



Volunteer Organisers Forum Agenda 12th April 2010

2:00 Registration, coffee, networking

2:15 Welcome, and introductions

2:30 Workshop – Ensuring Diversity in your
Volunteer Program

3:00 Volunteer Week – Older people's event

3:30 Sharing and ideas for future forums

4:00 Close

2:15 Welcome & Introductions

Housekeeping, toilets, accessibility, mobile phones, fire evacuation instructions.
Agenda for the afternoon

Aim of the Forum - Being a volunteer organiser/supervisor can be a very demanding role. The aim of this forum is to give each other support, information and to share our successes and failures so that we can learn from each other. It is also the opportunity to receive informal training and updates on the world of Volunteer Management.

The forum can also be seen as a force for change as together we can influence local and national policy on issues that affect volunteers and volunteering.

Go around the room ask people to introduce themselves, their role in looking after volunteers



Volunteer Centre
Telford & Wrekin

2:30 Workshop – Ensuring Diversity in your Volunteer Program

This is a very short workshop to enable you to explore diversity issues in your volunteer program. Obviously this is a very wide ranging issue as diversity should be at the heart of volunteer involvement.

Split into three groups to discuss some elements of diversity. You have 10 mins to come up with some suggestions. Then each group can feed back in turn.

1. What is Diversity and why is it important to your organisation?
2. What practical barriers to volunteering may discourage different groups and how can you help remove them?
3. Where and how should you promote your volunteering to encourage diversity?



What is Diversity and why is it important to your organisation?

Diversity literally means difference. When it is used as a contrast or addition to equality, it is about recognizing individual as well as group differences, treating people as individuals, and placing positive value on diversity in the community and in the workforce.

Diversity and Equality are not terms which can be interchanged. Diversity describes the range of visible and non-visible differences that exist between people whilst equality means having the same value - indicating a state of balance. When we talk about managing diversity therefore, we are referring to the harnessing of these differences to create a productive environment in which everybody feels valued, where talents are fully utilized and in which organizational goals are met (Kandola and Fullerton 1998).

Diversity in volunteering means two things:

A varied body of volunteers

A varied selection of roles;

Many organisations now understand the importance of having a diverse range of volunteers and staff, with people from different ages, from diverse cultures and with different perspectives.

Firstly, organisations can always benefit from fresh approaches, so involving people with a broader range of backgrounds and experiences can help you to plan new projects and reinvigorate long-running ones.

Secondly, incorporating a wider range of ideas might help your organisation to improve its service and work more efficiently to fulfil its aims, whether these are fundraising, tree-planting or counselling.

Thirdly, reflecting the local community can boost organisations credibility and improve its ability to focus on local needs. This could help you to develop new ideas or to meet specific funding criteria.

Fourthly, volunteering should offer everyone a fair chance to contribute and avoid excluding people through labelling, for example a client or a service user. Volunteering is mutually beneficial for both sides, so anyone should be able to participate as a volunteer.

Fifthly, as an organisation becomes more representative of the community it works in, the more welcoming it becomes. You can benefit from a snowball effect as your organisation diversifies and is accessible to new clients, customers and staff and a greater pool of potential volunteers.

What practical barriers to volunteering may discourage different groups and how can you help remove them?

Time commitment

Some people expect volunteering to take up large chunks of time each week or think that only retired people or part-time workers have time to volunteer.

- Your organisation could estimate the likely weekly commitment and include this in publicity materials used to recruit volunteers or let people know that they need only volunteer for an afternoon a week for example. However, you should be careful not to specify a minimum required time commitment as this could risk creating a contractual relationship.
- Organisations can think about designing different kinds of volunteer roles to suit different lifestyles. Depending on the tasks involved, you can also create taster days or one-off volunteering days to get people involved.

Childcare or other caring responsibilities

- If at all possible, care expenses should be paid or facilities provided.
- If this isn't currently possible, think creatively about how to create other family-friendly opportunities. Your organisation might be able to cover part of the cost of care expenses and could build these costs into future budgets or funding bids. You could also offer volunteering opportunities with flexible hours or consider whether volunteering from home would work.

Transport

Inaccessibility of transport can be a major barrier for potential volunteers

Entitlement to benefits

People receiving benefits are often uncertain of the rules around volunteering. It's often important to reassure them that they can volunteer and help them to understand the relevant rules. Booklet DWP 1023 (available from Jobcentres) states that volunteering should not affect Jobseekers Allowance (JSA), Income Support, Incapacity Benefit or Severe Disablement Allowance. There are no restrictions on the amount of time people can volunteer.

- People receiving Jobseekers Allowance should be aware that they have to remain both available for, and actively seeking, work. This means that as an

organisation you may have to give your volunteers some flexibility to attend Jobcentre meetings or job interviews.

- The benefits rules also state that volunteers receiving any of the benefits mentioned above should tell their Jobcentre or social security office if they do any voluntary work. Your organisation could provide a standard letter for volunteers to use when informing the Jobcentre or social security office. A volunteer may need to give your organisations telephone phone to the Jobcentre so that they are easily contactable for interviews.

Criminal records

Having a criminal record need not be a barrier to volunteering. Since one in five adult men have a criminal conviction, it is important not to automatically exclude this significant group of potential volunteers

Disability

Twenty percent of the UKs population are registered as disabled, but only 6% of volunteers have disabilities Potential disabled volunteers are often put off volunteering at an early stage by difficulties with access or transport. Wherever possible, organisations should reimburse their volunteers expenses and look into buying any specialist equipment required.

- Organisations should always be open to adapting tasks for their volunteers, and this might be particularly important when working with disabled people. It may be helpful to give a volunteer more breaks, or to look at dividing tasks so that different parts are completed by different people.
- The most important thing to take on board is to treat all volunteers as individuals. Don't second guess a volunteers needs talk to them about any support they may need to enable them to volunteer

Where and how should you promote your volunteering to encourage diversity?

If you produce leaflets, posters or adverts to recruit volunteers, using these in a wide range of local settings will help your organisation to reach a broader audience. You might already have advertised in lots of public and community organisations, but there may be a few in this list which you haven't tried:

- Volunteer Centre
- Places of worship, e.g. mosques, churches, temples, synagogues
- Meeting/leisure places, parks, clubs, cafes, pubs
- Sports centres and fitness groups
- Shopping centres, markets, supermarkets and shops
- Job Centre
- Community centres running key skills or English classes

- Health Centres, doctors surgeries or hospital waiting rooms
- Nurseries, schools or adult education colleges
- Universities, student unions
- Public libraries
- Hostels, housing providers or housing Association newsletters
- Local facilities, e.g. laundrettes and post offices
- Weekly groups, such as women's groups or toddler groups
- Local and free newspapers (through adverts or a weekly column)
- Community and hospital radio stations
- Seasonal and community events, such as fairs or carboot sales

Who to reach or target

Some organisations choose to target specific groups of people in publicity materials by including wording such as we particularly welcome enquiries from disabled people. Alternatively, consider using a broad statement such as, We welcome enquiries across the local community, regardless of background or experience.

You could try working in partnership with a local organisation which offers support to a specific group, examples could include schemes to help ex-offenders re-integrate into the local community, or programmes to help people with learning disabilities find a route into employment. Developing a partnership can bring fresh approaches and offer a further support network to new volunteers.

If you want to work more closely with faith-based or ethnic minority groups in your area, it may be helpful to meet representatives of community groups which exist already and see how you can link into existing initiatives. Taking the time to attend sports/music events or drop-in centres means you can chat to members of the community and learn about the issues they face.

3:00 Volunteer Week

Volunteers' Week is taking place from 1 to 7 June



Volunteers' Week is an annual event which celebrates the fantastic contribution that millions of volunteers make across the UK. The Week plays a huge part in raising the profile of the millions of volunteers who regularly contribute to society, while inspiring others to get involved too.

To highlight this contribution, there is a burst of activity during 1-7 June when a host of organisations from the public, private and charity sectors will hold parties and award ceremonies to thank their volunteers. and highlight their contribution to local groups and the wider community, while individuals are encouraged to use the Week to find out more about volunteering.

Everyone is invited to join this national celebration of volunteering; it's up to you to decide exactly how you join in.

If you are inspired by volunteering and would like to get involved in this national celebration there are lots of resources on this website, to help you do just that! You can visit the registered users area of this site for event ideas and to access the Volunteers' Week logo and other free resources. These can be used by anyone holding reward, recognition or recruitment events during Volunteers' Week. Elsewhere on this site you can share your own experience of volunteers and volunteering, and read about others' stories too.

Each year, they develop a fantastic range of affordable, high-quality, Volunteers' Week branded merchandise for you to use at your event, recruitment fair or to hand out to your volunteers as a small thank you gift. Products include just about everything that you will find useful:- from balloons, t-shirts and stickers to pens and photo holders.

The Volunteers' Week shop selling branded items for 2010, will be open for business shortly. <http://www.volunteersweek.org.uk/>

As part of its marketing campaign the Volunteer Centre is aiming to highlight the range of opportunities carried out by older people by digital imagery. We are looking for a working party to support this

3:30 Volunteer Centre Sharing

Carers Contact Centre and Community transport have moved to the “Poplars” at Lightmoor.

We are Celebrating!

The Volunteer Centre is delighted to announce that it has been successful in the reaccreditation of its Matrix Quality Award Standard for information, advice and Guidance. This award is for the service we provide in guiding individuals into volunteering.



Telford & Wrekin CVS has also been successful in obtaining the PQASSO quality mark. If any is interested in investigating if this quality mark is for them contact Lois Breen

The Volunteer Centre is due to go through a quality assessment with Volunteering England in September of this year.

Updating

The Volunteer Centre is constantly updating its data base to ensure that the information we hold is accurate and reflects a true picture of your volunteer program. Please let us know of any changes. For example;

- If you have sufficient volunteers
- If you urgently require more
- If any details change in your program - times needed, venues, training schedule
- If there are any changes in your contact details
- If you have any new opportunities

Satisfaction Survey

You have all either been emailed or mailed a satisfaction survey on the brokerage service within the volunteer centre.

Please complete this survey as it supports the continuous cycle of improvements within the volunteer centre. It is also available on our website on <http://www.tandwcvcs.org.uk/>

The National volunteering website

Up until the 1st April we have been placing “live” volunteering opportunities onto the national volunteering database www.do-it.org.uk for all volunteering opportunities within the Telford & Wrekin area.

From this information, prospective volunteers are able to register directly online and the volunteer centre receives an email with their contact details. From this we send them information on the opportunity or if they wish refer them to the organisation/organisations of their choice.

Because of increased activity from this website, due in part to the current economic climate, we have made some changes.

For organisations not affiliated to CVS

From the 1st April prospective volunteer’s details are directly emailed from do-it to the organisations that they wish to volunteer for. This would mean that organisations’ email details would be the direct contact for the enquiry and the organisation would respond directly to the volunteer.

Opportunities will continue to be placed on the volunteer centre data base for personal callers to the volunteer centre

Organisations affiliated to Telford & Wrekin CVs can request that the volunteer centre remains as the initial point of contact. Please let us know if this is your choice on 01952 291350

Affiliation to Telford & Wrekin only costs £6 a year and includes reduced fees for training, access to funding advice, developmental support, bi- monthly newsletters and invitations to forums, conferences and consultation events.

Training

How to keep Volunteers Motivated

Friday 7th May 10:00 -1:00 at Meeting Point House

This workshop looks at what motivates and de-motivates volunteers and looks at ways to implement good practice for recognising and rewarding volunteers.

Volunteer Matters Capacity builders' new bursary fund to support volunteer management skills development.

If you manage and support volunteers you may be eligible for a skills development bursary of up to £1950 from Capacitybuilders.

Each bursary will fully fund an approved skills development package with three access levels - distance and online learning options also available.

There are a limited number of bursaries available so early application is advised.

Bursaries are available to individuals in England who support, coordinate, manage or have strategic responsibility for volunteers.

Delivery is being undertaken regionally via four approved training providers. Each skills development package is aligned to the national occupational standards in volunteer management and offers the option of nationally recognised accreditation at levels 3, 4 or 5.

Volunteer Centre Warrington will be delivering the [Excellence in Volunteer Management Programme](#) (Level 3) in the North West and West Midlands regions as part of this work.

How to apply: Application opened on Monday 22 March. Don't delay!

To find out if you are eligible and to find out more about the programme and how to apply please visit www.capacitybuilders.org.uk/vmpskills today.

Funding

The Grassroot panel is meeting on the 19th April to consider applications. Information on how to apply is on our website <http://www.tandwcvcs.org.uk/17.html>

The Charity Aid Foundation has launched an Access funding stream to support disabled adults into volunteering. Grants are available from £250 - £5,000 and can be used for special aids and equipment and for travel costs.

Vetting and Barring Scheme

The Independent Safeguarding Authority has produced guidance on how the new vetting and barring scheme will affect different sectors.

Volunteering England has worked with the Office of the Third Sector on the guidelines specifically to include volunteer involving organisations. The scheme will assess people's suitability to work or volunteer with children and vulnerable adults. The ISA will make the decision who should be barred from working with vulnerable groups.

It does not replace CRB's or absolve organisations from making their own checks such as checking identity, qualifications and references.

The guidelines are available on the Home Office website.

Ask for topics for future forums

4:00 close