recruit your volunteer **should match the role itself**. Signing up to a family volunteering session, helping out with an event or as a general work party volunteer, requires essential information e.g. contact details, any health concerns and an emergency contact for the day. This can be done on the day where appropriate (although pre-registration is better practice).

If you are recruiting for a role with added responsibility such as a team leader or a trustee, you will need to have robust **processes in place** to make sure that you have the **right person** for the role before investing time and effort into inducting, training and allocating tasks that carry a responsibility towards the organisation.

You should always state your commitment to safeguarding in any communication about volunteering. Follow the **safer recruitment practices**, including DBS and reference checks. (See Handbook 3: Safeguarding and Health & Safety.



#### Easy and clear

Standardising your processes ensure you don't have to reinvent the wheel every time you are recruiting new volunteers. Have all your forms and communication ready to go including standardised emails. A data management system could do these things for you.

From the perspective of a potential volunteer, all information and next steps should feel clear and timely, supportive and personable. It's a good idea to have someone available who can speak to any potential new volunteer if any questions arise.

### Ensuring fairness

Standardising your processes ensures that they are fair to everyone who might be interested in the role. However, this needs to take into account different backgrounds, skills and abilities, and there should be enough flexibility for people to use different formats or be supported with their needs.



Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust use TeamKinetic to list their volunteering opportunities. Potential volunteers can easily see what is involved, where it is, what skills are needed, perks and benefits, travel information and if there is a DBS check involved. Once a potential volunteer is registered, they can apply easily for any opportunity.

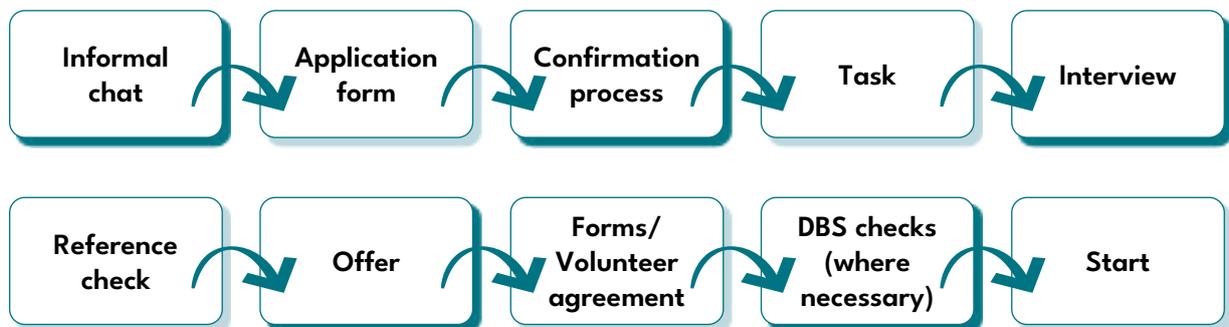
[GWT Team Kinetic](#)

Below are two examples of a recruitment process – one is for a role that just requires turning up on the day, the other is for a role-holder working with children or vulnerable adults. Both are acceptable and anything in between is, of course, possible - it all depends on what the role requires and the process at the start needs to be clear to the volunteer.

Example of a recruitment process for a **'light touch' role** (e.g. attending a work party):



Example of a recruitment process for a **role that is more involved** (e.g. team leader, trustee):



### Saying goodbye early in the process

If either party feels that the role is not a good fit, that is fine. You could consider offering a **different role** that might be more suitable, or **signposting** to another organisation. It is likely that the feeling is mutual, although maybe not immediately apparent. As long as the process is **fair and respectful**, saying goodbye before making a commitment might be better than managing difficult behaviour or frustrations later.

For role holders, you might want to have a specific trial period after which you review the situation with your volunteer.

### Application/registration form

Depending on the role, you might call this a **sign up** or an **application form** (other terms are used) – just be clear whether this is a sign up only (with a guarantee to be accepted) or an application (with the chance to reject). Bear in mind that you are recruiting volunteers, not employees.

You can **capture the data** via a Microsoft or Google form, your data management system or with a simple Word document.



According to data protection legislation, you should only capture the data you need, for as long as you need it.

**Essentials:**

- Contact details
- Emergency contact details
- Any medical information and support needs (be aware that this is special category data and needs consent and careful handling)
- Consent to be contacted and for data to be stored (privacy notice)



What else would you like/need to know you need to know about your volunteers when they sign up? You could **consider asking:**

- Motivation for volunteering and any goals
- Skills and previous experience
- Self-declaration
- References

Example application form on Google Forms:

[\(Insert Organisation / Project Name\) Volunteer Registration Form Template](#)

Volunteer emergency contact information template (Google form):

[https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSdy6zxe2N5tlugULz7alkppJ-gKkmK55NiJUur2iB8qPL3QGeg/viewform?usp=sf\\_link](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSdy6zxe2N5tlugULz7alkppJ-gKkmK55NiJUur2iB8qPL3QGeg/viewform?usp=sf_link)

Application form template: [template](#)

**Capturing other consent**

Apart from consent to contact your volunteer and to store their data, you might also want to capture other consent at this stage, unless you do this at the induction. Photo consent and special category data i.e. capturing information about health or ethnicity, need consent and require strict data protection.

Photo/video consent template:

<https://vcsutton.org.uk/vcsutton/assets/documents/photography-and-filming-permis>

**References**

References can be one aspect in a suite of tools to conduct **safer recruitment** for volunteers. If you have decided to ask for them, they need to be followed up as an essential step in your recruitment process.

**Q: who is responsible for requesting references and how do you store these safely?**

The reference form can be **short** and needs to be tailored to what you need to know but as it forms part of your safer recruitment, it should as a minimum contain a question about **suitability to work with children or adults at risk**. You might want to ask other questions, e.g. trustworthiness and reliability. It is also common to attach a role description to the email so that the referee can comment on the suitability for the particular role.

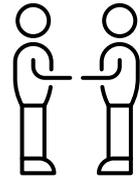
It is useful to have an **email template** that you can adapt and send out to referees, with the reference document attached for them to complete. Sometimes referees prefer to give a **verbal reference** on the phone which you would then record.

Sample reference form: [Sample-Form-for-Referees.pdf](#)

Please also have a look at the other safer recruitment section in Handbook 3.

## Interviews

Interviewing potential volunteers is a great way to **get to know each other**. The atmosphere should be as **relaxed** as you can make it. However, interviewees are bound to be nervous; giving them all the information they need in advance will help – where, when, who etc.



Some employers send out **interview questions in advance** and this would also be helpful for volunteers – after all you would like to see if they are suitable for the role, not how they can perform under pressure.

Volunteer Interview Guidance (PDF) [volunteer-interview-guidance-p](#)



## Monitoring

You might want to monitor certain aspects of your recruitment process. Finding out how people **first heard** about the opportunity (e.g. word of mouth, social media, newsletter, poster at Tesco) will give you an idea of which of your marketing channels are working well for you. If you have invested in paid advertisement on Facebook or printed some new leaflets this will help find out if they were worth it.

You might also want to issue a **diversity monitoring**, which is separate to your sign up/ application form and which people can submit anonymously. This will help you track who your volunteers are and if you reach people from currently under-represented groups.

Diversity monitoring template (Google form):

[\(Insert Organisation / Project Name\) Volunteer Equality and Diversity Monitoring Form Template](#)

## Questions for consideration:

- What does your recruitment process currently look like?
- What can you do to make this (even) better?
- What do you need to make this happen (resources, skills, steps to success)?

## Induction

A thorough induction is the way to a good relationship between your organisation and your volunteer. It should include **everything you would like the volunteer to know** - your values, ways of working, key people as well as your policies and procedures. This introduction to your culture is key – once volunteers are established it can be very difficult to ask them to work differently.

Investing time and energy into induction shows your **appreciation** for volunteers, whether its through a well-designed handbook or a 1:1 induction programme.

The induction needs to be **appropriate** to the role – someone volunteering for a one-off session will only need to know the basics. For a volunteer role holder, e.g. a team leader or trustee, you will need to have a planned induction schedule.

The induction can be carried out by different people such as the volunteer coordinator or a volunteer. You might like to include a **buddy system**; tapping into the experience and skills of valued volunteers. Be clear about what you would like them to deliver/ share and provide them with appropriate guidance or training.

### Volunteer handbook

Having a volunteer handbook is a good way to give the volunteers **all the information** they need. The handbook can be sent out after the volunteer has been accepted for the role (printed, electronically or in a shared folder); they can go through it in their own time and can keep it for **future reference**. Make sure that all information is **up to date**, including **contact details** for key people. Be available for any questions that might come up for the volunteer. In addition:



**Stroud Valleys Project** have a comprehensive, yet compact volunteer handbook that includes all relevant information for new volunteers that is comprehensive, yet compact:

[SVP+Volunteer+Handbook+2025.pdf](#)

### Questions for consideration:

- Do you currently have a volunteer handbook?
- If you haven't, what would you put into yours?

In addition to the general introduction to your organisation, you need to think about what else your new volunteer needs to know in order to carry out their role. This volunteer induction management process (Excel doc) has a comprehensive tick list of **various induction aspects**: [vcsutton.org.uk/ods](http://vcsutton.org.uk/ods)



How do you record your volunteers' induction? Volunteer Centre Sutton suggests doing this via an online form (e.g. Google or Microsoft) with tick boxes. That way, you have written confirmation that your volunteers have read your policies and procedures and completed all relevant forms.

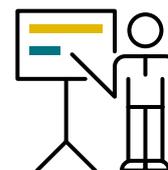
[\(Insert Organisation / Project Name\) Volunteer Induction Checklist Template](#)

### Reflection

- In what ways do you provide an induction to your volunteers currently?
- What can you do to make this (even) better?
- What do you need to make this happen (resources, skills, steps to success)?

## Training and development

Volunteers are likely to need some sort of training relating to their role. This could be anything from how to use specific software for marketing or paddle a boat to using tools and working with disabled adults.



Organisations are sometimes reluctant to ask volunteers to undertake training. However, training should not be seen (or communicated) as a chore but rather as a **benefit of volunteering**. Any training opportunities can be **listed in the role description**, so people know from the start what is expected of them, and what the offer is.

There are different ways to offer training. It can be done **informally**, e.g. by talking through a risk assessment or a buddy showing a new volunteer the ways of working. It can be an **in-person** or **online** course or webinar. Some roles require **formal training** and **certification**, especially for the use of tools and machinery.

Also think about **development opportunities** you can offer your volunteer once they have settled into the role. Would they be interested taking on more responsibilities, e.g. by becoming a **team leader**? Have they got a special interest that you can help them develop and use for your organisation? All of this could help keep the volunteer engaged. Having regular check-ins or appraisals will help identifying these.



### Budget

Have you got an allocated training budget? This will need to cover essential training required to carry out activities in a safe and compliant way. A whole organisation training plan can help you to work out what is needed.

### Question:

What training budget does your organisation have per year?

### Training plans

Training plans can be useful on different levels:

- Individual volunteers (role holders) – aiding their skills development
- Individual roles – helping inform the role descriptions/inform the role descriptions
- Team of volunteers – e.g. making sure that all needs are covered, including certifications (First Aid, power tools)
- Whole organisation – as with teams above but covering skills and certifications across the organisation

Below is an example of a whole organisation training plan:

**Example:**

Skills outcome	Actions	Who is responsible?	Budget	Training format and provider	Progress
Enough first aiders to cover each team	Carry out annual audit to check numbers and renewals needed	Trustee/volunteer coordinator	£2000	In person xxx training company	Training booked for xx/xx/2025
All volunteers have adequate safeguarding training	Level 1 training mandatory for all new starters; refresher after 3 years	Volunteer coordinator	-	Online Local council	
	Safeguarding for trustees training mandatory for all new trustees			Webinar NCVO	

### Things to consider:

- Do you have a training plan?
- Who and what does it include?
- Does it serve its purpose or is there anything that would work better?

### Team leaders/Lead volunteers

Team leaders have an important role as they are responsible for the safe and efficient running of volunteer sessions and they convey your organisation's culture 'on the ground'. All aspects covered in the volunteer management section are particularly pertinent for this role, e.g. recruitment, induction, training and development as well as ongoing support and supervision. There needs to be clear lines of responsibility and communication.



Resources for training volunteer leaders gathered by The Conservation Volunteers (TCV):

[EVM5 - Leading practical volunteer projects | TCV](#)

Inland Waterways guidance notes on leadership skills: [07-Leadership-Skills.pdf](#)

### Heritage skills

Your organisation and/or volunteers might have special knowledge and skills around heritage. How do you make sure knowledge and skills are passed on to the next generation of volunteers?

Some useful case studies here:

[Sustaining Heritage Skills | London Transport Museum](#)

[Case Studies - HVG - Heritage Volunteering Group](#)

## Peer learning

Peer learning refers to volunteers being involved in recruitment activities, induction, training and support of fellow volunteers. There are **lots of ways** you can utilise your volunteers' experience and skills, some of which you might already be doing:



- Meet the volunteer sessions for prospective volunteers
- Buddy system
- Mentoring sessions
- Specialist skills
- Train-the-trainer
- Networking
- Action learning set within your organisations or with others

The volunteers need to have the right skill sets and attitudes to get involved with these tasks as they will be **ambassadors** for your organisation and **role models** for new volunteers.

Depending on the role, you can look to recruit:

- internally, especially amongst volunteers who have lot of experience, e.g. for buddies and mentors, or
- externally, e.g. for specific training roles that require specialist knowledge.

Think about if there is any **training** required, e.g. in-house training or certification; in some cases, you might need to check with your insurance company that peer learning is sufficient, e.g. training for using power tools.

How do you use peer learning in your organisation?

### Accredited learning programmes

Accreditation works best with specific, time-limited volunteering projects. You need a good understanding of the award, administrative tasks involved and the support you need to offer to anyone working towards it. There might also be a cost for signing up.



Accreditation is especially useful for young people or those looking to improve their job prospects. It is a reward for their commitment, time and energy that they have given to a specific project or organisation, and also something that helps them strengthen applications for further education or employment.

Here are some awards you might want to consider:

- Duke of Edinburgh: DofE - [The Duke of Edinburgh's Award](#)
- John Muir Award: [Engagement Initiative | John Muir Award](#)
- Heritage Hero Award: [Heritage Hero Awards | Archaeology Scotland](#)
- ASDAN Volunteering Short Course: [ASDAN Website | About us](#)



The Cotswold Canals Connected engagement team offered a programme of volunteering activities with a variety of partner organisations to the National Star College, a provider of specialist education for young people with disabilities. The students got involved with planting hedges and trees, canal restoration and vegetation maintenance, and enjoyed trips to museums and boat trips on katanus and canal boats.

Through discovering, exploring, conserving and sharing information about the 'wild place' of the canal corridor, they earned the bronze John Muir Award which was handed out in a special ceremony at the council offices in July 2024.

Read more about the project and watch a short film here:

[Students shine in Canal Restoration Project | News | National Star](#)

#### For consideration:

- Which accreditation schemes might work for you?
- What would it require to put these into practice?

#### Placements and work experiences

Volunteers give their time for a variety of reasons. For some, especially for younger people, it is a good way to **learn skills** that will **help them find employment**.

While the terms volunteering, work experience and placement are often used interchangeably, there are **differences** which are worth exploring.

[Work-Experience-vs-Volunteering-Infosheet-English.pdf](#)

[Work experience, internships and training | Disability charity Scope UK](#)

The CCC project has already made connections with Stroud College and Stroud High School, and there is scope to work with more **local schools and colleges**.

**Canal College** is an example of a heritage skills focussed employability project:

[Canal College® | Keep Scotland Beautiful](#)

#### Questions for consideration:

- How could you incorporate placements and work experience students into your organisation?
- What would be required for these?



#### Support and supervision

Providing volunteers with support ensures that they are content and continue to volunteer. In most cases, volunteer coordinators or team leaders might just check in with volunteers in an **informal** way, or ask questions if they feel that 'something is off'.

If you have the resources (mostly - people and time), you might be able to offer **regular supervision meetings** which are especially valuable for role holders, e.g. team leaders. This creates a space to talk about their wellbeing, give feedback and discuss any issues; it can also be an opportunity to talk about training and development.

Refer to your organigramme as to who line manages who. Make sure that those with line managing responsibilities are current with expectations and requirements, so that any potential issues get addressed.

For more information and a simple 1:1 supervision template:

[Best practices in volunteer supervision and support | nottinghamcvcs.co.uk](https://nottinghamcvcs.co.uk)



### Having difficult conversations

Sometimes it is inevitable that you have to have difficult conversations, e.g. because a volunteer does not comply with your **code of conduct**. This is where a **problem-solving policy and procedure** comes in, as it can guide you through this challenging situation. It is generally considered best practice to address any issues at the earliest opportunity. Often an honest and supportive conversation is all that is needed to resolve the issue.

### Top tool!

There are tools available to support the difficult conversation process such as the AID model which looks at the Action-Impact-Desired Outcome. Follow this link for more information: [Using The AID Model To Give Feedback](#) Using the AID model to conduct difficult conversations can help navigate the situation with a positive outcome.

### Questions for consideration:

- In what ways do you provide support and supervision to your volunteers currently
- What could you put in place to make this (even) better?
- What do you need to make this happen (resources, skills, steps to success)?

## Wellbeing

Volunteering is generally great for our wellbeing. The New Economics Foundation has developed the **Five Ways to Wellbeing model** – five activities that help us feel better. They are:

- Connect
- Be active
- Take notice
- Keep learning
- Give

Volunteering potentially fulfils all of these, and studies have shown the positive effect that volunteering can have both on our physical and mental wellbeing.

There might be scope to **measure wellbeing** for your impact assessment; here are some useful resources:

- What Works Wellbeing – Wellbeing evidence, policy and practice: [whatworkswellbeing.org](https://whatworkswellbeing.org)
- Measure Wellbeing: [Evaluating wellbeing – better evaluations for social change](#)



### Volunteer burnout

Volunteer burnout is a **real issue** and can creep up quite quickly, especially amongst trustees and role holders, including volunteer managers.

Volunteers give their time and energy because they are passionate about the work and goals of their organisation. Sometimes a volunteer will give more time and energy than they have capacity to give, sometimes an organisation will ask too much of their volunteers in response to a lack of resources. Whatever the cause (and there are many other reasons for burn-out) don't forget to offer regular check in opportunities for volunteers, respond to any concerns as soon as possible and allow volunteers time off without feeling guilty.

### Working with emotions

This activity toolkit explores the important topic of working with your own emotions as a volunteer manager as well as those of your volunteers and is a resource well worth exploring: [Working with Emotions in Volunteering Toolkit - Association of Volunteer Managers](#)

### Including volunteers with mental health conditions

You might also have volunteers who have mental health issues, e.g. depression, anxiety, bipolar disorder or others.

For more information: [220331-Managing-the-wellbeing-of-your-volunteers.pdf](#)

For mental health and suicide training refer to HB3.

### For consideration:

- In what ways do you look after your volunteers' wellbeing currently?
- What can you do to make this (even) better?
- What do you need to make this happen (resources, skills, steps to success)?

### Reward and recognition

Rewarding and recognising volunteers keeps them **motivated** and **engaged**. There are **lots of ways** to reward volunteers, and will be specific to your organisation. It is important to **ask your volunteers** what they would most like. This can be done through conversations, a survey or a quick poll.



Here are some **ideas** that organisations do:

- Newsletters or other ways to keep volunteers informed and updated about the good work your organisation is doing
- Saying thank you – at the end of a session, through social media, or via a card...
- Positive feedback
- Volunteer event, e.g. a BBQ
- Celebrating milestones
- Badges, t-shirts and other branded goodies
- References for job applications
- Volunteer awards – either internal 'volunteer of the month' type awards, or nominate them for external community or volunteer awards
- Long service awards

Here are some useful links:

- NCVO – Thanking volunteers: [Thanking volunteers | NCVO](#)
- Volunteers’ Week: <https://volunteersweek.org/>
- VSE Gloucestershire Volunteer Awards: [Gloucestershire Volunteer Awards | Go Volunteer Glos](#)

### Questions/ for consideration

- In what ways do you recognise and reward volunteers at the moment?
- What can you do to make this (even) better?
- What do you need to make this happen (resources, skills, steps to success)?



### Exit procedures

A volunteer might leave for a whole variety of reasons, but the exit should ideally be a **positive** one. Explore with them why they would like to leave; it might be possible to find them a different task or team or point them to another charity that might align better with their interests.

If the volunteer has made a decision to leave, you should thank them, **show appreciation** for their contribution and **collect feedback** about their volunteering experience, e.g. with an **exit questionnaire**: [Volunteer-Exit-Questionnaire-Template-1.pdf](#)

If they were role holders, think about how tasks and knowledge are handed over and how access to equipment, buildings and data are revoked. Here are some considerations about safeguarding when someone is leaving your organisation:

[Ending volunteering well | NCVO](#)

### Reflection

- In what ways do you manage a positive exit for your volunteers at the moment?
- What can you do to make this (even) better?
- What do you need to make this happen (resources, skills, steps to success)?

## 4.2 VOLUNTEERING FOR ALL: BEING INCLUSIVE

An inclusive and welcoming approach should be **at the heart of every organisation** that involves volunteers, including registered charities that work for the public benefit. When we actively create spaces where people from all walks of life feel valued and able to contribute, we reflect the diverse communities that we serve. Tapping into the diverse people power on our doorstep will help to strengthen your volunteer programme and make your organisation more sustainable.

In this section of the handbook, we look at inclusion and accessibility as well as different types of opportunities that allow a whole variety of people to engage with your organisation.

Accessibility

Family  
volunteering

Employer  
supported  
volunteering

Micro  
volunteering

Youth  
volunteering

## Inclusion and accessibility

In short, inclusion is making sure that you have a culture where everyone has a seat at the table. Accessibility is about creating environments and conditions for everyone to feel that they have the opportunity and the access to be involved. Inclusion and accessibility ultimately **benefit everyone** as we are all unique in our characteristics and needs, and measures that make facilities and experiences easier to access and understand are great for us all.

An Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) policy or statement is an important expression of your commitment to inclusion. The underlying legislation is the **Equality Act 2010** which specifies the protection against discrimination for these **protected characteristics**:



- age
- disability
- gender reassignment
- marriage and civil partnership
- pregnancy and maternity
- race
- religion or belief
- sex
- sexual orientation.

Other characteristics to think about in the volunteering context are socio-economic status and neurodivergence.

Being inclusive and accessible is more than ensuring that we do not discriminate; it's about having a **positive approach to diversity** and acknowledging that it brings with it new perspectives, ideas and a deeper sense of belonging within the local community. The Sensory Trust believes that 'accessibility shouldn't be viewed as an obstacle but an **opportunity to innovate**' ([What is Accessibility & Equal Access – Sensory Trust](#)) and that we should thrive not to necessarily create the 'same experiences' but 'equally great experiences'.

To achieve inclusion, we need to **understand the barriers** to participation. If these don't affect us personally, it can be difficult to be aware of barriers, as they can take many forms and might not necessary be obvious to us. The Inclusive Volunteering Toolkit identifies different economic, social, cultural and physical barriers to volunteering and offers practical ideas on how to take **steps to positive action**: [Make Your Mark: Volunteering Toolkit \(Main\)](#)

The toolkit was written by Make your Mark, a Scottish initiative for inclusion in volunteering, with heritage, community and place at its heart. They have a plethora of resources on their website to support voluntary organisations to approach volunteering for all. Have a look at their excellent tips and videos: [Make Your Mark: Volunteering Toolkit \(Main\)](#)

### Local experts:

- Barnwood Trust: Supporting and advocating for those who are disabled and have mental health challenges [Barnwood Trust | Building Belonging in Gloucestershire](#)
- Inclusion Gloucestershire: [Disability focussed accessibility audits and other services Home - Inclusion Gloucestershire](#)
- Focal Elements, led by Ismail Kholwadia: [Community engagement and faith & cultural inclusion Focal Elements](#)
- Lives of Colour: [Elevating the voices of ethnically and culturally diverse individuals and communities Lives of Colour](#)
- The Grace Network: [Social inclusion Grace Network](#)

## Case study: support volunteer



**Stroud Valleys Project** has a dedicated ‘project officer support’ volunteer. They are an additional person working alongside the paid project officers, giving attention to those group members who have additional support needs, e.g. by repeating how to do a task and also making sure that they are included socially.

The role was also created with health and safety (H&S) in mind. If the project officer has to leave the site, especially to deal with an emergency, the support volunteer will remain on site with the volunteer with additional needs until they get picked up.

## Social prescribing and volunteering

### Heritage Buddies Pilot Project

Heritage Buddies is an innovative pilot project funded by Historic England to test and trial an approach to delivering social prescribing and wellbeing through heritage in local settings. NCVS is working with different heritage and befriending organisations to design and pilot the Heritage Buddies role to explore what works for: Organisations, volunteers, participants

[Heritage Buddies - Training handout](#)

### Reflection:

How could you make volunteering with your organisation more inclusive and accessible?

## Family volunteering

Involving families in volunteering can have **many benefits for both the families**, e.g. spending quality time together and engaging in meaningful activities, and **your organisation**, e.g. engaging with the wider community, increasing diversity and potentially increasing donations/memberships.

For a full list of benefits and challenges, see here:

[The outcomes of family volunteering for families and organisations.](#)

Family volunteering is generally seen to be intergenerational volunteering. Family volunteering does not have to be complicated, as the work of the Family Volunteering Club demonstrates:



**The Family Volunteering Club** offers volunteering opportunities for families with young children. Parents and children (0-9 years) can get involved in their local community through sessions hosted by different partner organisations.

The emphasis is on the experience of doing something positive - together and with other families - and learning about and connecting with local organisations. Session times are kept at an age-appropriate length and alongside the volunteer task there are sometimes other more child-centred activities, e.g. singing or crafts.

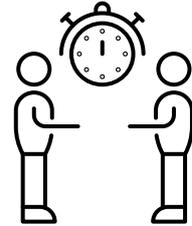
[Home | Family Volunteering](#)

For those who would like to delve deeper into this topic, have a look at the NCVO families and volunteering framework, including some key questions for your organisation: Families and volunteering: [An evidence-based framework for volunteer-involving organisations](#)

- How could you engage families with your organisation?
- What would be required to put these into practice?

### Employer supported volunteering

Employer supported volunteering (ESV) allows employees to take paid time off work to engage in volunteering activities. For businesses, this shows **support for local charities** as well as employee wellbeing. Also referred to as ‘corporate volunteering’ it is aligned with the Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) agenda.



As an organisation, partnering with one or more local businesses might bring you a trickle of volunteers for **unskilled tasks**, a whole **group** to tackle a bespoke, bigger task or even some **professional skills** or advice. It can also have monetary benefits as some businesses **pay** for group volunteering experiences, or they might choose to **donate** money or useful items.

Go Volunteer Glos has created **guidance** for employers and organisations on how to make the most of ESV: [Employer Supported Volunteering | Go Volunteer Glos](#)

How could you make the most of employer supported volunteering opportunities?

### Micro-volunteering

Micro-volunteering is a term used to describe volunteering opportunities that are **short** and require **no ongoing commitment**. It is important to consider this for your organisation as the landscape of volunteering is changing, with less people willing or able to commit to more traditional roles that require both time and longer-term commitment. However, many people would still like to be involved in volunteering activities and support organisations through ‘bite-sized’ opportunities.

Some **examples** of micro-volunteering are:

- Litter picking
- Sharing a post online, e.g. about a campaign or event
- Completing a survey
- Coming along to a one-off work party
- Being a marshal at an event
- Offering some hours or a day of professional skills, e.g. marketing, digger driving

The **recruitment process** has to reflect the nature of the role whilst you still need to make sure that you have all the necessary data, permission forms etc., the task is risk assessed and the volunteer has all the information they need to carry out the role safely and effectively. You might be able to **build a community of micro-volunteers** you can send new opportunities to.



**Cotswold Canals Trust** hand out presents to children during their popular Santa Cruises in the lead up to Christmas. They tapped into their committed community to find volunteers to wrap the presents. It was an enjoyable, communal task for the volunteers and got the job done.

Have a look at Macmillan's micro-volunteering page:

[Microvolunteering at Macmillan | Macmillan Cancer Support](#)

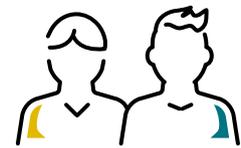
For a comprehensive guide on micro-volunteering, have a look here:

[How To Set Up A Microvolunteering Project](#)

What micro-volunteering opportunities could you develop?

## Youth volunteering

There are many **definitions** of 'youth' and 'young people'. Legally in the UK, a young person is between 14 and 17 years old. For our purposes, youth or young people are those between about 13 and 25.



Engaging young people in your organisation can be **rewarding for both sides**. Young people bring energy – both metaphorically and physically – and new perspectives. They often embrace new technologies that can help you stay current and maybe even streamline aspects of your work. Young people are a great connection into your local community and might encourage others to get involved as well, e.g. friends and family.

For young people, volunteering can be a **meaningful opportunity** to actively express values and concerns and make a positive contribution to their local community. Volunteering is also a chance to **develop skills, knowledge, confidence and connections**, both for their personal and professional life. For some young people, but certainly not for all, this could be the main reason for volunteering. With this in mind, **accredited learning** can be especially useful for young people.

Youth volunteering can take **different forms**:

- Individuals working alongside other volunteers
- Youth volunteering groups open to all young people
- Youth volunteering groups for certain demographics (e.g. care leavers or NEET (not in education, employment or training))
- Specific volunteering opportunities for already formed groups of young people (e.g. youth clubs, schools or colleges)

## Considerations

- **DBS:** People working with 16- and 17-year-olds will need a DBS check. Volunteers that are 16 and 17-years old working with others under 18-years will need their own DBS check.
- **Insurance:** Check with your insurance provider if under 18 year olds are covered for the planned activities.

- **Consent:** Ask for parents' consent for activities and photos.
- **Policies and procedures:** Have a look at your H&S policy, risk assessments and code of conduct and determine if you will need to make amendments or write documents specifically aimed at young people.

For a **comprehensive guide** of good practice, have a look here: [Young Volunteer's Toolkit](#)

If you are not working with young people already, a good way to start is to **team up** with an organisation already working with young people, e.g. a youth club. Ideally, give young people the chance to have an input in the volunteering programme or even co-produce it with them for a maximum sense of ownership.



**Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust's Youth Ranger programme is co-produced with teenagers aged 13-17 years. As a group, they make decisions about the tasks they would like to do in 'their' orchard at Robinswood Hill, e.g. installing bird boxes or sowing wildflower seeds.**

Young people turning 18 can progress to become young leaders.

[Youth Rangers | Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust](#)

Also think about the adults supporting the young people. If working with under 18s, what is your ratio of adults to young people? Do you need to recruit volunteers to lead or assist? What checks, training and support will they need?

**For consideration:**

- How could you engage young people with your organisation?
- Are there any local organisations, schools or colleges you could team up with?

# Appendix

## Vision for Volunteering

We used the Vision for Volunteering when devising the CCC volunteer development strategy, and it is worth having a look at this and considering how it relates to your own organisation.



Vision for Volunteering is a ten year collaborative project to create a better future for volunteering. It has identified five key themes that form a framework for positive change to make volunteering more inclusive and enjoyable for all:

- Awareness and appreciation
- Power
- Equity and inclusion
- Collaboration
- Experimentation

Find out more: [www.visionforvolunteering.org.uk](http://www.visionforvolunteering.org.uk)

Vision for Volunteering toolkit: [Vision for Volunteering Toolkit — Vision for Volunteering](#)

## Trustee-related resources

Trustees are often forgotten when we talk about volunteering, but they are, of course, volunteers themselves who potentially give a big chunk of their time as well as their energy and experience. They are ultimately responsible for the governance and finances of your organisation and are therefore **key role holders**; recruitment, induction and training should reflect this.

## Trustee recruitment

There is value in having a diverse board of trustees where everyone brings their different skills and experiences to the table. Anyone over the age of 18 can become a charity trustee (with few exceptions). You might want to consider doing a **skills audit** with your board so that you know if there are specific skills or experiences missing, and for you to target recruitment accordingly.

Find a template for trustee recruitment and corresponding RACI chart in the appendix [here](#).

### For more information on trustee recruitment:

- **The Reach Volunteering recruitment cycle** will give detailed advice, case studies and templates to all of the below areas of trustee recruitment (including skills audits):  
[The Trustee Recruitment Cycle | Reach Volunteering](#)



## Trustee induction and training

The trustee induction sets out your values, culture, ways of working and expectations. **Getting this right** means that your new trustee will find their way around your organisation quickly and easily and get the skills they need. There are lots of resources online, including YouTube videos, courses and whole induction programmes. Some organisations offer training at certain times of the year.

**Training** should be an ongoing process and it’s worth considering offering refresher training, especially for trustees who have been in post for more than one year. There are different skills areas to cover within The Board e.g. safeguarding, governance and finance. Allocating each Trustee to a specific area will help focus trustee responsibilities and identify skills gaps and training needs to support their development.

### Trustee training plan

Course	Essential or desired	Course provider/ location on the internet	Cost involved	Refresher needed	
Safeguarding					
Governance					
Finance					

### Other resources:

- NCVO offers great online training and lots of useful information on their website [Help and guidance | NCVO](#). Additionally, they also have YouTube videos [NCVO webinars - YouTube](#) – search for NCVO webinars: Building good trustee relationships and what to do when things go wrong.
- Gloucestershire VCS Alliance: Usually has a trustee refresher programme in the Spring and lots of resources here: [Resources](#)
- This is a free trustee training programme: [Trustee training modules | ICAEW](#)  
It is less interactive than the YouTube videos but the style might suit some people who like working through online courses. There are six or seven parts to it which can be completed individually, one is on risk management.

## Trustee recruitment procedure

### Template trustee recruitment procedure:

1.	Carry out skills audit (and potentially diversity audit)
2.	Write/check/update <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• role description (informed by audit)</li> <li>• advert</li> <li>• application form</li> <li>• any other information for recruitment pack</li> <li>• interview questions</li> </ul>
3.	Place the advertisement
4.	Set interview date and invite panel
5.	Communicate with enquirers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have informal chat on the phone/in person</li> <li>• Invite to come along to a session on the water (optional)</li> <li>• Send out application form</li> <li>• Invite to interview, inform of outcome</li> </ul>
6.	Receive applications and shortlist
7.	Interview
8.	Make and inform of decision – trustee or potentially other role
9.	References and other checks (if applicable)
10.	Formal appointment
11.	Induction
12.	Evaluate process and record any learning

Task	Role X	Role Y	Role Z	Time frame/ deadline
Skills audit				
Write/check/ update all relevant documents				
Place advertisement				
Set interview date, decide on and invite panel				
Communicate with enquirers – have informal chat, send out application form, invite to interview				
Read applications and shortlist				
Interview				
Communicate interview outcome				
Recruitment checks (references, DBS)				
Induction process				

## Funding

For support on where and how to source funding check out the Gloucestershire VCS funding section and subscribe to the funding newsletter for up-to-date information on national and local funding opportunities. [Gloucestershire VCSE Alliance](#)