

Volunteering Strategy

for Nottingham Community
and Voluntary Service



Volunteer Centre
Nottingham

Nottingham
Community
and Voluntary
Service

Welcome!



Volunteering is a wonderful thing. It benefits the volunteers as well as the cause or the person they are helping to support. One of the reasons that I love working at NCVS is that we're at the heart of volunteering in Nottingham. We shout about volunteering and help many people to get involved in their local community every year. We support organisations to involve volunteers and we have always involved volunteers ourselves.

Writing this strategy has enabled us to look at what makes volunteering work and what we can all do to make the experience even better for our volunteers in Nottingham. We also hope it will help us to expand

what we do so that we can help even more people benefit from the joy that volunteering can bring.

I wouldn't be where I am today if I hadn't discovered volunteering. At university it helped me make friends and when I moved house it helped me secure my first job by helping me gain skills and experience. Whether you're a group or an individual, get in touch with NCVS to make sure you are getting the most out of volunteering.

Helen Voce

Chief Executive

Nottingham Community and Voluntary Service



We are privileged at the Volunteer Centre here at NCVS to witness, every day, the contribution that volunteering makes to our fantastic city. From the hundreds of groups we support who wouldn't be able to carry out their work without volunteers to the thousands of individuals who give their time freely to support others, volunteering has a huge impact on the social, cultural and economic development of Nottingham.

We hope that by listening to what you have told us

about volunteering in Nottingham we have produced a strategy that will support you in developing and improving your volunteering. The energy, enthusiasm and dedication of our volunteers is an inspiration to us all, we hope the following strategy will help you to ensure every volunteer enjoys a rich and rewarding experience.

Jon Stevens

Volunteer Centre Manager

Nottingham Community and Voluntary Service

Aims of the strategy

This volunteering strategy aims to develop and strengthen volunteering opportunities through partnership working.

Better communication and sharing of knowledge, good practice and recognition of all types of volunteer role will lead to a greater capacity in the VCS to involve and develop volunteers. More people will be encouraged to take up volunteering and make it part of their lifestyle.

Through strengthened partnerships, organisations involving volunteers will have greater capacity for building opportunities and developing volunteers as a long term commitment to voluntary action.

Please note: as a Volunteer Centre we do not broker opportunities for private or profit making companies.

Definition of volunteering

Volunteering means many different things for many different people so for the purpose of the strategy we are using the definition of volunteering used by Volunteering England from the Compact Code of Good Practice:

"Any activity which involves spending time, unpaid, doing something which aims to benefit someone (individuals or groups) other than or in addition to close relatives, or to benefit the environment"
(Dr Justin Davis Smith – 1997)

This includes any voluntary activity that is undertaken through a group / organisation setting and involves people coming together. This will include activities associated with active citizenship (e.g. tenants and residents associations, time-bank initiatives) and employee volunteering schemes.

Why volunteer?

There are many reasons why people get involved in volunteering. For some it can be a route into employment or helping them get ready for returning to work, for others they volunteer to meet people and make new friends. Many people get involved as a way of “giving something back” to groups who may have supported them or someone they know. Whatever people’s reason for getting involved the benefits of volunteering are many:

Benefits for volunteers

- Builds confidence and skills
- Builds social networks and increases social cohesion
- Improves health and wellbeing
- Increases career options, including helping people change direction; develops employability.

Benefits to organisations using volunteers

- Increased capacity enabling organisations to reach more service users
- Value for money – volunteers both save money with their time but they also help raise funds and profile
- More flexible approach to working with service users
- Fresh ideas from people not employed (paid) by the organisation.

Benefits to the community

- Increased support for vulnerable client groups
- Increased social cohesion
- Healthier (emotionally and physically) community
- Increases pride in the local community and develops a sense of ownership
- Increases wealth both in terms of funding attracted, benefits in kind, and increased employability.

NCVS – who we are, and what we do

Nottingham Community and Voluntary Service has been at the centre of Nottingham's community and voluntary sector for 135 years.

We are here to improve the quality of people's lives in Nottingham. We do this by strengthening our local voluntary and community sector and wider third sector. We work with you to improve:

- The effectiveness of local voluntary sector groups and organisations
- The quality of volunteering in Nottingham
- The quality of decision making by involving the third sector.



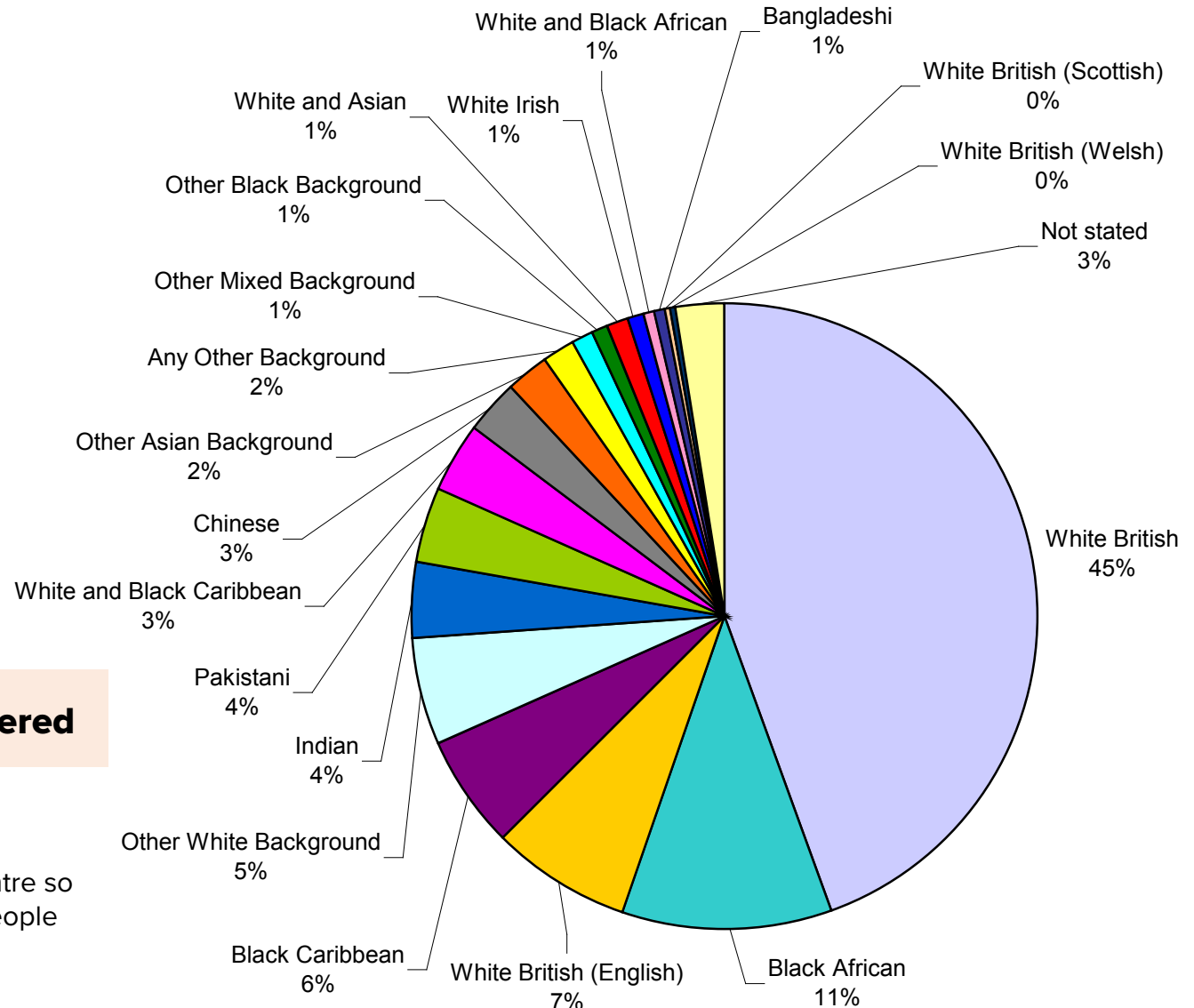
The Volunteer Centre: what we do

The Nottingham Volunteer Centre is an incredibly busy service, encompassing the V project (which works with 16–25 year olds) as well as the Volunteer Centre working with people over 25. In the last year we brokered volunteering opportunities to 1790 people.

Here are a few graphs to show you the range of people the Volunteer Centre worked with.

Ethnicity of volunteers brokered

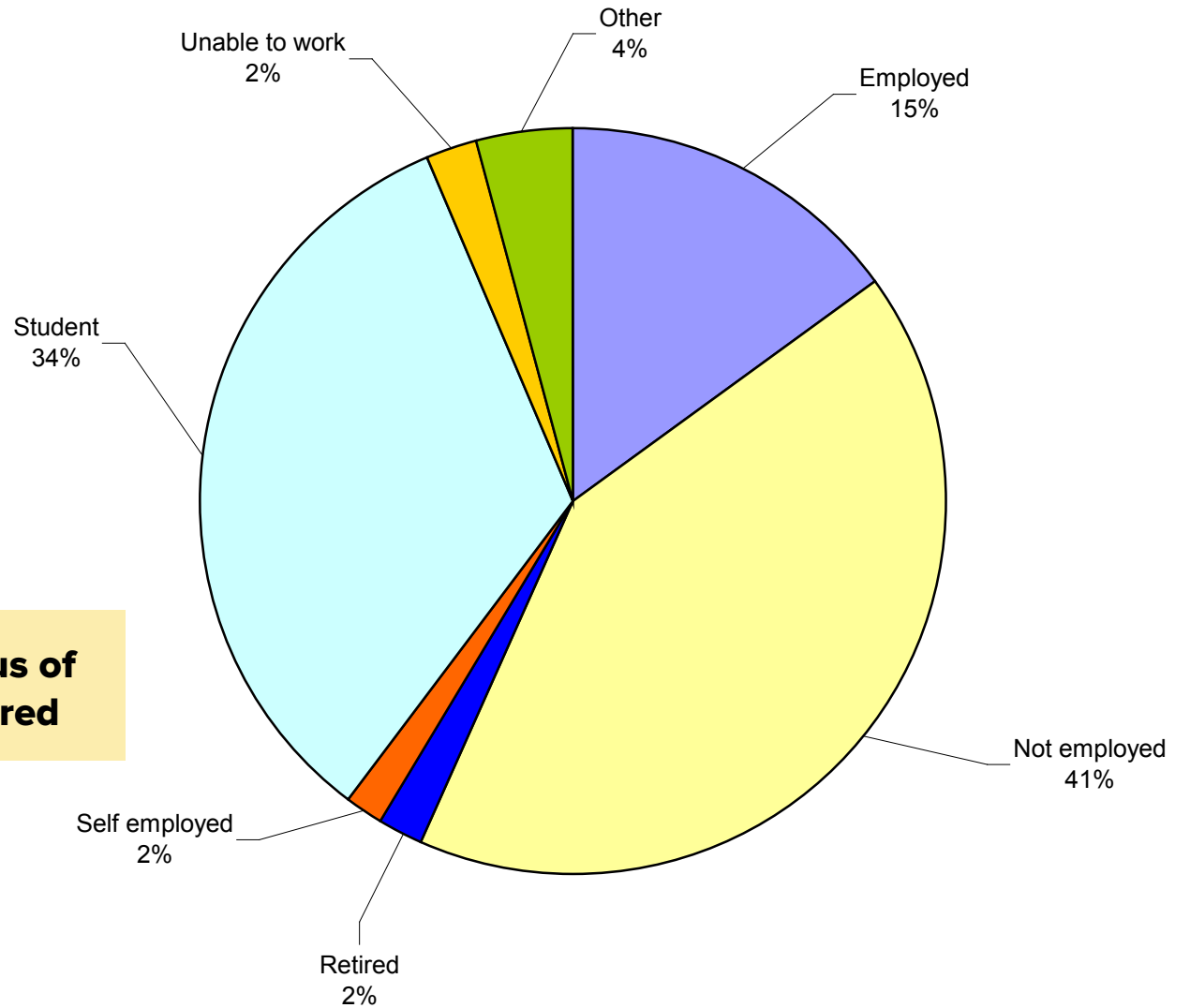
The Volunteer Centre is a welcoming environment to all people. We track information on people that visit the centre so we can make sure we represent the people of Nottingham.



A great number of people start volunteering as a way of getting back into work – either to build new skills, develop contacts in the sector or simply to keep themselves active until the right job comes along. Volunteering is a great way of showing employers that someone has enthusiasm and energy to take forward into paid employment.

Many of the people we see are studying and using volunteering as a way of broadening their experience and demonstrating their skills to potential employers.

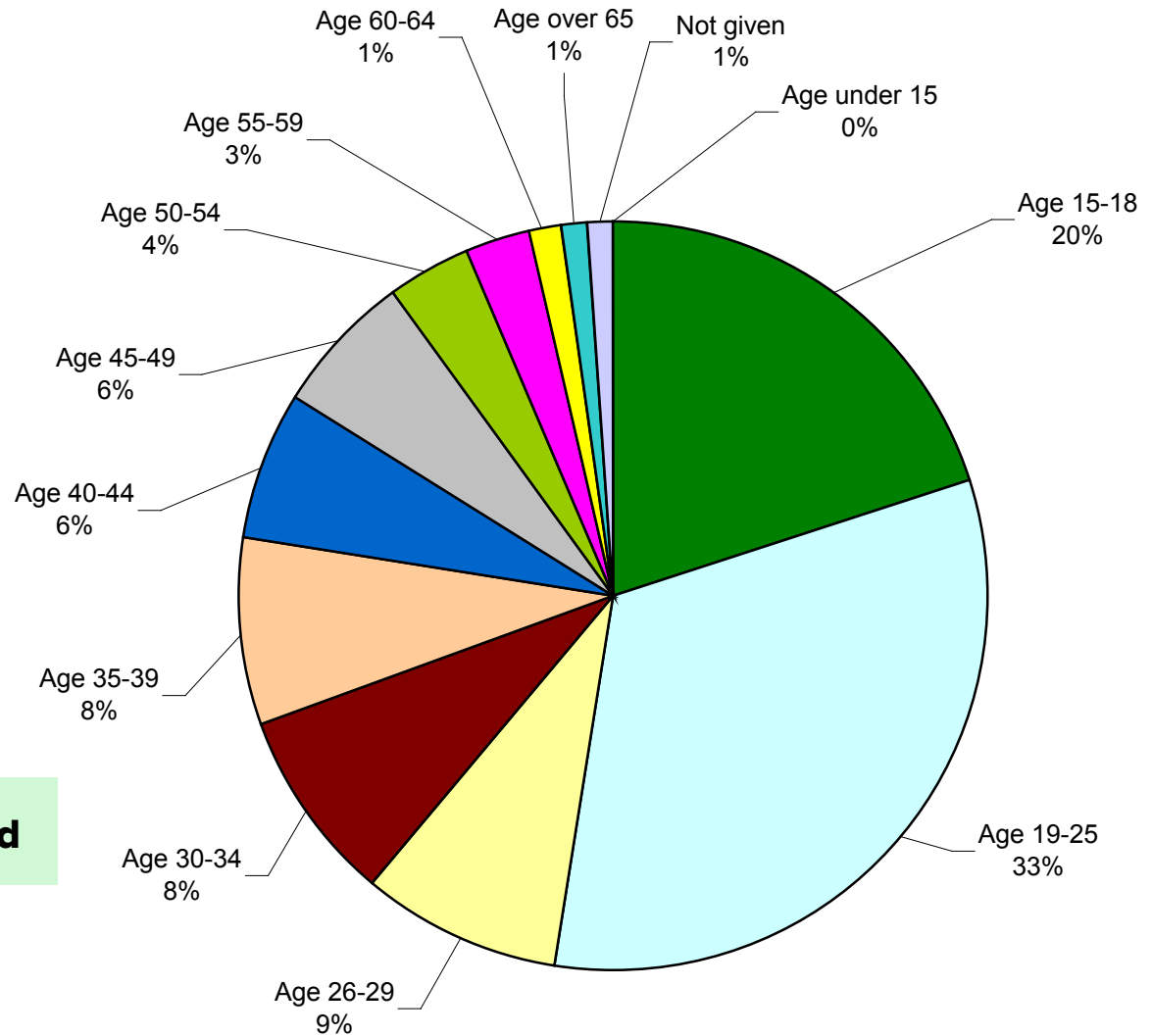
Employment status of volunteers brokered



Many years ago the perception was that it was only retired people that volunteered, however the current picture is far from that.

The V project which works with 16-25 year olds has made a real impact on the number of younger people volunteering and being active in their communities as you can see from the chart below, with 55% of the people coming in to find about volunteering falling within this age range. By getting involved in volunteering at a younger age people are more likely to remain involved throughout their lives.

Ages of volunteers brokered



The Nottingham picture

In 2010 volunteering was worth over £48 billion in England and Wales. This is the equivalent contribution to the economy made by people involved in their local community based on the national average wage.

NCVS recently commissioned some research into the economic impact of volunteering in Nottingham, and in Nottingham alone £14,194,345 is contributed to the to the local economy through volunteering, and it is estimated that there are 1,104,457 hours spent each year volunteering – that is the equivalent of 649 full time jobs, or 29,850 weeks of work! (Figures based on research undertaken in 2009-10). Breaking it down to a smaller level, the Institute for Volunteering Research (IVR) calculate that for every £1 volunteer involving organisations spend supporting volunteering they can expect a notional payback of up to 14 times that.

By involving volunteers in projects and services it enables more voluntary and community groups to reach more service users and more people are actively involved with and aware of social / community developments in city. This in turn leads to greater social cohesion, safer local neighbourhoods and empowers individual volunteers by giving them confidence and skills to change their environment and themselves.



Summary of themes / aims



Widen participation in volunteering

- Wider age range – we want all ages to feel able and supported to volunteer
- We want to reflect the growing populations in Nottingham and make sure that support is on hand for volunteers as well as projects to help make the process as smooth as possible. We want the body of volunteers to truly reflect the people of Nottingham
- Increase social cohesion – helping groups and individuals to work together to make Nottingham better
- We want to break down the barriers for non traditional volunteers to encourage them to be involved in volunteering whatever their circumstances



Increase the range of volunteering opportunities

- NCVS have been leading the way in developing opportunities with both new and existing organisations, and we want to continue making Nottingham a hub for voluntary action. We want people to get involved no matter what time they have or skills they have – increasing the range of opportunities makes sure that everyone benefits.



Raise awareness of the benefits of volunteering

- Volunteering is a great way to develop and maintain skills, or even to try something totally new. It's also a great way to develop employability skills
- We want Employer Supported Volunteering to have a greater profile – not just for one off events but longer term relationships with community organisations to share skills and experience
- There are numerous health benefits of volunteering – we want as many people as possible to experience those
- Volunteering is higher on people's agendas at the present time. We want people who want to volunteer to have a wide choice of roles to suit their skills and experiences to support their own goals.

4

Increase knowledge and skills of volunteer managers

- The Volunteer Centre has been doing lots of work to develop the skills and knowledge of volunteer managers – whether paid or voluntary themselves. We want to continue to do so. Increasing the skills of volunteer managers then ensures a more consistent and positive environment for people to volunteer in, making it more likely that they will continue to volunteer. Sharing good practice and networking is essential to continue this support
- Nottingham already has a long history of celebrating volunteering, particularly through Volunteers' Week in June. We also need to make sure that we shout about and celebrate the hard work of the volunteer managers who make sure that the processes happen.

5

Increase communication between organisations

- We want to make sure that the lines of communication are open for organisations to share good practice and opportunities for development, training and volunteering
- We want to encourage better publicity about volunteering and the contribution volunteering makes
- We also want to strengthen infrastructure around volunteering so that groups have increased networks and support.

6

Recognise and reward volunteering

- Individual groups already celebrate the hard work of their volunteers on an ongoing basis, and we want to encourage more of this across the city. Volunteer celebration events and shared training and publicity all help to reward and retain your volunteers
- Better quality of volunteer inductions and training should be on offer to all volunteers across Nottingham – the more skilled and confident volunteers are, the better they will be able to perform
- We want people's experiences of volunteering to be positive ones that encourage them and their peers to keep on being involved. Better support and training of volunteers leads to better retention. Their experiences should be consistently good whether they volunteer for 1 hour or 100
- We want more people to see just what a contribution volunteering makes to the city – raise the profile, make volunteering more visible and more people are likely to get involved themselves.



Widen participation in volunteering

Nottingham already has a great history of volunteering and active citizenship from people involved in local faith groups, to being a trustee for a charity or working for a branch of a national charity. By widening participation in volunteering it enables people from all walks of life to be involved in something they are passionate about and make a difference to their community. One of the things you told us you were particularly proud of was the amount of service user involvement in organisations – people who have received support giving back directly to the project that benefitted them.

At our consultation events, you not only shared with us what you were really proud of, but some of the issues you have come up against when widening access to volunteering.

Where we are now: what you told us

- Supported volunteers – many projects use a buddy system for new volunteers to help settle them into their roles, and many projects encourage service user volunteers
- Economic driver to increase use of volunteers coupled with a perceived restriction for people volunteering whilst receiving benefits. Most projects need funding to develop volunteer involvement – often the emphasis of a project will change to tie in with funding
- Concerns over safeguarding procedures for vulnerable groups – issues with CRB red tape holding up the recruitment process.
- Current volunteer team is a “narrow group” – aim for younger / work age/ different gender/ better balance. Are opportunities relevant/ accessible? Opportunities need to reflect the community.
- Childcare is often a barrier; need to develop schedules / flexible patterns for potential volunteers
- Volunteering is popular but not necessarily tracked within communities, particularly in faith based groups where people become involved rather than recruited.
- Some agencies’ perception is that volunteers are hard work and so don’t involve them very much if at all.

Where we want to be: what you told us

- Consolidate benefits of volunteer schemes – appeal to policy makers/ funders by working together
- Sharing models of involvement/ good practice with other volunteer co-ordinators.
- Link to public sector – i.e. university students, graduates to work with targeted groups.
- Volunteers to be involved in service delivery consultation, and to have equal treatment, comparable to the support offered to staff.
- Need to target celebrities/ role models/ volunteer advocates to demonstrate the benefits of volunteering.
- Varying recruitment methods – formal and informal opportunities to get involved to widen appeal and pitch opportunities so people see that they can do it, it fits into their lives and show that volunteering has changed.
- More outreach to access communities or people that don't want to travel to the city centre for an appointment with the Volunteer Centre, for example promote volunteering in supermarkets / job pages/ places of interest to potential volunteers
- Look for ways around problems, such as start volunteering on a different role to increase confidence.
- Use the tools already available - increase access by looking at language used, offering opportunities at different times of day/ weekends ensuring greater flexibility, and enable people to see the benefits to them
- Personalise communication and relevant opportunities to different communities, like **vin** involved does with young people
- Encourage younger people to start volunteering, such as starting in schools; set a life pattern for being involved.

How do we get there?

- Share good practice across organisations, including models of involvement
- Widen the range of opportunities within organisations to appeal to a wider range
- Pass on/ circulate opportunities for volunteers to transfer/ move on
- Promote ease of access – information more accessible, times, length of opportunity, skills set required.
- Informal opportunities to volunteer promoted.
- Effective tracking systems for monitoring progress.

How you can make this work

- Post your volunteering opportunities on the database at the Volunteer Centres in Nottinghamshire – they are then not only used to signpost people to who come in to find out what opportunities are available, but are put on do-it.org.uk too, so people can find out about volunteering for you 24/7.
- Join the Volunteer Co-ordinators Network at the Volunteer Centre near you – it’s a great way to share good practice, learn from each other and find out what is happening locally.
- Have a look at your volunteering opportunities – do you have scope for any more roles? Can you open up your roles to include younger people? Can you be more flexible regarding the time commitments you need, or the kind of skills you are looking for?
- Canvass the opinion of your existing volunteers – can they make any suggestions about what other roles volunteers could do?
- Look on the NCVS and Volunteering England websites – there is lots of information on there that can help you develop your roles and keep up to date with current best practice.
- Look at recruiting volunteers in your own neighbourhood for informal and formal opportunities – put up posters and leave leaflets in places where potential volunteers may visit. Take a look at the “Recruiting volunteers” good practice guide for ideas.
- Make sure you have a way of tracking your volunteer’s contribution – a simple database or spreadsheet once it is set up is easy to maintain and can provide you with an easy breakdown of what your volunteers are contributing, enabling you to identify any gaps or areas for expansion. Maybe recruit a volunteer to help design and maintain this for you?



2

Increase the range of volunteering opportunities

Nottingham has an incredible variety of volunteer involving groups, from small grassroots projects to large regional and national organisations, but there is often a smaller range of the roles people can get involved in within these organisations. One of the aims of the strategy is to enable more people to get involved in volunteering by offering a wider variety of volunteering opportunities.

At our consultation events, you not only shared with us what you were really proud of, but some of the issues you have come up against when increasing the range of volunteering opportunities.

Where we are now: what you told us

- Internal marketing showing the “value” of volunteers – led to other departments creating opportunities
- Struggle to find weekend volunteers – unable to give full training / placements and volunteers found it an unfulfilling experience
- Not focussing on new range of volunteer opportunities, managers are often pushed to train current intake - high volunteer to staff ratio
- Opportunities are led by skills of prospective volunteer, often leads to “Can I come and volunteer” – very informal routes of being involved.

You identified some barriers to developing a wider range of opportunities:

- Training
- Burden on paid staff
- Safeguarding
- CRB process
- Short projects
- Retaining distinction from job description – volunteer role
- Planning for busy periods
- Financial implications.

Where we want to be: what you told us

- Encourage employers to release staff to volunteer – Employer Supported Volunteering
- New opportunities created to meet volunteer requests – weekend and evening opportunities and support both regular and infrequent volunteering
- Volunteer leadership roles – progression for experienced volunteers to develop.
- Greater sharing of roles through Volunteer Centres
- Have flexible roles that can be amended to suit skills and experiences and involve volunteers in role description role creation
- Look at gaps in organisation and in shrinking employment base to identify roles and services.
- Making sure projects and volunteers have access to their own dedicated volunteer coordinator (volunteer role or paid)
- Support with changes in roles to encourage volunteers to stay when necessary changes take place – flexibility around personal growth and circumstances
- Develop the quality of opportunities so that more people want to be involved
- Skill sharing between employees and volunteers, volunteers and volunteers
- Advertise services and value of volunteers widely to attract funding and potential volunteers/ partners.

How do we get there?

- Promote the benefits of employer supported volunteering and increase the number of organisations taking part in this.
- Increase the amount of volunteer progression routes – within an organisation or through partners
- Increase the amount of volunteer leadership opportunities – support and training to enable volunteers to be able to take on this role.
- Skill sharing with volunteer involving organisations – buddy schemes
- Standardise paperwork and processes so opportunities are consistent across Nottingham.
- Share training costs with other organisations.

How you can make this work:

- Link with local employers to either have one off volunteering “experiences” – particularly helpful if you have a large project that needs to be done, or look for recruiting people’s specific skills (such as IT, finance, management) to help your project on an ongoing basis. Business in the Community, the local Chamber of Commerce and rotary clubs are all good places to recruit volunteers. Or why not approach companies directly?
- Publicise the training you offer to volunteers to other organisations – maybe you can share the costs and training expenses and make training more flexible.
- Think about the progression routes volunteers can take with you – maybe you are a large organisation with lots of opportunities, or you are a small organisation with scope to be flexible. You aren’t forcing volunteers to change roles, but giving the option of adapting roles, being given more responsibility as they become more experienced will keep volunteers interested and should lead to a longer term commitment from them.
- Streamline your paperwork so that even if it isn’t the same as every other organisation’s paperwork, the experience for volunteers is similar. Paperwork and application forms are a small part of the recruitment process – for more hints and tips see “Recruiting volunteers” good practice guide, and the Volunteering England website.



3

Raise awareness of the benefits of volunteering

The benefits of volunteering are often obvious to the people who are already involved in volunteering, but not always to others who aren't and by raising awareness of the benefits of getting involved in volunteering you can hopefully recruit more volunteers to work with you. However, not everyone knows what a volunteer is or does, or understands the role of volunteers within society. Showing people what they can get out of volunteering by donating their time can be an important part of raising your profile.

At our consultation events, you not only shared with us what you were really proud of, but some of the issues you have come up against when raising the benefit of volunteering.

Where we are now: what you told us

- Newsletters and magazines have features to promote the work of volunteers plus details of how to get involved, and employees who volunteer
- The image of volunteering has become jaded – it should be about what you can give your community
- Volunteers need to showcase what they have got out of volunteering e.g. Volunteers' week in Market Square included lots of organisations promoting their opportunities/ service, not volunteers telling their story.
- Job Centre – provide little guidance to individuals/ organisation.

Where we want to be: what you told us

- Encourage current volunteers to be involved in promotion – get feedback from volunteers about what attracted them to the role
- Working with other agencies to challenge stereotypes and show case studies e.g. Job Centre Plus (JCP) whilst promoting the benefits of volunteering in a job focussed environment; promoting the pathway to get a paid job you want to do.
- Hold awareness and celebration days
- Target disadvantaged groups – how they're motivated and their prior experiences.
- Work with business to encourage staff to volunteer, change the culture of who volunteers.
- Accreditation of training e.g. NVQ/ OCN courses – extra qualifications for people job seeking or wanting to develop.
- Local newspapers and magazines to share good news stories.

How do we get there?

- Increase volunteering promotion through Job Centre Plus and Welfare to Work providers
- Increase opportunities to promote and celebrate volunteers' contribution

How you can make this work:

- Develop a communication plan – you want to tell people how great you are at what you do? Have a targeted approach to communicating what you and your volunteers do. Use social media like Facebook or Twitter; email newsletters, contact the local or national press/radio/television. Put posters up or drop leaflets in areas where they will be seen by a wide range of people.
- Contribute to the e-bulletin that NCVS sends out each week. Email your news to communications@nottinghamcvs.co.uk or speak to any member of NCVS staff.
- Ask some volunteers to speak on your behalf to funders, groups of interested individuals, local politicians – the benefits of volunteering will never be sold better than by someone who is already proud of the work that they do.

- Target messages so everyone whatever their motivation has an opportunity to become involved.
- Local celebrity case studies – who is involved and in what?

- Do you have any famous patrons for your organisation? Ask them to come and speak about the work of your organisation and publicise their involvement.
- Volunteering is increasingly being used as a route into employment – if you feel your organisation can offer experience and skills to develop someone's employability, ask to promote volunteering in Job Centre Plus offices, or contact providers who are supporting people to find work.

4

Increase knowledge and skills of volunteer managers

Volunteer managers are often under great pressure to juggle managing often very large numbers of volunteers with other tasks such as looking for funding, developing and delivering training and recruiting more volunteers. By supporting volunteer managers and making sure their skills are as up to date as possible the volunteers they manage will be better supported and more likely to continue volunteering.

At our consultation events, you not only shared with us what you were really proud of, but some of the issues you have come up against in increasing the knowledge and skills of volunteer managers.

Where we are now: what you told us

- Management of projects – often by all managers who have no specialism for working with volunteers, and assumed management is same for volunteers and staff; it mainly falls to a person to “get on with it”. Often the role of volunteer manager is “given” or bolted on to another role
- Volunteer experience widely varies – lack of consistency can make a volunteer team harder to manage
- NCVS training and good practice guides found useful and practical
- Sports – often solely volunteer led, usually volunteer management is not recognised or seen as needed by sports clubs
- Training rare in some organisations and when it does take place it is often internal training run by peers; there is often a reluctance to undertake or release staff to attend training.

Where do we want to be: what you told us

- Management support for and release of staff for (external) training
- Common induction standards throughout projects and organisations
- Induction schemes to include volunteers
- Build experiences through careers and volunteering
- Some groups and sectors lobbying to introduce Volunteer Management training
- Foresee increase in prospective volunteers; looking for credibility and effective structures to support volunteers
- Increased positive experiences create managers / volunteers committed to volunteering.

How do we get there?

- Wide dissemination of good practice, recruitment materials, induction and training materials – not needing to “re-invent the wheel”.
- Regular and responsive training shared through Volunteer Centre and promoting spaces on partners’ training programmes

How you can make this work:

- Look at some of the resources that are available for volunteer managers – on the NCVS and Volunteering England websites; join UKVPM (UK Volunteer Programme Managers) forum, Volunteer Centres and other websites for information and documents that can be downloaded for free – see page 29 for details.
- Attend some training – Volunteer Centres nationally offer a wide variety of training courses to suit your needs. Volunteering England has a search function on their website for finding suitable training.
- Join the Volunteer Co-ordinators Network to meet other volunteer managers and co-ordinators and share good practice.

- Recognition that volunteer management is a role whether paid or voluntary, and requires appropriate training; possibly training could be a pre-requisite for volunteer managers?
- Use of trustee training/ support networking.
- Recognise “responsibility” of volunteer managers; boundaries clarified and support increased
- Can use skills from volunteer management in CV enhancement
- Training needs to be supported afterwards
- Greater benefit in training those organisations that don’t currently use volunteers.
- Promote “shared learning” – feedback to the team, particularly good for smaller organisations.

- Organisations committing to training and supporting volunteer managers
- Volunteer manager induction standards supported by Volunteer Involving Organisations.

- Read blogs! There are lots of blogs around volunteer management out there that promote discussion around volunteer involving subjects. See pages 29 - 31 for details.
- Link with other organisations who are doing something similar to yours – pay a visit, meet up and discuss the similarities and differences and share experiences.
- Look at the Managing Volunteers National Occupational Standards produced to demonstrate the skill set that volunteer managers have and need to be supported in. See page 30 for details.

5

Increase communication between organisations

Volunteer managers are fantastic at communicating with their volunteers, service users and funders about the work that they do and the impact that they make; however they are often not always able to disseminate their messages wider than that, either to their peers, statutory bodies and the wider public. One of the things you told us you were proud of was the impact that your volunteers had; by increasing communication between organisations you will be in a better position to share knowledge, good practice and develop partnership working.

At our consultation events, you also shared some of the issues you have come up against in increasing the communication between organisations.

Where we are now: what you told us

- Lots of separate organisations' databases that aren't linked up, and there isn't any mapping to see who covers what, showing where to get information.
- Can cost to get details from databases and not all organisations are able to meet this cost. It can also take a long time to search and volunteer managers don't have time to look for other organisations doing similar work
- Data protection issues around sharing some information.
- Information not always passed on when people have requested it.
- VCN (Volunteer Co-ordinators Network) helps link organisations. People don't always attend the meetings but blog useful.
- Organisations and projects can feel insecure and want to work to support/partnership with others and there are lots of examples of well established organisations working together
- Groups like having a hub e.g. Volunteer Centre and then passing on/ signposting
- Capacity of existing infrastructure which often supports smaller rather than larger groups, and keeping up to date with a changing workforce – often contacts are lost.

Where do we want to be: what you told us

- Service directory – centralised, updated regularly, online, accessible
- Themed groups – to share contacts (communications networks)
- Increase understanding of what different orgs do via networking and accessible information
- Volunteer/ Vol managers' chat room / online forum similar to national online forums?

How do we get there?

- Increase use of online support mechanisms – Facebook, online message boards etc
- Increased networking opportunities

How you can make this work

- Set up a Facebook page or Twitter account if you don't already have one; join UKVPMs forum, read and comment on blogs, link in to existing mailing lists such as the NCVS e-bulletin.
- See training events and meetings as a method of networking as well as sharing information or discussing a topic – often the people that you meet are as useful for your work as the information you gathered from the event. Often people from similar organisations come along to the same events increasing the chances of meeting someone useful to you.

- Keep it informal – partnership working doesn't need to be forced.
- Share best practice through networking and via Volunteer Centre
- Joining up resources – can groups share databases?

- Mapping of the sector – disseminate the findings widely and through already established communication channels
- Volunteer swap shop – unsuitable volunteers can be re-placed with other organisations via informal network, not just signposting to the Volunteer Centre.

- Link with infrastructure organisations such as NCVS to tap into their resources and use the mapping of the local voluntary and community sector that has taken place.

6

Recognise and reward volunteering

Volunteers need to feel appreciated for the time, energy and commitment they show to an organisation. By showing your appreciation of volunteers they are more likely to remain a volunteer for you, may be more likely to recommend you as a volunteer placement to others, and be more productive when they are volunteering for you as their passion is being rewarded.

At our consultation events, you shared with us some of the ways you recognise and reward your volunteers, as well as some of the issues you have come up against.

Where we are now: what you told us

- Already hold formal thank you events, graduation, celebration events, certificates
- Informal recognition, thank you, feedback after every visit
- Keeping volunteers involved in the organisation, meetings, team building, newsletters
- Expenses – not all volunteers have access to out of pocket expenses.
- Many organisations already emphasise importance of volunteers to them.
- People don't always engage in events and celebrations.

Where we want to be: what you told us

- Avoid jargon and make language accessible for all, for example not everyone understands the term “third sector”
- Volunteers should be able to access same training as staff and the link to employability is clearly demonstrated.
- Celebrations and / or social evenings give a chance to recognise volunteers, build their confidence and networks, but is once a year enough? Share good practice on what works for you in your organisation.
- Benefits should be listed as they would be on a job opportunity – not just doing tasks, not just a one way thing.
- Opportunities for volunteers to reflect on/ record what they have done – otherwise you don’t see it on an ongoing basis (this is similar to log books for V awards).

How do we get there?

- Consistent and shared resources for supporting and rewarding volunteers – shared training, themed celebration days, discounts?
- Regular publicising of volunteer roles and volunteer impact through local media and local networks.

How you can make this work:

- Have a celebration plan – ongoing events and meetings that you use to support and reward your volunteers in a structured way. This can include your regular team meetings, regular events that you use to celebrate or reward your volunteers, even events that your organisation is putting on (particularly if you are a project within a larger regional or national organisation).
- Celebrate Volunteers’ Week (June) and Student Volunteering Week (February) by having an event or taking part in local celebrations.

- Regular supervision / consistent support on a 1:1 and group basis, and access to ongoing / accredited training.
- Create a community of volunteers bring together for social events, peer recognition
- Involve volunteers in organisations’ own volunteering strategy
- Feedback from volunteers and their experiences - ask what do volunteers want, volunteers’ expectations of us, what matters to volunteers
- Measure volunteers’ achievements, volunteering as a journey that leads somewhere and share the case studies and good news stories widely.
- Publicise and promote volunteers’ contribution on annual accounts and publicity materials – show the financial value of volunteering as well as increasing the capacity of an organisation.

- Increased opportunity for training and advancement – existing volunteers offered more challenging roles, “swap shop” idea to pass on skills to other organisations.
- Increased awareness of volunteer progression routes for development and training

- Communicate the work of your volunteers by promoting through the local press and media.
- Have a look for recognition campaigns run locally or nationally that you can nominate your volunteers for - the NCVS e-bulletin, Nottingham Post, Volunteering England and UKVPM forum are all good sources of information.
- Link in with other volunteer co-ordinators for sharing experiences, ideas and potential projects by joining a VCN near you.



What do we do now?

We want groups to work with the Volunteer Centre to drive this strategy forward.

Taking part could involve ensuring that your organisation makes a commitment to working to support and develop volunteers by providing greater access to training, or it could be ensuring access for volunteer managers to appropriate training and networking opportunities.

To help move the strategy forward only takes a small amount of effort from each organisation already working with volunteers to share knowledge and to demonstrate the benefits volunteers are already having for Nottingham.

Acknowledgements

Thank you to all who took part in the consultation exercises when pulling the strategy together, whether you came to one of the events, submitted responses to the online survey or came to have a chat about your thoughts – without this input the strategy would not be what it is.

Useful links

Nottingham Community and Voluntary Service

www.nottinghamcvcs.co.uk

Good practice guides on the NCVS website: www.nottinghamcvcs.co.uk/help-groups/useful-information/managing-volunteers

Volunteer Coordinators Network blog

www.nottinghamcvcs.co.uk/volunteering/involving-volunteers/volunteer-co-ordinators-network/blog

Volunteering England

<http://www.volunteering.org.uk>

Volunteering England good practice bank (to download information sheets)

<http://www.volunteering.org.uk/resources/goodpracticebank/index.htm>

UKVPM forum You will need to register with this site to contribute but there are some useful documents included

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/UKVPMs>

Volunteering good practice guides from Brighton and Hove volunteer centre

<http://www.bh-impetus.org/volunteeringgoodpractice>

Hull Volunteer Centre good practice Guide

http://hullcvcs.co.uk/wp-content/files_flutter/1281710114VolunteerCentreHullGoodPracticeGuide.pdf

Volunteering Compact Code of good practice

http://www.thecompact.org.uk/shared_asp_files/GFSR.asp?NodeID=100323

Susan J Ellis website Useful articles and information on volunteering
<http://www.energizeinc.com>

i-volunteer forum
<http://www.i-volunteer.org.uk>

Vol Resource
<http://www.volresource.org.uk/briefing/volunteer.htm>

Community Service Volunteers
<http://www.csv.org.uk>

Association of Volunteer Managers blog and website
<http://www.volunteermanagers.org.uk>

Managing Volunteers National Occupational Standards
http://www.skills-thirdsector.org.uk/national_occupational_standards/management_of_volunteers_standards

Institute for Volunteering Research An offshoot of Volunteering England, with a wide variety of research publications about volunteering
www.ivr.org.uk

Sheffield Volunteer Centre's good practice guide
http://www.sheffieldvolunteercentre.org.uk/managing_volunteers

East Midlands Business in the Community
http://www.bitc.org.uk/east_midlands/contacts_and_directions/index.html

Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire Chamber of Commerce
<http://www.dncc.co.uk>

The Prince's Trust, East Midlands

http://www.princes-trust.org.uk/support_us/in_your_region/east_midlands.aspx

Initi8 Nottingham Trent student volunteering

<http://www.trentstudents.org/volunteering>

University of Nottingham student volunteering

<http://www.su.nottingham.ac.uk/activities2/volunteering>

Nottingham City Council

<http://www.nottinghamcity.gov.uk>

V inspired For awards and accreditation of volunteering for 16-25 year olds

<http://vinspired.com>

Voluntary Service Overseas

<http://www.vso.org.uk/volunteer>

Timebank

<http://timebank.org.uk>

Experts in volunteering Best practice for volunteer managers

<http://www.expertsinvolunteering.org.uk/web/resources>

Know how non profit volunteer managers forum

<http://www.knowhownonprofit.org/people/volunteers/managing-volunteers-forum>

The logo for Nottingham Community and Voluntary Service is a bright orange speech bubble shape. Inside the bubble, the text "Nottingham Community and Voluntary Service" is written in a white, bold, sans-serif font, arranged in four lines.

**Nottingham
Community
and Voluntary
Service**

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This information pack is available in different formats. Please contact us for more information.

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