

READY, STEADY, GO!

Volunteer Managers Toolkit



**Produced by
Peterborough Volunteer Centre
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Introduction

This toolkit has been written for anyone involved in running a volunteer programme. You may be a paid worker or volunteer yourself with the responsibility of looking after the volunteers in your charity or voluntary group. You may not have yet started involving volunteers in your group.

The aim of the toolkit is to make sure all organisations involving volunteers provide a quality volunteering programme and feel confident their volunteers feel valued.

Throughout the toolkit there are special symbols that are check points for you to consider as well as a comprehensive appendix sections with lots of example documents you can adapt for your group.

We have adopted the format of **READY, STEADY, GO!**

READY – getting your organisation ready for volunteers

STEADY – getting your volunteer programme in order

GO! – now your volunteers are busy helping you, how do you keep them

To focus your reading we have used the following symbols in this toolkit,
What the symbols mean:



If you see this sign we think this information is of particular importance



If you see this sign we think as a group you may need to put in place some actions maybe for your trustees others for the people involved in managing volunteers.



This help sign will provide advice or direct you to a specific area of the toolkit or a web site for more information

The Toolkit is meant to be a resource that you can dip in and out of. The Volunteer Centre is here to help 'tailor' its use to meet your more specific individual needs as and when required.

The Toolkit is a working document, so do feel free to recommend additions or pieces of best practice you may use that you are happy to share with other like minded parties.

Where we refer to organisation or group we are not referring to any specific voluntary sector establishment. You could be a registered charity or any other non profit organisation/group. What we are concerned with is you involve volunteers.

A few quick things to consider when involving volunteers

There will be many issues to consider and address before and when you involve volunteers. Some issues relate to working practices and the environment they will be working in. Also the people the volunteers may be working with; these could be children or vulnerable adults so consideration of whether Criminal Record Bureau checks will need to be made. The following is a quick reference check

1. Volunteering environment

- Where will the volunteering take place?
- Have volunteers got any special needs?
- Who will be managing the volunteers?
- Have you consulted with other staff or trustees about involving volunteers?
- What type of volunteering activities does your group need?

2. Volunteer agreement

We recommend you produce a volunteer agreement; this document sets out the guidelines for all volunteers about your organisation or groups working practices, who the volunteers should contact in case of emergencies and any areas such as what happens if they breach this agreement. Volunteers do not have the same regulations as paid workers if things go wrong, but you do need to have a framework in place to help keep things running smoothly for both them and the organisation.

3. Risks

You may need risk assessments for each volunteer coming to your organisation or if they are working with people in their homes, where they may need to be made aware of any potential risks. We will be covering 'what a risk assessment is in this toolkit'

You will need to ensure health and safety regulations are adhered to, so think about the type of work you would normally give for paid staff and the regulations needed for this, the regulations are the same for volunteers.



4. Basic rights

Everyone should be told where the toilets are, where to get a drink, where the fire exits are located and any other facilities available to them. This might seem obvious but sometimes volunteers are not shown these basic rights.

Find out if you need to make any adjustments for volunteers with special requirements, such as wheelchair access.



5. Who are your volunteers helping?

This could include staff members of the organisation, service users or other groups of people you are helping. Within these groups there could be children and vulnerable adults, which could mean using the Criminal Record Bureau (CRB) checks and the new Vetting and Barring Scheme. These are in place to help ensure you are not putting either the volunteer or vulnerable person or child at risk.



In an office environment your volunteers may be performing administrative roles in which case they may be working closely with your paid staff. You will need to ensure they are involved in the day to day office environment, so they and the staff are comfortable working together.

6. What type of work do you require volunteers to do?

Think about the work you want a volunteer to get involved with, produce a role profile for each volunteer task. Does it look like a complete role or can you add other aspects to make it more interesting, or is there too much for one person to do in the time you may have them with you?



Other things to consider

- How much training will be required to complete the tasks you have for your volunteer and who will be doing the training?
- How much time is reasonable to expect for your volunteer to be working each visit?
- What variety (if any) can you offer in the role?
- Who is going to supervising or supporting the volunteers on a daily basis?

We will be covering all of the above in more detail throughout this toolkit.

Ready – Section one

Introduction

Getting ready for volunteering, this section is dealing with what you might put in place to before you start taking on or keeping volunteers.

To be ready for volunteering consider your:

- Policies
- Documents
- Marketing

Policies

To be ready for volunteering you need to make sure that your policies are appropriate for your organisation and the type of work your volunteers will be carrying out.

You will need to think about how you want to present essential information to the prospective volunteers. This could be done in the form of a 'Volunteer Handbook' covering topics in some depth or put together a 'Volunteer Policy' document briefly touching on the essentials required.

There will be some elements of any role that you will need to think about the result of not having put a policy in place, for example working with machinery you would need to consider health & safety.

Ready

Policies

Your organisation may already have policies in place because you have volunteers already working for you. Some policies may be the same as those used for staff but some may need to be considered just for the volunteers.

Many organisations will cover the policies in a volunteer handbook, or in brief with the full policy available on request. This way the volunteer knows what policies are in place but does not get bombarded with lots of information on hundreds of pages.

Generally the areas of policy that could be covered are:

- Health & safety
- Equal opportunity & diversity
- Induction & training
- Expenses
- Supervision and support
- Confidentiality
- Child protection
- Vulnerable adults

The following is not a policy you write merely a legal requirement for many groups

- Insurance policy/ies

The full detail of the policy should be held by the organisation, volunteers should know about the policies and where to access them, they don't need full copies of them all.

A good way to explain your policies is in a 'Volunteer Handbook' or 'Volunteer Policy' which is an overview of the policies in place, along with other information about the organisation and what you do.

It is essential to provide a description of what your organisation does, mission and or vision statements and a definition of what a volunteer is. This will give a prospective volunteer a good insight to what you are all about and should help with recruitment.

Some organisations will include a 'Volunteer Agreement' document. It is generally a two way document detailing expectations for both volunteer and organisation or group. But it should be remembered it is not a legally binding contract.

More detail on developing policies has been compiled by Volunteering England in its 'Get it Right from the Start' publication available for download on their website - http://www.volunteering.org.uk/NR/rdonlyres/9944935D-0D0E-4385-B66B-7843EAF010/get_it_right.pdf



Alternatively please contact us at the Volunteer Centre for a copy.

Health & Safety

Despite the increase in importance of volunteering and the numbers who actually volunteer, (over 20 million people, equating to an approximate average of 88 million voluntary hours spent per week), the legal requirements for health and safety are less clear than they are for employees. There is a legal obligation for volunteers and it is essential to treat volunteers with equal consideration when it comes to health and safety.

There are two main areas of law to consider:

- The 'duty of care' a common law duty which applies to all individuals and organisations
- Health & safety legislation such as acts of Parliament and regulations set specific duties for employers in order to limit the risks to anyone coming in contact with their organisation.

Duty of care is a general common law on all individuals to avoid carelessly causing injury to persons. The duty is regardless of size of the organisation, income or if staff are paid or not.

Basically if you ask a volunteer to do something that results in them getting injured or injuring someone else, the members of your governing body may be liable. Regardless of how large or small the activities you are involved in there is a duty of care owed to your volunteers. Liability will depend on whether your organisation provided to take sufficient reasonable care.



Risk assessments are an important part of Health & Safety it will identify potential problems/risks before someone gets hurt. There are five steps to follow for assessing risk:

1. Identify hazards
2. Decide who might be harmed and how
3. Evaluate the risks and decide on precaution
4. Record your findings and implement them
5. Review your assessment and update if necessary

Health & safety legislation will refer to the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 which is the main general piece of health & safety law and provides the framework under which more detailed regulations are made.

Please refer to the Ready Appendix for more information about Health & Safety. Or look at the following links to useful websites:



Health and Safety Executive

The Government body for health and safety provide further information on all aspects of health and safety. www.hse.gov.uk or the Infoline 0845 345 0055

Worksafe - Provide occupational health and safety training and support to voluntary and community groups. www.worksafe.cswebsites.org

Equal opportunities

Equal opportunity covers equality and diversity and is a very important consideration when dealing with both staff and volunteers. It should prevent discrimination and help to create an inclusive organisation.

Equality is ensuring individuals or groups of individuals are treated fairly and equally and no less favourably, specific to their needs, including areas of race, gender, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation and age. Promoting equality should remove discrimination in all of the aforementioned areas. Bullying, harassment or victimisation is also considered as equality and diversity issues.

Diversity aims to recognise, respect and value people's differences to contribute and realise their full potential by promoting an inclusive culture for all staff and volunteers.

We now live in a very diverse society with people from many different backgrounds making up our communities, it is therefore important not to put up barriers even accidentally as this will limit the range of volunteers you could attract. By welcoming diversity you create a richer mix of people with different views, skills, attitudes and experiences.

If you don't have Equality and Diversity (Equal Opportunities) Policy you should produce one, covering all the points mentioned above. Volunteering should offer everyone a fair chance to contribute and avoid exclusion through labelling or stereotyping.



Useful Websites

- Disability Rights Commission: www.drc.gov.uk
- Equal Opportunities Commission: www.eoc.org.uk
- Equality and Human Rights Commission: www.equalityhumanrights.com.
- Commission for Racial Equality: www.cre.gov.uk/



The ready appendix provides a framework for developing your equal opportunities policy.

Induction & training

Induction

Remember the new volunteer may be feeling nervous and unsure of themselves so the Induction is an important way of helping volunteers feel part of your organisation and a great way of sharing information. Therefore it is advisable to tailor the induction to the activities an individual will be carrying out. Keep the induction concise and informative to ensure the volunteer is clear on what is expected of them and what they can expect from you. It is also a good opportunity for raising initial questions and to get to know them.

Areas that could be covered include:

- Organisation overview
- Role and location
- Reporting lines for allocation of work
- Volunteer policies
- Health & Safety, fire procedures, first aid
- Housekeeping – refreshments and toilets
- Expenses
- Introduce to staff and other volunteers

It is also worth ensuring that before the new volunteer comes along for their first day that you have supplied them with the role description, information about your organisation and importantly directions, preferably with a map. Also make sure that the volunteer manager or person supervising them is available to meet and greet them when they arrive.



The duration of the induction will depend on what and how much information you have to impart to the volunteers. It is also important to think about the timing of the induction, ideally you would want this to take place before the volunteer starts the job that will be assigned. It should form part of the welcome to their volunteering experience with you.

Ensure the volunteer has enough information about your organisation and service users they will be working with. There may be times when they will be acting as an 'ambassador' for your organisation.

You may also consider developing an Induction checklist that you can go through with them to ensure you do not forget anything and they get the information they require.

Specific job training

Ensure adequate resources are available to give the volunteer specific training needed for the individual role they will perform. For example it would be appropriate to give an overview of a database or specific computer program they may be not be used to. Why not produce a factsheet to use for equipment such as IT you can tailor them to the actual task that will be completed.



Take time with 'on the job' training as everyone has their own learning style and ability so some may pick things up easily others may need a little more time. Think about the tasks to be done and break them down into manageable chunks.

Make sure to check the volunteers understanding of what it is you are explaining to them and have patience as they may have a lot to take in, in one session.

If you have not been involved in delivering training before, ask Peterborough Council for Voluntary Service or Peterborough Volunteer Centre what current training is available.



Expenses

If your organisation has funding it is good practice to allocate part of your budget for paying volunteer expenses. As volunteers are giving their time freely and know they are not in a paid 'staff' role, it is still important to make sure that they are not 'out of pocket' to perform their role.

It is easy to over look expenses when you are working to tight budgets, but even more embarrassing and potentially damaging if you say you are reimbursing expenses when you don't have the money to pay them.

Reasonable expenses may include:

- Travel to and from the place of volunteering and travel whilst volunteering.
- Meals taken whilst volunteering
- Care of dependents, including children, whilst volunteering
- Postage, telephone calls, stationery, etc.
- Protective clothing/special equipment necessary.

When claiming expenses always ensure that the amount claimed is what the volunteer actually paid out. This must be supported by a receipt and not at a flat rate allowance, as this can create problems with taxation.



The flat rate payment can create two problems:

- The volunteer could run into problems with HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) and may be liable to pay tax on the money you pay them.
- You may be deemed to have created a contract of employment, in which case you will be liable to pay the volunteer the Minimum Wage (see www.hmrc.gov.uk/nmw/ for rates) for all the time they are with you, plus all employment contract law comes into force.

Volunteers who pay tax will have no problems as long as they are only receiving reimbursement of genuine out of pocket expenses, supported by receipts. However they could have problems with claiming mileage if they use their own vehicle. These claims should be claimed on an expenses claim form with details of the date, reason for travel and distance travelled or mileage. Make sure that you reimburse according to the allowances approved by HMRC you can check out the most current approved rates at <http://www.hmrc.gov.uk/payee/rates-thresholds.htm>

There is no set rate for paying volunteers mileage rates, the amount should be agreed annually by your trustee board. You should pay all volunteers the same rate.



It is not unreasonable to ask volunteers to use the cheapest mode of transport wherever possible, unless they are expected to use a car as part of their volunteer role.

If your organisation really cannot afford to reimburse your volunteers' expenses, do try to reach a point where this is possible. Always include volunteers' expenses in funding applications. You must inform your volunteers if you cannot pay expenses.

Support and supervision

Support and supervision is what you do to basically 'manage' your volunteers when they are in your care. This can cover everything from allocating workload to celebrating the great work your volunteers do.

Support and Supervision can include:

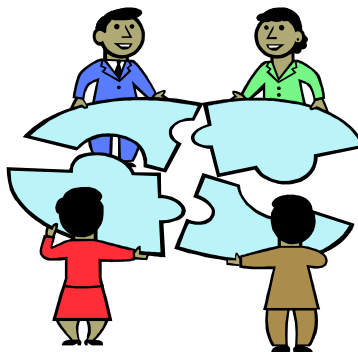
- Supervision and Feedback
- Problem solving
- Reviewing roles
- Reward and recognition

The subject is covered in more detail in the GO section of the toolkit.



You must decide who is going to provide the daily support to your volunteers. This might not be the person who is responsible for the overall management and supervision of your volunteers. If you are asking a member of your staff team or another volunteer to take on this daily role, check they are okay with this and understand fully what their responsibility is.

Have in place a 'back up plan' in cases of holiday or sickness. There is nothing worse than a volunteer coming in to help and they don't know what tasks are prepared for them. Volunteer's time is precious too, don't waste it!



Insurance

All volunteer involving organisations should have an insurance policy that covers volunteers. There are several different types of policy, so it is often confusing to work out which is the most appropriate. Basically, volunteers should be covered by either the employer's liability insurance or public liability insurance and, depending on the type of work involved; the organisation may need professional indemnity insurance as well. Policies should explicitly mention volunteers because they may not automatically be covered. Insurance companies should also be aware of the types of work that volunteers are doing, because if the tasks are high-risk then the insurance policies may have to be changed to accommodate these risks.

As insurance is not only a legal requirement but very complex when employing staff, delivering services or going about your daily activities we recommend you always seek advice from an insurance company regulated by the industry. You should also check whether they specialise in charity insurance (there are many insurance brokers and companies that do). The information below is a guide only.



There are three types of insurance covering organisations:

Employer's Liability Insurance

Covers paid employees in the event of accident, disease or injury caused or made worse as a result of work or of employer's negligence. This insurance does not automatically cover volunteers. There is no obligation to extend the policy to cover volunteers, but it is good practice to do so. The policy must explicitly mention volunteers if they are to be covered by it.

Public Liability Insurance

This should always explicitly mention volunteers. It protects the organisation for claims by members of the public for death, illness, loss, injury, or accident caused by the negligence of the organisation. Public liability insurance generally covers anybody other than employees who come into contact with the organisation. This should include volunteers, covering them against loss or injury caused by negligence of the organisation if they are not covered under the employer's liability insurance. It also protects for loss or damage to property caused through the negligence of someone acting with the authority of the organisation, which would include the actions of volunteers.

Public liability cover should clearly cover loss or injury caused by volunteers. In some cases a volunteer could be sued as an individual for damage caused to a third party, so the organisation's public liability insurance should indemnify them against this.

Professional Liability

Professional liability, professional indemnity errors and omissions or malpractice insurance covers the organisation for claims arising from loss or injury caused by services provided negligently or without reasonable care. Such loss might arise, for example, from incorrect care or inaccurate advice. An organisation can be sued for claims arising from incorrect advice or information even if it is given free or via a telephone helpline. Professional liability insurance should also cover defamation, inadvertent breach of copyright, confidentiality and loss of documents. However, this type of insurance is not always easily obtained and maybe your organisation will be questioned by the Charity Commission why you require it.

Insurance cover (public or employer liability) does not automatically cover people under 16, so it is important to check that there are no lower age limits to the cover. It is normally easy to extend the policy to cover young people, but occasionally the insurance company may decide that because of the types of work involved, the risk of involving young people would be too high. There may also be problems with upper age limits. Many insurance companies will not extend policies to cover people over a certain age. It is well worth searching around to find insurance that allows you to include as many people as possible, but many organisations find that insurers will not extend certain policies to cover people over 80.

If an organisation owns the vehicle being used, then it is responsible for arranging insurance. If the volunteer owns the vehicle, then he or she is responsible for arranging insurance and informing the insurer about his/her volunteer driving.

In the event of a driver having an accident during their volunteering and there is a problem with the insurance for that vehicle, the organisation could be held responsible, whether or not it owns the vehicle involved. The organisation can take out a Contingent Liability Policy to protect it from this risk.

Your trustees and managers should check insurance documents are up to date and a copy of your employer's liability insurance should be publically displayed. If you are undertaking a new activity we suggest you check with your insurance company to make sure it is covered.



Confidentiality and Data Protection

Confidentiality

It is bad practice to disclose any confidential information about your staff, volunteers or service users. Any breach of confidence should be dealt with according to your confidentiality policy or complaints procedure and considered very serious.

What exactly is meant by a breach of confidence?

- If a child/person under the age of eighteen makes a disclosure of abuse or something else to a volunteer then the volunteer is obliged by law to follow the procedures laid down by the organisation they are working for.
- Volunteers should feel free to discuss any worries, questions or general observations with the Volunteer Coordinator or the contact within the organisation.
- Personal information about service users will remain confidential.
- For example: there is no reason why a volunteer needs to know why a service user has mental health issues. If this information is revealed to a volunteer by the service user then it is not appropriate to discuss this outside of the project and should be considered as confidential. Personal information about any service user is to be treated respectfully and the service user may not wish what they have told you to become common knowledge even if they have not specifically indicated this.
- Confidential matters must not be discussed with members of the general public.
- Personal information about other volunteers or staff even if disclosed in a social setting should not be repeated and should be treated in a sensitive manner.

Data Protection Policy (DPA)

The Data Protection Act 1998 (DPA) concerns personal data held about living individuals, and provides such data that must:

- be obtained and processed fairly and lawfully and only if certain conditions are met;
- be obtained for specified and lawful purposes;
- be adequate, relevant and not excessive for those purposes;
- be accurate and up-to-date;
- not be kept for longer than is necessary;
- be processed in accordance with the rights of data subjects;
- be kept safe from unauthorised access, loss or destruction;
- not be transferred to countries outside the European Economic Area, unless to countries with equivalent levels of data protection.



Personal Data

Your organisation holds and processes data relating to service users, volunteers and staff in order to undertake the administration needs of your group. You may have the following information retained about your volunteers:

- Personal Details
- Photographs
- Information linking individuals with specific opportunities
- References
- Information on CRB Disclosure checks

We recommend you check how and where this information is kept. Who has access to it? If you are involved in a small group with no office facilities this information maybe kept in a private home. Could other people in your house have access to this information? If yes, arrange for a separate lockable briefcase or similar.



Sensitive Personal Data

The DPA defines certain types of data as sensitive. Such data cannot be collected or processed without your explicit consent.

You may ask volunteers to disclose any disability or issues that may affect the type of volunteering that they could undertake. There is no requirement to provide this information but it may assist the organisation in matching the volunteer with an appropriate opportunity or taking appropriate action to open up otherwise restricted volunteering opportunities.

When information such as this is disclosed it must be kept in the strictest of confidence. If this information is to be disclosed to a third party the volunteer must be asked for their consent before such a disclosure occurs.

For more information about the Data Protection Act 1998
<http://www.opsi.gov.uk/acts/acts1998/19980029.htm>



Problem solving

Problem solving is covered in the 'GO' section of the toolkit, but for the purposes of the information for your Volunteer policy, we need to briefly explain what we mean by problem solving.

Volunteers need to know what processes and measures your organisation has in place to deal with complaints, who they need to speak to if they want to raise an issue or are worried about anything. There should be clear guidelines when things go wrong or volunteers breach their volunteer's agreement

Above all make it clear that it is a team effort and some of these things can actually be prevented if the communication channels are clear, open and honest.

Complaints policy

If you don't have a complaints policy available you are not required to produce one, but remember a volunteer is not protected by employment law. Volunteers need to have a mechanism to comment, complain or make suggestions for improvement. By having an open Complaints and Suggestion policy available your volunteers will have an easy route to follow up any problems.

There is an example complaints procedure in the Go appendix.



Application forms and volunteer role descriptions

These are dealt with in more detail in the next section – Steady

Before you start involving volunteers you must think about what you are going to ask them to do. As a trustee board or management team this is best done by setting up a volunteer programme planning session. List everything you do as an organisation and where volunteers could get involved. It doesn't matter how long the list of volunteering tasks is, just make sure you can support all your volunteers.



Volunteers should compliment the role of paid staff not replace them. If you do not have paid staff you may want to think about how volunteers can help your group expand. What sort of skills would be really useful and look at creating new volunteering roles to attract these skills.



Marketing

Initial information for a prospective volunteer

Information about your group and how you will present it to your prospective volunteers, this could be in the form of an information pack.

Other aspects of marketing your volunteering needs is dealt with in more detail in section two – Ready

Steady – section two

Introduction

In the Ready section we looked at what was needed to begin the volunteer process. We are now looking at implementing procedures to get the volunteers on board and up involved in your organisation.

The areas we will look at here are:

- Recruitment
- CRB and vetting & barring
- References
- Induction and training

Recruitment

You must consider the processes you could use to ensure you are recruiting the right people for the roles you have available. How and what type of 'interview' will you use and what sort of questions will you ask.

References

With more people becoming interested in volunteering, especially with new government initiatives supporting the long term unemployed, there is a need to find out who you could be recruiting. You may have to think a little more creatively with volunteer references, you are not recruiting a paid member of staff; some volunteers may not have previous employment references.

This along with other measures will help get the best balance of volunteer matching to the opportunities you have.

CRB and Vetting & barring

The current legislation is in place to protect children and vulnerable adults with the Criminal Records Bureau and the checks that are made. The further extension of protection comes under vetting and barring and will give a more complete view of an individual's background, to aid in the suitability of them to perform a volunteer role. This would only apply where it is applicable to use the information or to request it.

As this is such an important issue we have dealt with this in more detail on pages 27 - 29



Induction and training

Here we look at the importance of your volunteer induction and ongoing training when volunteers are in place.

Steady

Recruitment introduction

Having spent time identifying your volunteer role you want to make sure that you take on the right person. You will want to develop a process which enables you to find the best matched volunteer. But also if there are expenses incurred during recruitment such as CRB checking, they are budgeted into your annual costs.

The steps you may follow are:

- Identify the volunteer need
- Write a volunteer role and specification
- Advertise
- Acknowledge response
- Completion of application form
- Interviews
- Taster session for the role
- Offer role pending references and CRB completion (if required)
- Induction and initial training
- Start role

There is not a hard and fast rule with recruitment and you may have a way or an idea of how you will do it yourself. The important thing is to think through what is it you want or need a volunteer to do, how long will it take for a job to be done, do you need more than one person to cover the role.

Again where and how you choose to advertise is up to you and the type of role you have on offer. But the very minimum would be to come through the Peterborough Volunteer Centre telephone 01733 311016.

Make the interview and checks appropriate to your organisations needs, references are important, as are CRB checks if they are required or appropriate.

Induction and training are also important as they will help embed the volunteer into your organisation.

You must also check whether your volunteer requires any of this information in other formats e.g. large print.



Volunteer motivations

Prospective volunteers may have different reasons or motivations to want to volunteer. Having a good understanding of them is useful for recruitment, retention and maintaining positive relationships with them.

Motivations for volunteering can include:

- Learning new skills
- Using existing skills
- Acting on a belief or passion
- To have fun
- To feel useful
- Be part of the community
- Gain work experience
- Meeting new people and making new friends
- Getting out of the house



People have many underlying motivations or reasons why they volunteer and to be able to identify them helps in the recruitment and allocation of roles.

By knowing your volunteers and what makes them 'tick' will enable you to find ways to keep them motivated in their role. You can also think about reward and recognition relating to their motivation. All in all you will be able to retain a happy team of volunteers because you have got to know them and know what it takes to keep them happy.

Role description

So you think you have need of volunteers to support what you are doing. You will need to develop a role or roles that people can do. By creating a role description this will not only give a prospective volunteer an idea of what they can do, but gives you the opportunity to see exactly what is it is you need.

This is a volunteer ROLE description NOT a JOB description and must be stated as such.



The volunteer role should be clearly defined and have within it specific responsibilities. Break the role down into the distinct parts then evaluate.

- Is there too much work to complete in a couple of hours?
- Is there more work for one person to do, if so how many volunteering positions do you need?
- If you have more than one volunteer for a role are you developing a roster?
- Who if anyone will they be working with?
- Does CRB and Vetting and Barring need to be considered?

A good role description should contain all or some of the following elements:

Title: Name of the role

Role description: Outline the role and its contribution to the work of your organisation.

Tasks or activities: List the main tasks/activities involved in the role.

Location: Where the volunteering will take place, will they be office based, working outside, in a different location or in a service user's home.

Support and Supervision: Who is responsible for the management of the volunteer and the relationships with staff and other volunteers? Also describe what support will be available and what form this will take as well as any training required.

Benefits: This could include things such as training, re-imburement of expenses etc

Time: Give the timescales involved in the role and if there is flexibility on the days of attendance.

Recruitment process: Make it clear if the volunteer requires any of the following: references, an interview, completed application form, Criminal Records Bureau Check.

Having your clear and succinct role description developed will allow you to focus what details are necessary for the medium you are using to advertise the role.

Volunteer Person specification

This is different to the role description in that the specifications are the ‘nuts and bolts’ of the job you require someone to do. They make it easier for both you and the volunteer to realise what skills and abilities are required for the role.

The person specification should come about as a result of the volunteer role description. In other words you have created or identified a role, now what skills do a volunteer need to be able to fulfil it.

The Volunteer person specification can be shown under three headings; Attributes, Essential and Desirable. There are different ways in which you can reflect these in your documentation. This could be achieved by showing a table with the list of attributes in one column then descriptions of the essential and desirable qualities. For example: (You would complete the essential and desirable criteria as required.)

Attributes	Essential	Desirable
Knowledge		
Skills		
Relevant experience		
Team working		
Skills		

You may decide to have a table that describes the attribute but you tick whether it is essential or desirable. An example shown below:

Experience		Essential	Desirable
1.	To have undertaken Leadership and Volunteering in Sport in at least one of the following settings: School Sport, Community/Club Sport, Sports Events	✓	
2.	To have gained an undergraduate degree or be in the process of undertaking an undergraduate degree or equivalent		✓
3.	To have experience and knowledge of sport either as a performer or volunteer	✓	
4.	To have undertaken and experienced leadership and volunteering qualifications in at least one sport (for example coaching or officiating awards)		✓

You may find in what ever format you use there are only essential criteria, it is worth asking what is really essential and could the opportunity be opened up to a wider audience by being creative or flexible about your needs.

Also is it necessary for someone to have all the skills required or is there opportunity for development within the role?



This can be shown on a specification in different ways but you are recruiting a volunteer not an employee. So what attributes are necessary for the role?

Please remember that many people volunteer for fun, if you make all your volunteer roles too specific or skills based you may be putting up unnecessary barriers. We recommend you create a range of volunteering opportunities and perhaps include a general statement such as “whilst we have listed the essential skills for this volunteering role, we are always willing to discuss each role with you to explore your skills and match them to our needs”



If you make the volunteer specification so restrictive that you may narrow your ability to actually recruit. If this is the case why not reconsider the scope of the role. You may have a specific need in a particular area of expertise for example marketing or treasurer, but again try not to be too exclusive about the attributes, you may find someone who has desirable skills but not essential, so you will have to make a decision as to whether you think they are what you want. Also, with training many people can adapt existing skills to your requirements.



Marketing and Advertising

You have identified the need for volunteer help and have developed your role description and person specification, the next step is to let people know you are in the market to recruit people to volunteer with you.

How will you get your message out there that you are looking for volunteers to work with you?

There are various methods to advertise for volunteers these can include:

- Local Volunteer Centre in conjunction with Do-It website
- Press
- Your own website
- Word of mouth
- Posters and leaflets

Remember to keep on top of costs use services that are free to you, your local Volunteer Centre or the Do-It website. If you come direct to the Volunteer Centre we will put your volunteer request on to the Do-It website. If you put it on directly with Do-It, we will be made aware of your volunteering opportunity.

Using the media will allow you to spread the word to a wide audience. Try and develop a good relationship with them, find out who in local media covers community and charity and give them regular updates of things your organisation is doing. Don't forget if you write a press release and you need volunteers make sure this is included.



If you have never written a press release, help is available at http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/chartermark/holders/pr_toolkit/write_press_release.aspx



Creating your own web pages can be a cost effective way of getting your message out there. However if you want a state of the art, bells and whistles version you may have to pay for someone to develop it for you, if you don't have the capabilities to do it yourself. You also may need to comply with Disability Discrimination Laws as you are providing a service.

Word of mouth is a cheap way of creating an impactful and one of the most successful ways of recruiting volunteers. Existing staff, volunteers, supporters and 'customers' will 'advocate' your organisation and tell friends, neighbours and work colleagues, creating a pool of potentially interested parties.

Be creative, develop posters and leaflets that can be distributed and displayed.

There are many places where you can place your posters and leaflets:

- Schools and colleges
- Libraries
- Town halls and other public buildings
- Doctors and dentists
- Sports, leisure centres and community buildings
- Places of worship
- Shop windows/notice boards
- Pubs/bars/cafes
- Job centres
- Volunteer Centre

The Peterborough Council for Voluntary Service can always give you a costing for printing your posters and leaflets.

Many groups make the mistake of trying to include too much writing or information in their leaflets or posters. Avoid this, eye catching, fun or dramatic posters will have more effect. Simple leaflets providing an over view of your group and examples of how volunteers can help are enough. Remember to always include your contact details.



Dos and Don'ts for Promoting your Opportunities

Do	Don't
Keep it brief	Be too formal
Describe your organisation and what you do	Use acronyms or jargon
Describe the role, especially what the time commitment is	Assume people know about your organisation or what you do
Use plain English	Include unnecessary detail
Be clear about the qualities you are looking for	Forget to include how to respond and when
Stress the benefits of getting involved	Oversell – be realistic about benefits
Sound welcoming and use upbeat words like 'opportunity' and 'inspiring'	Forget to include details of how to contact you
Get someone to proof read it for you	Disguise the commitment required
Put your ad or notice in places your 'target' audience is likely to see	
If you are a registered charity, make sure you include your charity number	

If setting up a marketing campaign is something you are new to, why not enrol on the Peterborough Voluntary Sector marketing course. For more information contact PCVS on 01733 342683 or email pcvs@pcvs.co.uk



Interviews and taster sessions

The interview will give you an insight into the person and should be a two way process. Letting you know if this is someone you can work with and the prospective volunteer's opportunity to see if you are the type of people or organisation they want to volunteer with.

The interview process should be tailored to your organisation and can be as formal or informal as the role or work you undertake dictates.

You may want to have a process which includes an informal chat, to allow the prospective volunteer the chance to find out about what you do and what type of volunteering they can expect. If there is a CRB check needed for the role it is essential to explaining this early, if the potential volunteer is not willing to go through this process you will avoid wasting time. The prospective volunteer will probably be honest with you or their reaction will tell you.

The next stage could be giving the person a taster session for the role; this will give the volunteer a good idea of your organisation and the actual volunteering. They and you can then make an informed decision as to whether this is the role for them. Also as they are being supervised or chaperoned you will at this stage not need to CRB check if it is required. This will save time and money having a check done if they don't proceed with you. The length of time a taster session lasts is down to you from a 'one off' or several sessions similar to a probation period.

This could lead onto a more formal interview at which you may wish to go through some of the specific requirements. These could include completion of CRB forms and giving any other relevant paperwork such as forms for references.

Following the results of the CRB checks and references and depending on what is received you may then want to offer the volunteer position from that point. Do make the prospective volunteer aware that this will be the case and taking up the role will depend on the outcome of these checks. Do try and give some idea of the timescales that can be involved especially with the CRB checks, as these can take anything from a couple of weeks to two three months to come back.

How you ask the questions will be up to you, the underlying information is what you want to get to. You could appear to simply having a chat over a cup of tea, or in a more formal office setting.

You should cover the following questions:

- Why the volunteer wants the role
- What would they like to get out of volunteering
- What experience, skills, hobbies do they have that are relevant to the role
- What information would they like to know about the role or organisation

Make sure you allow time for the volunteer to ask you questions, they may have many more than you imagine.



Screening, CRB checks, Vetting & Barring

The protection of children and vulnerable adults is of high importance and in the voluntary sector this is no different. It is part of your statutory duty of care as an organisation to make arrangements to safeguard these vulnerable groups.



Not all volunteer roles require a CRB check, your trustee board and management team should carefully consider whether all or any of your volunteering roles require a CRB check.



In essence all the screening, Criminal Records Bureau and Vetting and Barring are in place to protect vulnerable groups but also organisations and individuals who work with them. It should give all parties peace of mind that as far as is possible all efforts have been made to ensure suitable people are working with vulnerable groups.

Remember that when the CRB forms are completed there are essential pieces of information that needs to be provided to ensure the paperwork goes through smoothly. These include address details for the past five years and multiple forms of identification. [See Steady appendix for PCVS CRB document](#)



Much has been written in the media about the new Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA) and its registration and CRB and most of this has 'muddied' the water and provided an unclear message. The main problems appear to have been around what makes up regular contact with vulnerable groups and the newspapers almost claiming that any contact even by mum's taking kids to football practice will need to be CRB checked and ISA registered. This is not strictly correct especially if this arrangement is done on a non regular basis, for example a few friends and neighbours taking it in turns to take the kids to football.

If a volunteer role is regulated or controlled, specifically working with vulnerable groups such as volunteers helping blind or partially sighted people in their own homes or helping with children's groups or coaching a youth football team. Some common sense should prevail, you know what your volunteer roles you have and what exposure to different groups and whether it is supervised or not. But do check what the ISA defines as a regulated or controlled group.

CRB checks are there to help safeguard vulnerable groups and not part of your recruitment policy to screen out people who may have a criminal record. The checks need to be used appropriately and only if they are required. Also if a CRB check does uncover information about a conviction this alone may not be enough for you to not take the person on as a volunteer, it may not be in the requirements for the role that they applied for.

Foreign Nationals will need to have CRB checks completed in the same way as a UK National. If you have any concerns in these areas it always best to speak to the professionals at CRB.

There are several very important mandatory changes as a result of the ISA registration, to volunteers working in regulated roles. For example if the volunteers CRB and ISA registration has not come through, they are NOT allowed to work in a regulated role, even if they are supervised. Before Vetting and Barring under CRB checking, organisations would often allow volunteers begin work as long as they had someone with them supervising. The other change will be not to allow a barred person to have a regulated role, if you are informed that they appear on list YOU must not allow them to perform that role as there are now fines and prison sentences to prevent this.

Further to this, under the new Vetting and Barring Scheme (VBS), organisations may face fines of up to £5,000 if they fail to refer information about an employee who harms or poses a risk of harm to children or vulnerable adults,

ISA Vetting and Barring Scheme timetable:

From 12 October 2009

Increased safeguards introduced, including a wider definition of 'Regulated Activities' (see Steady appendix). Eligibility criteria for Enhanced CRB checks extended to anyone volunteering or working in a regulated position.

It is a criminal offence for voluntary organisations to knowingly take on barred individuals for volunteering work with vulnerable groups. It will also be a criminal offence for barred people to look for or take on a volunteer role with vulnerable groups

Organisations have a duty to pass on to the ISA any relevant information about individuals who may pose a risk to vulnerable groups.

From July 2010

New volunteers or existing volunteers changing roles to take on a regulated activity or changing role within a regulated activity may apply for ISA registration. People currently working with vulnerable groups and are staying in their current role will not have to become registered until later in the 5 year phasing in of Vetting and Barring.

Individuals can apply for ISA registration and a CRB check on a new single application form.

Once ISA registered the individual will be continuously monitored and their status reassessed against any new information which may come to light.

From November 2010

Employees and volunteers have a statutory duty to register with the Vetting and Barring Scheme through the ISA. The organisation has a statutory duty to check that their volunteers have Vetting status, which comes into effect in November 2010.

From 2011

Existing volunteers without a CRB check must apply for ISA registration. Also existing volunteers with CRB checks must also apply for ISA registration, starting with those whose CRB is the oldest.

If you have any doubts or are unsure of CRB or the Vetting and Barring scheme rather than just getting everyone checked even if it is not appropriate to the role always take advice from the authority concerned. Also, as there are charges to having checks completed it is not a good use of your budget to spend on irrelevant checks being done.

- Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) contact
Telephone: 0870 9090811 Mon - Fri 8am to 8pm Sat 10am to 5pm
Email customerservices@crb.gsi.gov.uk
Website <http://www.crb.homeoffice.gov.uk>
- Vetting and Barring - Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA)
Telephone 0300 123 1111 Mon - Fri 8am to 5.30pm
Email info@vbs-info.org.uk
Website <http://www.isa.gov.org.uk/>
- UK Border Agency
<http://www.bia.homeoffice.gov.uk/>



Remember if your group are unable to access CRB's, PCVS are able to provide a CRB checking service, through a link to Atlantic Data Ltd. The service is provided at the current (as at Q1 2010) minimum administration charge of:

£10 for Volunteers

£45 Staff

Please check with PCVS for current charges



Criminal Records Bureau

References

Checking references is an important part of the recruitment process and can (where relevant) compliment Criminal Record Bureau checking, Vetting and Barring. References are requested once you decide to offer a volunteering role.

Taking up references is important for:

- Protection – for voluntary organisations, service users and volunteers.
- Information – in addition to that gained at interview, this is essential for the best use of the volunteer.
- Selection – of the best role for each volunteer.
- Confidence – for all concerned, including the volunteer.

There is a legal requirement for volunteers working with children under 16 and vulnerable adults to have two references checked.

Although it is up to the discretion of individual organisations or projects if they want to ask for references from volunteers, it is strongly recommended as 'good practice' to do so. It is advisable that you adopt a standard policy for all volunteers.

Before the volunteer starts, even when desperate for a volunteer, you should ensure that references are taken up, for it is at this time that organisations may be open to exploitation. Problems may arise from rushed decisions, insufficient information or faulty intuition.

Either ask the volunteer to complete a confidential form or help them to complete one at the interview stage. The potential volunteer should be asked to give the name and address of two independent referees, preferably who know the character and personal qualities of the volunteer well, but who are not related.

Some volunteers will find it easier than others to nominate referees. You can help suggesting the kind of people who would be suitable, e.g. a past employer, a doctor, a Church Minister, Social Worker, key worker, Health Visitor or friend etc. This is important. There is a danger that unless carefully handled the request for references might result in some people being discouraged from volunteering, because initially they are unable to think of anyone appropriate to suggest. Care has to be taken to ensure that the volunteer who is unfamiliar with the practice of giving references is not intimidated.



Doubtful references

Experience has shown that a reference indicating a problem does not necessarily mean the volunteer is completely unsuitable; rather such information can be helpful to the organiser in identifying a sensitive situation to be avoided, the volunteer can often be successfully involved in other areas within the organisation.

How to ask for references

You can either send a standard letter to the referee, or you can send a reference reply form. You should always enclose a Stamped Addresses Envelope.

Induction and Training

Induction is an important way of helping volunteers feel part of your organisation and a great way of sharing information. Therefore it is advisable to tailor the induction to the activities an individual will be carrying out. Keep the induction concise and informative to ensure the volunteer is clear what is expected of them and what they can expect from you. It is also a good opportunity for raising initial questions and to get to know them.

Areas that could be covered include:

- Organisation overview
- Role and location
- Reporting lines for allocation of work
- Volunteer policies
- Health & Safety, fire procedures, first aid
- Housekeeping – tea, coffee and toilets
- Expenses
- Introduce to staff

The duration of the induction will depend on what and how much information you have to impart to the volunteers. It is also important to think about the timing of the induction, ideally you would want this to take place before the volunteer starts the role. It should form part of the welcome to their volunteering experience with you.

Ensure the volunteer has enough information about your organisation as there may be times when they will be acting as an ‘ambassador’ for you and the better they can present themselves it will reflect on your organisation.

As part of the Induction process it is worth producing a checklist, and once an item is covered it can be ticked off as completed. You and the volunteer could initial the sign off with a date so that you both know that you have covered that part of the process.

Other useful information at this stage could include:

- Induction checklist
- Contact details and who they report to
- Leaflet of information pack about your organisation
- Volunteer policy or handbook

Make sure you cover all the things you would want to know on your first day working somewhere as well as the volunteering itself. Don’t forget a volunteer may only be with you a couple of times a week and for a few hours, so some of the things a paid worker who comes in everyday for seven or eight hours will automatically know they may need several reminders. Be patient with your volunteers if it takes some things a little long for them to understand, it is not a reflection of their ability, just them not having the daily repetition of learning.

It is also important that where you have staff or even other volunteers who may have been with you a long time and are 'part of the furniture', new volunteers are made welcome and integrated quickly. This will help them settle into the role and become a key part of your team quickly.

Training

Ensure adequate resources are available to give the volunteer specific training needed for the individual role they will perform.

Take time with 'on the job' training as everyone has their own learning style and ability, so some may pick things up easily others may need a little more time. Think about the tasks to be done and break them down into manageable chunks.

Make sure to check the volunteers understanding of what it is you are explaining to them and have patience as they may have a lot to take in, in one session. So it may be appropriate to develop a training plan of things that need to be covered to enable the volunteer to become competent in the role.

Courses and National Curriculum Qualifications (NVQ's) can form part of a volunteers training. For example there could be free courses offered to volunteers through the local Council for Voluntary Services, or Train to Gain these could cover a range of topics that are open to people working in the voluntary sector.

GO!

Introduction

In the 'Ready' section we have looked at what you need to put in place to get started. Moving onto the 'Steady' section which is getting the volunteers into the organisation and started. 'Go' is the ongoing support you need to think about as a volunteer manager or person responsible for volunteers, to keep them with you as keen and eager volunteers working hard for your organisation.

What are the issues you need to consider to fulfil the ongoing need of your organisation to have volunteers and the needs of those volunteers you have working with you. Also to consider the people your organisation is working for, especially if the volunteer's role is vital to them as befriender, driver or gardener etc.

- Do you have procedures in place to allow the volunteer to know how and who to give feedback to, who they tell if there is a problem?
- How do you know if the volunteer is happy and isn't likely to just not turn up ever again or come in under duress?
- Do you know if the volunteer role the organisation set up 5 years ago or two weeks ago is still relevant and realistic?

The overall maintenance of both the volunteer and the roles is important and this section will look at:

- Supervision and management
- Retention and reward
- Law and the volunteer
- Other support available and the wider networks

GO

Support and Supervision

Volunteers do need both support and supervision, in order to keep them updated and motivated. In a similar way to paid staff in that if there is insufficient support they become bored disinterested and unproductive. Volunteers as they are not paid do need to be reassured they are doing a good job and are valuable to you. The last thing you want is volunteers to be hostile or leave feeling unfulfilled.

An unhappy volunteer will start to create their own role or do only what they want. Therefore, having good supervision coupled with the role description should help keep the volunteer focused to what is required. No one wants a volunteer to feel they have to put in superhuman hours or feats to fulfil their volunteering role.



Support and Supervision can include:

- Supervision and Feedback
- Problem solving
- Reviewing roles
- Reward and recognition

It is important for volunteers to know who they should go to if they do have a problem or who will allocate them jobs to do. This is often the volunteer manager but could be whoever you choose to nominate.

Ongoing support and supervision needs to be a constant and consistent process throughout the lifespan of the volunteer roles. Regular monitoring and feedback will allow you to know your volunteers, recognise pressures on them and when things are not quite right. Problem solving will come from the monitoring and feedback, if there are things going wrong you should have processes in place to help. Also from doing all these things you will be in a position to look at and review your volunteering needs, keep them consistent and up to date.

Supervision and Feedback

Supervision or what ever you decide to call it should be an ongoing process allowing you and the volunteer to reflect on the work they have done, look at the support you are giving, any personal development and to discuss any other issues that may arise.

The supervision can be done both formally and informally. For example if your volunteer comes in one session a week, welcome them on arrival; set out any tasks that need to be done; give them any organisational updates and give them the opportunity to give you feedback. You could also set up regular monthly meetings to discuss in more depth any issues such as development or any other areas that may arise.

The formality of the supervision will be up to you and it may work well to have a regular updates especially if you work with volunteers who are not actually in the same building as you. They could have a befriending role which means they are home based, so keeping in touch becomes more important as they don't want to feel isolated.

If you do have an inclusive organisation it will be much easier to spot things that are challenging your volunteers and things that are going well.

It is important to encourage feedback both formally and informally and with open and honesty communication. Using the results of feedback will help shape your volunteer proposition and allow you to give a better service to customers.

Remember your volunteers are often in the front line working with people delivering help, so their experience is invaluable to help improve services. This will also help with retaining your volunteers, as they will be taking an active part in shaping what they are doing in their role.

Make sure you act on feedback given if you ask for it; you have a responsibility to do something with it. There is nothing worse than someone giving some constructive feedback and never to hear anything about it again, especially if it is a good idea that could benefit the organisation.



Supervision and feedback is a benefit and not a chore as it helps open up good communication with the volunteers and also helps address their concerns before they become major issues, which could result in losing the volunteer. Also it will help if there are more serious concerns that have to be addressed through problem solving and actions.

During supervision it a good idea to keep records of your meetings especially if you are conducting a slightly more formal monthly update. Again this should not be intimidating and if you produce a document to record information you could either get the volunteer to write it up or do it together and both sign as a true record of the meeting. By keeping a clear record you are protecting you the volunteer and the organisation if something goes wrong.

Problem solving

Remember volunteering should be a positive experience for all concerned, however sometimes things can go wrong. If they do it is important to do something about it and act quickly. Just hoping things will resolve themselves just doesn't work, you need to act.

Having a simple problem solving procedure in place shows that you are committed to the volunteers and recognise that from time to time there may be the need to deal with problems. If the process is clear it should help to prevent small issues developing into full scale problems. Remember that positive experience in volunteering we want to have!

The procedure has to be used as a two way process, in other words if the volunteer has done something wrong or is not performing, the procedure needs to apply the same way if you or the organisation does something that upsets the volunteer.

You cannot create a legally binding contract with your volunteers, unlike a paid employee contract of employment. A problem solving procedure provides a framework only for you and your volunteers if things go wrong.



What the problem solving procedure could contain

Discipline

Most disciplinary matters will be dealt with informally with the volunteer manager responsible for the volunteer. If required, the procedure to be followed is outlined below:

Stage one: formal warning; Stage two: written warning; Stage three: volunteer is asked to leave

If you feel it appropriate, the role and placement of the volunteer may be terminated by their manager at one week's notice, or immediately where behaviour equivalent to gross misconduct has occurred. In all cases the volunteer will be entitled to an explanation of the decision and action taken.

Grievance

A grievance or complaint raised by a volunteer should be examined quickly and effectively. A mutually agreeable resolution will be sought at each stage:

- Stage one: The volunteer should put their grievance to their manager. Where the grievance is against the manager the matter should be raised with a more senior manager.
- Stage two: if there is no satisfactory resolution at stage one; the volunteer should put their grievance to a Senior Manager, up to and including the Chief Executive. A written response will be provided within ten working days.

Further details are in the GO Appendix.



Reward and recognition

Reward and recognition is not what most volunteers are doing it for, many will feel the act of volunteering itself and helping others is reward enough. Volunteers should always feel they are an important part of the organisation. Where appropriate they should be involved in decision making, and their achievements should be recognised



You will find that when you have the right balance of reward and recognition; it will help with retention and volunteer fulfilment. It can be the simple things that actually make the biggest difference. Saying **thank you** can be as important in feeling recognised and rewarded as a special meal or party.

Sometimes a chat over a cup of tea or coffee can make all the difference. Remember those inexpensive touches can make all the difference, things like remembering birthdays or anniversaries either with a card and or a small gift. These are often things that would be done for paid staff, so why not extend this to your volunteers. You could think about sharing positive 'customer' feedback.

Suggested ways you could reward and recognise your volunteers

Formal

- Volunteer events (for example, a 'thank you event' as part of Volunteers' Week)
- Certificates (could be an annual 'thank you', or after a fixed term, such as completion of a specific number of volunteering hours)
- Accreditation, such as NVQ's etc.
- Invite volunteers to meetings that affect them, such as staff meetings if appropriate
- Invite volunteers on to working groups
- Annual Volunteer Awards Event, organised by Peterborough Volunteer Centre

Informal

- Saying 'thank you'
- Making sure they have enough tasks to do every day.
- Including them in social events
- Going out for lunch, to the pub etc.
- Asking them about informal matters, such as where the new notice board should go
- Birthday/anniversary or celebration cards
- Regular volunteer get-togethers such as a coffee morning

Your trustee board and management team should plan how, when and where you will reward and recognise volunteers helping your group



Some points of Law from Volunteering England

Involving young volunteers

While there are legal restrictions on employing young people, they do not in general apply to young volunteers. Volunteering England's Volunteers and the Law book gives details to consider from The Children and Young Persons Act 1933. Both the young person and their parent or guardian should fully understand what the voluntary work entails. The Children Act 1989 states that a person who does not have parental responsibility for a child but has care of the child must do what is reasonable to promote a child's welfare.

Volunteer drivers

Drivers using their own vehicles should inform their insurers of their voluntary activities. To avoid confusion with commercial use of the vehicle, they should make it clear that they will receive out-of-pocket expenses only. Volunteer drivers should not accept an increase in premium, and may wish to change insurer if their current one insists on an extra charge.

Volunteers from overseas

The rules on which people from overseas can volunteer are complex and sometimes contradictory. People from outside the European Economic Area are not allowed to take up work, paid or unpaid (which includes volunteering), without a work permit. However, the Home Office has allowed a concession to allow people from outside the EEA to volunteer for a charity if they meet certain criteria – they will still need an appropriate visa or entry clearance. Refugees and asylum seekers are allowed to volunteer.

You must seek advice if you are not sure whether you can legally take a foreign national as a volunteer.



Volunteer fundraisers

The Charities Act 1992 and The Charitable Institutions (Fund-Raising) Regulations 1994 define 'professional fundraisers' and the relationship they have with organisations. Organisations involving 'volunteers' who they feel may be professional fundraisers should seek guidance on their duties from the Charity Commission. In terms of house-to-house or street collections, volunteers must be over the age of 16 and be 'fit and proper persons'. They must have a badge and certificate of authority. The full Volunteers and the Law book gives more detail about the House to House Collections Act 1939, the House to House Collections Regulations 1947 and 1963 and The Charitable Collections (Transitional Provisions) Order 1974. In terms of good practice, volunteers should be given sufficient information to be able to assess their own safety and avoid problems.

See GO! Appendix for a full copy of Volunteering England's Volunteer and the Law by Mark Restall



Other support available and wider networks

For many organisations and groups keeping on top of the daily demands seem hard enough but sometimes it is worth looking at the wider picture. The following information provides a summary of what other support is out there.

- **Volunteer network** – set up in September 2009 this network is for any group that involves volunteers. It can be for volunteer managers, volunteers or trustees. The purpose of the group is to look at the wider volunteering picture in Peterborough and to provide a network of support and mentoring. For more information contact Annette Atkinson at Peterborough Volunteer Centre
- **Volunteering strategy** – this has been developed with the help of a wide range of local volunteer involving organisations. The focus of the strategy is quality. Providing a quality experience for volunteers through quality volunteering. This toolkit is an integral part of the strategy.
- **Compact agreement** – this is the agreement that forms the important partnership arrangements for relationships between the voluntary and statutory sector. It sets out a clear framework of working partnerships. We recommend local groups to 'sign up' to the Compact. For more information contact Peterborough Council for Voluntary Service.
- **Peterborough Infrastructure Consortium** – members include local charities all committed to providing vital representation and a voice to our statutory partners. It is this group that have the overall responsibility for the success of this Volunteer Managers Toolkit. For more information contact Peterborough Council for Voluntary Service.
- **Training** – a range of training opportunities is available for anyone working or volunteering in the voluntary sector. One of the most important training opportunities is the Peterborough Voluntary Sector Business School. Courses include Management, Marketing, Communication, Finance, Fundraising and Modern IT. For more information contact Peterborough Council for Voluntary Service.

Useful links



- PCVS, Peterborough Council for Voluntary Service – www.pcvs.co.uk
Telephone 01733 342683
- Peterborough Volunteer Centre – www.pcvs.co.uk/volunteering
Telephone 01733 311016
- Volunteering England – www.volunteering.org.uk telephone 0845 305 6979
- NAVCA, National Association for Voluntary and Community Associations –
www.navca.org.uk telephone 0114 278 6636
- NCVO, National Council for Voluntary Organisations - <http://www.ncvo-vol.org.uk/contact> telephone 020 7713 6161
- Compact – www.thecompact.org.uk telephone: 0121 237 5900
- Office of the Third Sector – www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/thirdsector
Telephone: 020 7276 6400