



**VOLUNTEERING IN DAVENTRY DISTRICT  
NORTHAMPTONSHIRE**

**A TOOLKIT FOR  
VOLUNTEER INVOLVING ORGANISATIONS**



Supported by



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## Foreword

This toolkit has been produced by Daventry Volunteer Centre to support small and medium-sized organisations who wish to engage volunteers in delivering their services to help people in their local communities. The toolkit aims to improve understanding of the value of good practice in Volunteer Management with the result that the volunteering experience firstly for the volunteer, and secondly for the volunteer involving organisation, is enhanced. It includes ideas, suggestions, checklists, and recommendations for those new to working with volunteers and a case study for a project run with a team of volunteers – the Brushes & Spades project.

Daventry Volunteer Centre has run a number of highly successful volunteering projects across the rural Daventry District of Northamptonshire for over 20 years. This toolkit is based on information from Volunteering England/NCVO's Good Practice Bank, and draws on Daventry Volunteer Centre's experience and knowledge of local volunteering and commitment to

- ✚ Improve access, advice and information on volunteering opportunities
- ✚ Identify the current barriers to volunteering and support their elimination
- ✚ Give appropriate training and support to volunteers
- ✚ Assist volunteers to find appropriate roles
- ✚ Promote and encourage partnership working
- ✚ Promote the mutual and individual benefits of volunteering

## 1. Introduction: What is a volunteer?

Volunteering England defines 'volunteering' as: 'any activity that involves spending time, unpaid, doing something that aims to benefit the environment or someone (individuals or groups) other than, or in addition to, close relatives.'

'Volunteer', therefore, may refer to a wide range of people including:

- ✚ committee volunteers: those who serve on boards of management
- ✚ organising volunteers: those who co-ordinate the work of volunteers
- ✚ service delivery volunteers: those who contribute to delivering the services, or carrying out the tasks of the organisation

Whatever they do, however, anyone who donates their time freely to an organisation in order to benefit others, is a volunteer.

## 2. Recruiting volunteers

There are lots of reasons for recruiting volunteers, which may include some of those listed below:

- ✚ be looking for new energy, ideas and approaches
- ✚ want to make your organisation more attractive to funders
- ✚ want to offer more activities, meet a new need, expand what you do, or work with more diverse communities
- ✚ need more trustees

Whatever your reasons, before you begin you should do some planning. How much you do will depend on your organisation and its activities, but the principles are the same for everyone.

### What motivates volunteers to take part?

There are as many motivations for volunteering in the local community, as there are people taking part. For example, people may want to volunteer in order to:

- ✚ learn something new
- ✚ practise an existing skill
- ✚ realise a long-held ambition or dream
- ✚ make new friends/find friends with similar interests
- ✚ be recognised in the community
- ✚ give something back
- ✚ teach others
- ✚ keep alive their interest in a specialist field
- ✚ create or produce something of value

### What do you want volunteers to do?

Volunteers are recruited specifically to do something, therefore the first question you need to ask is: *what are you recruiting them to do?*

- ✚ think practically about tasks that staff members currently don't have time to do or about what support they might need to add value to their work
- ✚ think realistically about what an individual volunteer or group of volunteers could achieve and what training and support you will need to provide them with
- ✚ think sympathetically about what might interest a potential volunteer and benefit their personal development

- ✚ identify where possible, challenging roles that would offer stimulating and creative volunteering opportunities

### **Role/task descriptions**

Once you know what you want volunteers to do, you can start to write role/task descriptions. These set out the specific activities a particular volunteer will undertake. They are like job descriptions, but you should use a more relaxed terminology – hence ‘role description’, to avoid implying a contract of employment.

You can find more information in the creating volunteer roles section of Volunteering England/NCVO’s Good Practice Bank Themes, or for local support, contact the Daventry Volunteer Centre

### **What support will you offer?**

Your volunteers will be involved in or participate in your project with the support, encouragement and opportunities offered by your organisation. Think about the benefits you offer. Do you offer them training opportunities? Will their CV be enhanced as a result of volunteering? From a volunteer’s point of view, you need to answer the question, ‘What’s in it for me?’

All volunteers require support. The kind of support you provide will depend on the nature of their tasks and their needs, but key elements can include:

- ✚ induction
- ✚ role description
- ✚ supervision
- ✚ training

It’s a good idea to produce a Volunteer Information Pack giving some background to your organisation and summarising useful information for the volunteer. A sample Volunteer Induction Pack can be seen under Appendix 1.

You can find more information in the support and supervision section of Volunteering England/NCVO’s Good Practice Bank Themes, or for local support, contact the Daventry Volunteer Centre

## How will you select?

In some cases, volunteering selection can be very informal and focus on an introductory chat about the role and the potential volunteer's interests. But if the role has some degree of responsibility - such as working with elderly or disabled people, for example, then the selection procedure might need to be more formal.

Key elements of selection can include:

- + application forms
- + references
- + interviews
- + criminal record (DBS) checks (especially if volunteers are working with children or vulnerable people)
- + health checks
- + equality and diversity

The Office of the Third Sector has published guidance to help organisations that use volunteers to be clear about when they do and don't need to carry out DBS checks on volunteers. For further information visit [www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk](http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk).

You can find more information about selection and all aspects of the volunteer recruitment process in Volunteering England/NCVO's Recruitment Guide, or for local support, contact the Daventry Volunteer Centre

## Finding volunteers

There are many ways of finding volunteers and these will differ from area to area, but there are some key things to consider. You may wish to start with your current members, audiences and participants, as they already have a connection with your organisation, but also try to think beyond your group or community.

### Recruitment can be through:

- + word of mouth
- + your local Volunteer Centre
- + advertising
- + talks
- + flyers
- + website

- ✚ events
- ✚ open days
- ✚ inspirational case studies
- ✚ taster or sampling sessions
- ✚ editorial press features or articles
- ✚ promotional campaigns
- ✚ [www.do-it.org.uk](http://www.do-it.org.uk)

### **Do-it website**

Do-it is a national online database of volunteering opportunities in the UK. It is managed by IVO and is extremely well used. You can register both volunteer vacancies and groups on the website.

### **Marketing**

Don't forget to:

- ✚ describe the volunteer role and what key skills are required
- ✚ give details of when it's available
- ✚ say where the volunteering will take place
- ✚ explain how much time individuals will need to commit to the role
- ✚ explain what's in it for them and whether expenses are paid
- ✚ give the name of a key person to contact on all your publicity materials

## **3. Equality and diversity**

Looking for volunteers like the ones you have is a sensible approach to recruitment, with one proviso: if you don't look beyond your existing group you could become a clique, or be seen to be excluding others on purpose. Make sure your recruitment isn't discriminatory in any way. Publicise your group well, work across cultural boundaries and be prepared to welcome new members who aren't 'just like you'.

There are many benefits to working with a more diverse group of volunteers, including:

- ✚ the positive impact of fresh approaches to the organisation's work
- ✚ incorporating a wider range of ideas might help your organisation to improve its service and work more efficiently to fulfil its aims
- ✚ reflecting the local community can boost an organisation's credibility and improve its ability to focus on local needs

- ✚ offering everyone a fair chance to contribute and avoiding the exclusion of people through Labelling

It's a good idea to have an equality and diversity policy that covers how and where you will recruit. At its simplest, such a policy states that the group or organisation will not discriminate directly or indirectly on the basis of differences other than suitability for the role. As well as saying what it won't do, an equality and diversity policy can include a statement about how the group or organisation will aim to create an inclusive environment, including positive action. Positive action involves encouraging less represented groups, for example black, gay or disabled members of the community, to volunteer. Be aware of potential barriers. Remember, ensuring that everyone has an equal opportunity to participate in your activity doesn't mean just thinking about disabled people. People can be excluded by factors such as their financial situation, the time available to them, and their childcare or caring responsibilities.

Some of the things you might want to think about include:

- ✚ physical accessibility of the venue or location
- ✚ requirements of the role, such as time commitment
- ✚ whether you can cover travel expenses
- ✚ if you can provide childcare or cover the cost
- ✚ is there a religious aspect to your organisation or activity?
- ✚ does a role require a volunteer to be Police Checked (DBS) ?
- ✚ is involvement in your group or organisation restricted to a particular group of people, e.g. women? Is this relevant or necessary?
- ✚ do you have a welcoming and friendly atmosphere?
- ✚ are there long-standing members who can act as mentors to newly recruited volunteers?
- ✚ is information in easy-to-read format with appropriate illustrations and images
- ✚ are you able to provide appropriate tools, resources, kit etc. to people with a Disability?

You can find more information in the equality and diversity section of Volunteering England/NCVO's Good Practice Bank Themes, or for local support, contact the Daventry Volunteer Centre

### **Volunteer policies**

A volunteer policy (including health and safety) sets out what potential volunteers can expect while volunteering for your organisation and, vice versa, what you can expect from them. It ensures that everyone knows where they stand and provides clear procedures on what happens if anything goes wrong. It also sends a message that you are a volunteer-friendly

organisation and have really thought about the kind of opportunities that you provide. Make sure occasional or short-term volunteering opportunities are included within your policy.

## 4. Retaining volunteers

Although it's not always possible (or desirable) to keep the same volunteers for a long period of time, it's worth looking at what you can do to reduce the turnover of volunteers in your group or organisation. After all, you've already gone through the process of recruiting, inducting, training and supporting the volunteers. In addition, when they leave they may take a wealth of knowledge and experience with them.

### Basic Needs

There are a number of basic needs that all volunteers share, which when met, ensure their volunteering experience will be successful, and they will be more likely to volunteer with your organisation for longer. These are:

- + A specific manageable task with a beginning and an end.
- + A task that matches interests and reasons for volunteering.
- + A good reason for doing the task.
- + Written instructions
- + A reasonable deadline for completing the task.
- + Freedom to complete the task *when* and *where* it is most convenient for the volunteer.
- + Everything necessary to complete the task without interruption.
- + Adequate training.
- + A safe, comfortable, and friendly working environment.
- + Follow-up to see that the task is completed.
- + An opportunity to provide feedback when the task is finished.
- + Appreciation, recognition, and rewards that match the reasons for volunteering.

Recognising these needs and knowing how to meet them will help you expand the number of volunteers and increase the number of hours each gives to your organisation.

### Aspects of a volunteer project that is likely to retain volunteers:

- + vision and direction
- + training and accreditation
- + supervision and feedback
- + responsibility and progression
- + equal opportunities

- ✚ health and safety

### **Create rewarding roles**

You should build retention into your volunteer programme before you even begin recruitment – by creating roles that are attractive and rewarding, as well as meeting your core objectives. When drawing up a role or task description, think about what you need and want the volunteer to do. What is there in the role that would attract and keep volunteers? Is it a chance to learn new skills and meet new people, or an opportunity to put existing skills and knowledge to good use? Can the role be a springboard into other activities?

### **Be aware of motivations**

Being aware of a volunteer's motivations is useful because it can help you plan the volunteer's journey during their time with your organisation and ensure you meet their needs as well as your own. An informal chat at the recruitment stage can be a helpful way of discovering a person's motivations for wanting to volunteer with you.

### **Motivations may include:**

- ✚ learning new skills
- ✚ using existing skills
- ✚ addressing a specific problem in the community
- ✚ having fun
- ✚ gaining work experience
- ✚ feeling useful
- ✚ getting out of the house
- ✚ making new friends
- ✚ improving levels of health and wellbeing

Remember, too, that motivations can change over time, which makes ongoing communication with your volunteers very important.

### **Support and supervision**

Providing good support and supervision helps to retain volunteers by:

- ✚ helping you identify problems and solutions early
- ✚ ensuring you know how they're feeling about their role
- ✚ identifying external issues that may impact on their volunteering

- ✚ making them feel valued
- ✚ having clear goals and aspirations
- ✚ giving real opportunities to assess progress by either one-to-one reviews or appraisals

## Reward and recognition

Volunteers are more likely to stay with you if they feel they're an important part of the organisation. There are many ways of doing this, and different people value different forms of recognition. Therefore, you'll need to think about your own situation and volunteers, but some suggestions are:

- ✚ involve volunteers in discussion and decision making
- ✚ hold celebration events
- ✚ provide certificates after a certain length of service or at the completion of a project
- ✚ formal accreditation, e.g. NVQs
- ✚ identify opportunities for additional responsibility
- ✚ ask longer-term volunteers to mentor or buddy new volunteers
- ✚ develop specific social activities such as group lunches or coffee mornings
- ✚ remember to say thank you
- ✚ provide training

## Gifts

Some organisations like to reward their volunteers with gifts. This is okay as a one-off, but any regular gift could be seen as payment, which you want to avoid as it could confer employment rights on the volunteer. The rule of thumb is that a volunteer should not be rewarded with anything that either represents a cost to the organisation or that the volunteer could use to make a profit. This isn't to say that an organisation can't reward their volunteers with flowers or other gifts when they leave or after many years of service, but these should be small rewards.

## Exit interviews

Whatever you do, volunteers will leave. When they do, exit interviews are useful for finding out why and evaluating their experience as a whole. This will help you to think about your volunteer project and how to develop it. Some individuals may leave without having an opportunity to meet with you. Where this happens, a quick email, telephone call or short questionnaire can be effective at finding out their reasons for leaving. Feedback from these meetings is imperative in improving service delivery and performance, which ultimately will impact on the overall volunteer experience.

You can find more information in the reward, recognition and retention section of Volunteering England/NCVO's Good Practice Bank, or for local support, contact the Daventry Volunteer Centre

## 5. Induction and training

The purpose of induction and training is to ensure that volunteers are able to carry out their role as effectively as possible.

### Induction

Induction introduces new volunteers to the organisation and their role in it. You may want to consider putting together an induction pack that contains most of the information. You might also send this to anyone who enquires about, or shows an interest in, volunteering with your group or organisation so they can make an informed decision about taking up an opportunity. Key volunteers who have been with you for some time can be very helpful in this process and some really welcome the opportunity of playing a part in designing key documents.

### Pre-arrival

This forms part of the recruitment process and will consist of any information about the organisation and the role that you send the volunteer before they start with you, such as:

- ✚ details about your organisation and what it does
- ✚ volunteer role description(s)
- ✚ contact details and address, including directions and/or map of how to get there
- ✚ an application form
- ✚ a volunteer handbook (if you have one)

### Organisational induction

Induction should cover what the organisation's goals are and how it goes about achieving them, as well as helping the volunteers understand where they fit within the organisation as a whole. You might include:

- ✚ background/history of the organisation
- ✚ mission statement
- ✚ services provided/projects
- ✚ organisation chart

- ✚ talks from paid staff and established volunteers about their roles in relation to volunteers and the organisation as a whole
- ✚ case studies and personal quotes
- ✚ personal testimony can add depth and scope to induction discussions, such as current number of volunteers, number of hours they commit, and examples of how volunteers have used their volunteer experience to enrich their lives or improve their levels of employability

### Local induction

You need to make sure that volunteers have a clear understanding of their role within the project and how they will carry it out, as well as site-specific information and guidance on support and supervision mechanisms, such as:

- ✚ health and safety issues, e.g. first aid procedures, accident reporting, policy on smoking, emergency exits and evacuation procedures
- ✚ financial issues, e.g. how to claim expenses (and what can be claimed)
- ✚ volunteer agreement (what the volunteer can expect from the organisation, and vice versa)
- ✚ arrangements for support and supervision, including, if appropriate, allocating a key member of staff, mentor or buddy
- ✚ problem-solving procedures (discipline/grievance/complaints)
- ✚ training programme/training needs identification process
- ✚ relevant policies, e.g. confidentiality, data protection, phone/internet use, computers

### Induction

Key elements to include:

- ✚ introduce new volunteers to other staff and volunteers
- ✚ show them around the building/group facilities
- ✚ explain who they can go to if they have any questions or problems
- ✚ show them where they will be based and any equipment they will be using
- ✚ let them know about breaks
- ✚ explain how to claim expenses and what forms they will need to use
- ✚ ask them to shadow other experienced volunteers or paid members of staff
- ✚ give an overview of all key health and safety issues

### Group versus individual induction

The way you approach the induction process will depend on a number of factors, including the number of volunteers you have starting at the same time and the amount of space you have for

group activities. Group induction can take less time overall, and allows for discussions to take place where appropriate. It can also enable volunteers to start to build relationships and provide a support system for each other. On the other hand, if you only have volunteers starting from time to time, it might put them off if they have to wait a while for others to join and form a group, so it could be as well to start people one at a time. Some things might be covered more effectively in a group, for example confidentiality, and you may choose to wait and deal with that as part of a specific training session when you have more people to contribute to the discussion.

## **Training**

Providing useful and relevant training helps volunteers develop their skills and competency, and can also motivate them to increase their involvement. The training your volunteers receive will depend entirely on their roles, and on the number of volunteers you need to train at any one time. Initial training may be required to enable the volunteer to carry out their role effectively, and, depending on the role, may take hours, days or weeks to complete. Ongoing or refresher training may also be required to keep volunteers skills up to date, or to enable them to develop within the organisation and take on further tasks.

However you decide to address your volunteers' training needs, the key is to make sure that it is designed around their roles. Current volunteers can be extremely useful in helping identify the elements where they feel some formal training would be useful, and they will be able to feed in examples of situations that could form interesting case studies for discussion. Experienced volunteers might even find it interesting to deliver, or at least co-deliver, elements of a training programme for new volunteers.

### **On-the-job training**

The most common way of training volunteers and probably the most economical is on-the-job training. This is most appropriate if you only take on one volunteer at a time and the work they'll be doing is relatively straightforward. A member of staff, or another volunteer, will show the volunteer how to do a task and then supervise them as they do it. This method is effective as long as the person doing the training takes care to make sure the new volunteer really understands what they are meant to be doing, and the volunteer feels able to ask questions.

### **External trainers**

Alternatively, you can send volunteers on a training course with a trainer from outside the organisation. This can work either with groups or individual volunteers, as you can either send

one or two people on a public open course or book the trainer to do the course purely for your organisation.

### **In-house training**

Another method of delivering training is to develop an in-house programme. This works best if you can take on volunteers in groups and you need to train them in fairly complex tasks, ideas or key skills. There are lots of good 'train the trainer courses' out there, too, to enable the people delivering the training to keep up to date on current thinking about learning styles and training techniques. You might also consider asking volunteers to take part in staff training if it's relevant. As well as saving money and time, it will also introduce volunteers to staff and help them to feel part of the team. Remember, however, to ensure there is a difference between staff and volunteer roles.

You can find more information in the induction and training section of Volunteering England/NCVO's Good Practice Bank.

## **6. Support and supervision**

All volunteers need support and supervision, but the form this takes will vary. Volunteers at a one-off event will need support different from what a long-term volunteer needs. What is important is that support and supervision are appropriate to the role and the individual volunteer. Don't prejudge what support someone might need – ask them. Some people may need a little extra training or on-the-job coaching. Other volunteers may lack confidence, and need reassurance that they are doing things correctly.

### **Peer support**

It's worth considering peer support. This could be through a buddying system, in which experienced volunteers support new ones. As well as providing support for new volunteers, a buddying system is a good way of recognising the expertise of experienced volunteers. Another option is volunteer meetings. These provide an opportunity for volunteers to collectively contribute to the work and daily life of an organisation, and a chance for them to share their experiences. You could also hold joint staff and volunteer meetings. This would offer both groups the opportunity to learn from each other and understand their respective roles. It also has the potential to increase the cohesion of your team.

## Supervision meetings

One-to-one supervision meetings may not be appropriate for all models of volunteer involvement, but for many volunteers it's a good way of ensuring they have a chance to give and receive feedback. Avoid supervision being seen as an 'appraisal'. Reassure volunteers that it's a chance to talk in a private space, and that it's as much about you listening to the volunteer as you talking to them. Questions to ask include:

- + what's going well?
- + what problems or concerns do they have?
- + are there any other tasks they would like to undertake?
- + do they feel there is any support or training they need?
- + are they happy within their role?
- + can they think of what would improve their volunteering?
- + what are their key goals and aspirations for the future?

Encourage volunteers to raise problems or concerns. It's much easier to deal with a problem at an early stage than let it grow into something which disrupts the work of the volunteer or even the whole volunteering programme. Give clear feedback. Make sure you let volunteers know when you are pleased with their work. Where there are problems related to the volunteers work or behaviour, don't be afraid to raise them. Always remember that the problem is the behaviour not the individual, and phrase the issue as a shared issue.

## Other models

Where regular formal supervision meetings are not appropriate to your involvement of volunteers, you should consider finding other ways of sharing and receiving feedback. The above questions are still likely to be a useful base for such conversations, but of course they may need to be adapted to the situation. When involving volunteers in a one day-project, you may simply need to chat to everyone involved and make sure they are happy with the training they received and understand what they are doing

You can find more information in the support and supervision section of Volunteering England/NCVO's Good Practice Bank, or for local support, contact the Daventry Volunteer Centre

## 7. Expenses

Although unpaid, volunteering shouldn't leave volunteers out of pocket, otherwise it can be difficult to involve a diverse range of people. That's why it's good practice to reimburse a

volunteer for all the expenses they incur where possible. While this should be a straightforward matter, there are a number of legal and good-practice issues to be aware of, including ensuring you don't inadvertently grant employment rights to volunteers.

### **Be open and honest**

The most important thing is to be open and honest with your volunteers from the start. They will then be able to make an informed decision about their volunteering. Be clear about:

- + what expenses will and won't be reimbursed
- + limits on the amount that can be claimed for expenses such as meals
- + the process for submitting expenses claims, especially that receipts will need to be provided

### **Why reimburse expenses?**

By ensuring that no volunteer is out of pocket due to their volunteering, a group or organisation will be increasing the potential number of volunteers that might support it. Expecting volunteers to cover their own expenses could be a barrier to people with low incomes or little spare cash. It could also deter people who feel that they are already making a significant contribution of their time. Refunding volunteer expenses is a legitimate financial element of any volunteer programme, so groups and organisations should take account of potential volunteer expenses in funding applications and budgets.

### **Which expenses should be reimbursed?**

In general, any reasonable expense incurred as part of the volunteering activity should be reimbursed. This includes but is not limited to:

- + travel, including to and from the place of volunteering
- + meals and refreshments
- + care of dependants, including children
- + equipment such as protective clothing
- + administration costs such as postage, phone calls and stationery

### **What is 'reasonable'?**

Some expenses will be necessary and have a set cost, such as protective clothing and stationery. However, it may be worth considering buying these items centrally and distributing them to volunteers if possible. For expenses such as meals and refreshments, it may be useful

to set a limit. Many organisations do this so it's worth checking to see what others in your area do, or what general local costs are.

### **How to reimburse expenses**

The process of reimbursing expenses should be based on a single, simple principle: only reimburse actual out-of-pocket expenses. This means volunteers submitting receipts that show what they have had to spend as a volunteer that they otherwise wouldn't have.

### **Be volunteer friendly**

Be clear about what expenses will and won't be reimbursed. Be clear about limits on the amount that can be claimed for expenses such as meals. Try to reimburse expenses as soon as possible. Try and reimburse in cash or by bank transfer rather than by cheque, which can often be inconvenient and delay payment. It's okay to provide expenses payments in advance, as long as receipts are provided once the money has been spent and any remainder is returned. This can be particularly helpful for volunteers with a low income who may find it difficult to cover expenses upfront. If the group or organisation can only process expenses claimed within a certain timeframe after incurred, then it's important to ensure volunteers know this so they don't miss the deadline.

Develop a simple expenses claim form. A sample can be found in the Expenses and State Benefits section of Volunteering England/NCVO's Good Practice Bank, or for local support, contact the Daventry Volunteer Centre

### **Encourage all volunteers to claim expenses**

Some volunteers may feel they don't need or even should not be offered expenses payments. However, ensuring everyone claims expenses helps a group or organisation to determine the full cost of a volunteer project. This will help in forecasting volunteer budgets and applying for appropriate funding. If a volunteer really doesn't want to have their expenses reimbursed it is possible to set up a scheme whereby they donate these unclaimed expenses back to the group or organisation along with Gift Aid. Guidance is available on the HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) website.

### **Do not pay a flat rate**

Volunteers should not be paid a flat rate because:

- ✚ any money given to a volunteer over and above out-of-pocket expenses is regarded as income by HMRC and would render the entire payment liable for tax, not just the portion above the actual expense
- ✚ it could affect payments if the volunteer is in receipt of state or other benefits
- ✚ it could be regarded by an employment tribunal or similar body as contributing to the formation of a contract between the volunteer and the organisation, leading to a volunteer being granted the same rights as employees, including the national minimum wage

It should be noted that there have been cases in which HMRC has decided that flat-rate payments are earnings and has demanded several years' tax be paid on them.

You can find more information in the expenses and state benefits section of Volunteering England/NCVO's Good Practice Bank, or for local support, contact the Daventry Volunteer Centre

## 8. Health and safety

The legal obligations of organisations towards their volunteers with regard to health and safety are less clear than they are for employees. Nevertheless, organisations do have legal obligations towards their volunteers, and it is good practice to treat volunteers with equal consideration when it comes to health and safety (duty of care).

### The duty of care

Generally, a duty of care arises where one individual or group undertakes an activity which could reasonably harm another, either physically, mentally or economically. A duty of care can arise in ways that may not always be obvious, for example:

- ✚ loaning equipment to others
- ✚ charity walks and sponsored runs
- ✚ running fêtes or fairs
- ✚ organising day trips
- ✚ selling food at a charity stall

### Committing to good health and safety practice

We strongly recommend that, as far as possible, all organisations meet the same health and safety requirements for volunteers as are demanded by law for paid employees. If an organisation has no employees, it may not be able to achieve the same standards of health and safety as are required for employees. However, by aiming to accomplish this, the organisation

will demonstrate to its volunteers and the outside world the value it places on them and their efforts.

### **Health and safety policy**

A health and safety policy is the foundation on which to develop procedures and practices. It also announces the organisation's commitment towards good health and safety standards. Organisations with fewer than five employees are not obliged to have a written policy, but are strongly advised to do so. If an organisation involves volunteers, they should always be included in the health and safety policy as a matter of good practice. The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) website has examples of model health and safety policies that can be used for creating your own policies.

### **Health, safety and welfare**

All employers must provide a safe place to work which is clean and free from risks, to reduce the risk of ill health or injury; organisations without employees should aim to do the same. A safe system of working is required, such as having proper procedures for handling dangerous substances; there should be adequate supervision and training; and information should be provided.

### **Risk assessment**

Risk assessment is a technique for identifying and mitigating potential hazards involved with any activity. Risk is assessed by identifying a hazard and assessing the degree of harm it could cause against the likelihood of it occurring. The assessment then indicates what measures need to be put in place, if any, to reduce the risk to an acceptable level. Employers should ensure their risk assessment always involves employees and volunteers who are involved in the activities that are being risk assessed, and organisations without employees should aim to do the same. All gardening/decorating/DIY events or activities should be risk assessed, with brokers being aware of any key major activity in which volunteers will be involved, such as the use of garden machinery.

For more information, including templates, visit the HSE website.

### **Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH)**

The COSHH regulations<sup>20</sup> require employers to control substances that can harm workers' health. All employers have a legal duty to assess the workplace for risks to health which may be

caused by substances hazardous to health. They must take all necessary steps to control any risks identified. Organisations without employees should aim to do the same.

### **Fire safety and risk assessment**

All public and community buildings, whether owned or operated by an employer or an organisation without employees, must meet minimum levels of standards so that the risk of fire is reduced. The local fire and rescue service should be consulted for advice.

### **Registering your organisation's activities**

All employers must register their existence with the HSE or the environmental health department in the local authority. Organisations without employees only have to register if they take part in certain activities. An organisation should always check with the authorities if they are in any doubt about the need for registering activities.

### **First aid**

All employers have a legal duty to make a first aid assessment. The need for first aid will depend on the organisation's activities. For instance, a museum will have very different needs from a small knitting group. Organisations without employees are not bound to conduct a first aid assessment, although it is clearly good practice to do so. It can also be useful to have at least one first aid trained volunteer. In certain circumstances there may be a legal duty to provide first aid facilities. For example, if an organisation holds a major arts exhibition without first aid facilities and someone is injured, they may have broken their duty of care. An organisation should always check with the authorities if they are in any doubt about the need for registering activities. More information is available from the HSE.

### **Accidents and ill health**

Under health and safety law, employers must report and keep a record of certain injuries, incidents and cases of work-related disease. There is no legal requirement to record every accident, only those that meet the definition of 'serious'. However, keeping records will help you to identify patterns of accidents and injuries, and will help when completing your risk assessment. Your insurance company may also want to see your records if there is a work-related claim.

Information about what needs to be reported and how, is available on the HSE website found at <http://www.hse.gov.uk>.

## 9. Insurance

All groups and organisations that involve volunteers should consider what types of insurance they need to put in place to cover them for that involvement. Due to the variation between insurers and policies, listed below is general advice only. All groups and organisations needing specialist advice should always consult their insurance brokers for more detailed information. When purchasing insurance, a group or organisation involving volunteers should:

- ✚ ensure that the policies explicitly mention volunteers and covers them
- ✚ check if there are upper and lower age limits for volunteers
- ✚ ensure that the policies cover the types of activities that volunteers will be doing

### Employer's liability insurance

By law, employers must have employer's liability insurance. It covers paid employees in the event of accident, disease or injury caused or made worse as a result of work or of the 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

Also known as third party insurance, this protects the organisation for claims by members of the public for death, illness, loss, injury, or accident caused by the negligence of the organisation. A group or organisation should therefore consider having it in place if its activities could affect members of the public in this way. Public liability insurance generally covers anybody other than employees who come into contact with the organisation. This should explicitly include volunteers, covering them against loss or injury caused by negligence of the organisation if they are not covered by 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 therefore 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.

### Insurance for volunteer drivers

If an organisation owns the vehicle being used, then it is responsible for arranging insurance. If the volunteer owns the vehicle, then they are responsible for arranging insurance and informing the insurer about their volunteer driving. If a driver has 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. It may be necessary to brief volunteers on what they should and shouldn't do when using their own car for their volunteering – so they are fully aware of what they are committing themselves to and they can enhance their own car insurance policy if necessary.

## 10. Monitoring and evaluating a volunteer project

There are many reasons to monitor and evaluate your volunteer project, but they may include:

- ✚ identifying areas for improvement
- ✚ ensuring your volunteers have a positive experience
- ✚ providing information to funders
- ✚ assessing the programmes impact

### What is monitoring?

Monitoring is the process of collecting information so that programmes can be reviewed and updated as necessary. Information for monitoring can be collected daily, monthly or quarterly.

### What is evaluation?

Evaluation involves analysing the information you have collected to answer questions about how well the programme is doing, and to identify any gaps and improvements you can make. This will usually be done every six months or annually. Evaluation literature often refers to 'inputs', 'outputs', 'outcomes' and 'impact':

- ✚ inputs are the resources used to operate a project – e.g. time, money, materials
- ✚ outputs are the products and services the project leads to – e.g. training for volunteers, one-to-one support for isolated people
- ✚ outcomes are the changes that the project leads to – e.g. enabling people to develop new skills, a reduction in social isolation
- ✚ impact is the broader or longer term effects of the project – e.g. improved mental health, and improved community cohesion

### Deciding what to monitor

What you monitor will depend on the aims and objectives of your programme. For example, if you involve volunteers in order to increase the number of elderly people's gardens you are able

to maintain, you will probably want to monitor volunteer numbers, volunteer hours, number of gardens maintained/number of elderly people helped.

### **Some outputs you may wish to monitor are:**

- + the diversity of volunteers in terms of age, ethnicity, sex, socioeconomic background ,etc
- + the number of volunteers recruited by different methods
- + how long volunteers stay with you
- + the tasks undertaken by volunteers

### **Some outcomes you may wish to monitor are:**

- + the change in the number of people – such as numbers of isolated elderly people and/or volunteers engaging in your project
- + the diversity of the people engaging with your project
- + the quality of the volunteer experience
- + skills and experiences gained by volunteers
- + satisfaction with your project
- + the change in the level of funding to your organisation

### **Monitoring and evaluation**

- + use language that will be helpful
- + be clear about the target group you will be working with
- + be specific about what you are doing and who will benefit as a direct result
- + clarify the geographical area you are working in
- + make sure everyone in the project is clear about the project's aims
- + establish clear systems for gathering and collecting information
- + develop a wide range of collaborators, stakeholders and partners
- + reflect on how good people feel (soft outcomes)
- + who's contributing what?
- + how did we meet our targets?
- + identify any key success areas or weakness/pitfalls
- + how much did it all cost? Did we come in on budget?
- + time to share: consider how you might share best practice

### **Gathering information**

Different information is gathered in different ways. Some data will be quantitative (facts and figures) and some will be qualitative (opinions, comments, etc). Outputs will generally be

quantitative, but outcomes may be either. For example, an increase in the number of participants is a quantitative outcome of your volunteer programme, and satisfaction with your activity is a qualitative outcome. Ways of collecting this data include:

- + volunteer application forms
- + feedback forms
- + questionnaires
- + focus groups
- + one-to-one meetings
- + short interviews
- + attendance records
- + case studies
- + photographs
- + anecdotal comments

## Evaluation

Once you have collected the relevant information, you need to analyse it and draw conclusions. Again, the type of analysis and interpretation will depend on the aims and objectives of your project.

## Analysis

Quantitative data will usually be evaluated statistically, for example:

- + the percentage increase in volunteers, beneficiaries etc
- + relative numbers of people engaged from different backgrounds, e.g. age, sex, ethnicity, socio-economic background
- + average length of time a volunteer stays with you
- + increase in funding per volunteer involved
- + types of volunteering (formal, informal, short-term, group)

Qualitative data will often be evaluated by writing a report about what people have said about your programme.

## Drawing conclusions

Once you have analysed your data, you can draw conclusions about such things as:

- + the effectiveness of your recruitment methods

- ✚ how involving volunteers affects beneficiary numbers, funding, etc
- ✚ what parts of your project you should keep and what needs to change
- ✚ what information you need to gather that you don't already gather

## Demonstrating impact

The impact of your programme is the broader or longer-term effects it has on, for example, the community, volunteers or the organisation. If you have collected data, analysed it and drawn conclusions, you are well on the way to demonstrating the impact of your programme. What you need to think about is how you use the information you have gathered and the conclusions you have drawn. This will depend on who you want to demonstrate your impact to and why. For example, you may want to:

- ✚ show a funder that you have met their expectations
- ✚ gain new funding
- ✚ increase community involvement in and support for your organisation
- ✚ establish relationships and partnerships with other organisations
- ✚ have an effect on local or national policy
- ✚ demonstrate outcomes and achievements

It is therefore a matter of how you draw your conclusions and the method of presentation. Usually a report is produced which is then sent to the audiences that have been identified, presented at meetings and events, promoted via the press, etc.

You can find more information in the resources for volunteer managers and coordinators section of Volunteering England/NCVO's Good Practice Bank.

Volunteering England/NCVO produces a number of publications that you may find useful. In particular, the Volunteering Impact Assessment Toolkit (VIAT) contains step-by-step instructions on how to conduct an assessment. It is backed up by a suite of web-based tools such as questionnaires, guides for interviews, focus groups and other methods of collecting information. It also includes detailed guidance on conducting a Volunteer Investment and Value Audit, a measurement tool that assesses the value of volunteers' time in relation to the resources used to support them.

## 11. Job substitution

As the impact of public spending cuts becomes clear, an increasing number of organisations are concerned about the legality of replacing positions that have been made redundant with volunteers.

## **Is the role suitable for a volunteer?**

The first question to ask is whether or not the roles in question are suitable for volunteers in the first place. Volunteers are usually involved because they bring something additional to the role that paid staff cannot. Volunteers are not core to the organisation or the group but complementary. One of the principles of Volunteering England's charter with the TUC for strengthening relations between paid staff and volunteers is that the involvement of volunteers should provide added value and supplement the work of paid staff. They should not be used to displace paid staff or undercut their pay and conditions of service. Also, unless volunteers are involved appropriately, the situation could have a negative impact on the image of volunteering in the area. This is particularly important given that the role of volunteers in delivering public services is currently high on the political agenda.

## **Legal issues**

There are also some legal considerations, especially if a volunteer is in receipt of state benefits. Jobcentre Plus and HM Revenue and Customs can investigate instances of suspected 'notional earnings'. If the claimant performs a service for someone and either isn't paid or is paid less than for comparable employment in the area, their benefits claim could be affected. For more information, see the Directgov web page about volunteering while on benefits.

Also, there have been cases in which volunteers have been found by an employment tribunal to be, in effect, an employee or worker. This has conferred on them employment rights such as the national minimum wage. For more information, see Volunteering England's free publication 'Volunteers and the law'.

## **Displacement or replacement?**

In the current climate, however, it is not always easy to decide whether or not the involvement of volunteers constitutes the displacement of paid staff. For example, if a local library or museum is going to close unless volunteers take on the running of it, is that displacement? As the effect of cuts in funding for public services and the voluntary sector is still going on, no single answer has yet to emerge. However, it is clear that choosing to make staff redundant and directly replace them with volunteers does constitute job substitution.

## **13. Employer supported volunteering**

Employer supported volunteering (ESV) is the term for any volunteering carried out by employees with the support of their employer, usually during working hours.

## Benefits

Benefits to employees include developing new interests or skills and supporting local projects. Benefits to businesses include a motivated and socially engaged workforce, and the good publicity of having helped their community.

Benefits to the voluntary and community sector organisation include extra pairs of hands to help out with whatever tasks need doing and the specific skills of the employees.

## Information for volunteers

The employer and the beneficiary organisation should work together prior to the project to ensure that the volunteers have all the information they require for a positive experience. This includes, but will not be limited to:

- ✚ dates and times
- ✚ location
- ✚ activities
- ✚ expenses arrangements
- ✚ clothing requirements

## Activities

ESV often works best when you have a specific project in mind, such as creating the scenery for a community play or stewarding at a local festival. A project with a set completion date will provide the volunteers with a sense of achievement. It may also make a better story for the local media. You can approach businesses that will provide you with specific skills. For example, you could ask an interior design agency to help you refurbish your venue or an IT firm to set up a video-diary booth to collect case studies of your participants for YouTube. In all cases, you may want to consider a written role description, which you can discuss with volunteers prior to, and during, an induction. As with all volunteers, ensure they are adequately supervised and have the opportunity to provide feedback.

## Expenses

It is good practice to ensure that someone is not out of pocket as a result of their volunteering. Usually, expenses such as travel and lunch costs would be met by the volunteer-involving organisation. However, the situation may not be as straightforward with an ESV scheme. For example, the volunteers may be being paid their usual salary for that day, in which case they would not be out of pocket if they were usually expected to pay for their own travel and food.

In all cases, the employer and the volunteer-involving organisation should discuss and decide the issue of expenses and other costs before the activity takes place.

### **Insurance**

When a member of the public makes a claim of liability for death, illness, loss, injury, or accident, it will generally be against the organisation carrying out the activity that led to it. Therefore, employer supported volunteers would be covered by the insurance of the organisation in which they are volunteering. However, this doesn't mean that a claim could not be brought against the employer, either by a member of the public or one of their employee volunteers. Therefore, both organisations should seek advice to ensure they are covered. They should also consider whether specific cover is required for the activity, for example if the volunteers are using heavy machinery or driving.

### **Publicity**

If good publicity is one of the reasons the business has agreed to help you – and it often is – make sure you bear this in mind from the beginning. What kind of stories do your local newspapers and radio stations like to run? Do you have a good relationship with editors and reporters? Be careful not to promise publicity to a business if you're not sure you can deliver it. It's also better to word agreements in terms of what you will do rather than what you expect other people to do. For example, you could agree to 'send a press release to local media followed by a phone call', rather than to 'secure publicity in the local press'.

You can find more information on Volunteering England/NCVO's ESV web pages for volunteer involving organisations.

## 14. Case Study – The Brushes & Spades Project



### The Brushes & Spades Project

#### Introduction

Brushes & Spades is a unique project, in that it gives volunteers with extra support needs an opportunity for personal development through active engagement in meaningful volunteering activity, whilst increasing the health and wellbeing of elderly/disabled people and helping reduce their social isolation.

#### Background

The project has been run by Daventry Volunteer Centre (DVC) in various forms over the last 12 years using a number of funding sources. From June 2009 to May 2014 we received funding of £467,940 from the Big Lottery Reaching Communities Fund, to run the project for 5 years with 2 full time project workers. Additional funding was raised from a number of charitable trusts and foundations to purchase 2 second hand vehicles which were needed to transport volunteers and gardening/decorating/DIY equipment across the rural Daventry district. DVC recruits the volunteers for the project, the majority of whom have extra support needs, and offers them training and meaningful volunteering activity - gardening/decorating/DIY, which they carry out in teams for isolated elderly or disabled people, with the support of the project workers. Referrals for the projects services are received by DVC from a variety of sources including GP's and health professionals, other stakeholder groups, statutory agencies and individual members of the public and self-referrals.

The service offered by the project is widely known and trusted by local people, since all work carried out is supervised and known to be part of the Volunteer Centre activity. Customer satisfaction surveys are completed for each job and any problems that may arise following a visit from the project team, are immediately dealt with. The project does not make a set charge

for the work carried out but asks for an affordable donation to be made to the Volunteer Centre, enabling people on very low incomes to benefit from the service.

DVC has extensive experience of working with volunteers with complex support needs. Monitoring and evaluation of our work over the last 12 years has proven that this particular group of volunteers benefit from intensive one to one support, together with on-going skills and personal development training, which promotes motivation and engagement.

An independent evaluation of the project was carried out in October 2013 - "Review and Evaluation of the Brushes & Spades (Extra Support Needs) Project 2009 - October 2013 by Ann Gilbert. She states: "The project has undoubtedly been a success... providing support and benefits to isolated elderly people and volunteers with extra support needs".

During Year 5, 73 volunteers undertook 4396 hours of gardening, decorating and DIY, which helped 251 isolated elderly people with home maintenance, and had the added value of providing social contact with the volunteer team. This service enables elderly people to remain living independently in their own homes for longer and increases the sense of health & wellbeing of both beneficiary groups (survey results).

### **Research/The need for the project**

Before funding was applied for, information collected from a wide range of sources including research conducted through DVC's other services, was reviewed to establish possible appropriated funding sources. The Reaching Communities Fund (Big Lottery) was selected as the available funding level enabled DVC to expand and fully fund the existing project.

#### **The need - Elderly People:**

- Increasing rural and social isolation amongst elderly people
- Increased economic pressures making it financially difficult for elderly people to maintain their own properties. Elderly people report they cannot afford home maintenance services and are wary of engaging "rogue traders".
- Targeted crime rates amongst the elderly population. Poorly maintained gardens and properties belonging to isolated elderly/vulnerable people become a target for crime (Northamptonshire Police statistics).
- Increased depression/mental health issues/anxiety levels amongst elderly people struggling to manage at home due to cuts in statutory services, low incomes and social isolation.

### **The need – Volunteers with extra support needs:**

- Increased mental health issues/low self confidence/low motivation amongst long term unemployed people. Vulnerable people need on-going support to enable them to volunteer.

### **The need - Partner Agencies/Stakeholders:**

- Overstretched/Reduced services to vulnerable and elderly groups due to funding cuts to statutory services.
- Increase in non medical appointments (additional costs to the NHS) with GP's and other health professionals due to social isolation of elderly people just wanting to talk to someone.

The most quoted lines taken from our recent survey results from over 100 isolated elderly people include: "I'm on my own; I can't afford help; I'm worried about using traders I don't know/trust; I don't know how I'm going to cope with my garden/ DIY/ Decorating; I'm worried about my neighbours complaining about the state of my garden; I cannot do my garden and some of my jobs so would have to consider leaving my home".

### **The Project Plan Outline:**

An outline plan was written detailing the main activities of the project, based on the need identified from our research:

1. Form a stakeholder steering group with interested parties to review project progress, share information, address new developments, look at gaps in services and changing needs, and steer how the project could be shaped to meet these needs. Representatives from agencies working with the client groups (e.g. vulnerable adults and isolated elderly people) were invited to join. The steering group received project progress reports from the Brushes & Spades workers.
2. Daventry Volunteer Centre Trustee Board to recruit representation from elderly people, volunteers and stakeholder organisations. The Trustees have the overall responsibility for the management of the project and are fully involved in the development and running of the project.

3. Agree the Budget (see appendix 6) which includes recruitment costs, staff salaries and on costs, project management costs, project equipment costs, office overheads and project worker and volunteer expenses (see appendix 2).
4. Organise recruitment campaign to recruit project workers including job advert, job descriptions, person specifications and interview questions (see appendix 3)
5. Recruit a team of volunteers with extra support needs e.g. learning disability/ physical disability/ mental health issues to carry out the gardening/ decorating/ DIY activities.
6. The project will operate from Monday to Friday as our research shows that on these days elderly people are less likely to receive visitors and volunteers are more likely to be available to volunteer.
7. Project workers will train the volunteers in gardening/ decorating/ basic DIY skills and support them to deliver a service to elderly isolated/vulnerable people living across the whole of the Daventry District, using DVC vehicles and project equipment.
8. Referrals for gardening/decorating/DIY for elderly isolated/vulnerable clients will be taken from stakeholder, partner and self-referrals.
9. Project workers will visit elderly clients and Risk Assess the work requested (see appendix 4), discuss purchase of materials needed/discuss low maintenance garden possibilities etc.
10. Advertise and promote the project to beneficiaries (isolated elderly and vulnerable people) through stakeholder partners, local key network meetings (e.g. Daventry VCS Forum/Daventry Over 50's Forum) and using media (e.g. Twitter/ Facebook/ Local Newspaper /BBC Radio Northampton/ Village Network News).
11. Set up project monitoring and evaluation systems to satisfy funder requirements (see appendix 5).
12. Organise the supervision and support of the project workers and volunteers.
13. Purchase project equipment
14. Set up the reporting arrangements of project activities to the Steering Group, DVC Trustee Board and the Funders.

## Quotes from the Volunteers:

EMMA

I am 19 years of age and live in Daventry with my parents and twin sisters. Since leaving school I have attended various work experience programmes and done a number of voluntary jobs. Despite best efforts I am still trying to find full time work.

While looking for a job I have wanted to keep busy, and working with The Brushes and Spades Project has been a great help. The time I've spent there has been rewarding and confidence building. I enjoy the type of work that we do, particularly the gardening, and am glad to be involved with something that provides real help to people in need. I find my fellow volunteers friendly and kind and look forward to joining them each week. Volunteering with the Project adds to my skills, gives me a routine and is not unlike the work experience assignments I've done. I think it will help me in getting a job, if only because an employer would be impressed at the way I have been using my time.

RICHARD

Having lived and worked in and around Daventry for many years, I was made redundant earlier this year. I am approaching 48 years old, and my age may be contributing to the fact that I am not finding it easy to get a new job.

I am someone who likes to keep busy and enjoy working outside. I have cultivated an allotment for many seasons and consider myself to be a capable gardener. For these reasons I was pleased to join Brushes and Spades some months ago, and I have thoroughly enjoyed the time I have spent volunteering with the project. I have been able to share my knowledge with fellow volunteers who have less gardening experience than me. It has been good to assist elderly and disabled people who live locally – I think we make a real difference to their lives. In addition to the job satisfaction that I get from our work, I feel sure that time well spent in the voluntary sector will assist me in my job search.

ROBERT

Robert, who lives in Long Buckby, joined The Brushes and Spades Project six months ago. Whilst physically fit, he has various special needs and learning difficulties and has been recovering from a severe bout of depression arising from long term unemployment and the collapse of his marriage. Robert is 56 years old.

Robert greatly enjoys working with the Project. He states that it helps him to get out and meet people, rebuild his confidence, get over his depression and generally feel good about himself. He likes helping others and feels that the discipline of working for them can only be of benefit

in achieving his principle goal – to get back to work. “My confidence was right down”, he says, “Brushes and Spades has helped me in so many ways”.

DAVID

A couple of years ago I retired early at 60 after 40 years of slog. To volunteer has given me the chance to find friends have fun and maintain some exercise. The tasks are varied as are the volunteers and clients, each bringing their own character. This year has been quite miserable with terrible weather for gardening jobs and many of us have suffered with illness. Nevertheless our main objective has been to get a result for clients who are too old and/or have lost their partners and can no longer cope without our help. This gives volunteers great satisfaction - and usually a cup of tea! Finally, I find there is always something to learn.

LEE

Lee is now 37 and has been volunteering with the Project since its inception. With serious learning difficulties, he has never worked and is never likely to, but when volunteering he is always cheerful and able to contribute in some way to the work in hand. Lee says that he enjoys his work with us because he likes gardening and decorating and feels he is getting better at both (which is true). He sees the other volunteers as his friends and looks forward to the two days each week when he joins us. He likes to think that he is helping the elderly and disabled and finds that his family and friends are impressed by what he is doing; the Project has boosted his self esteem. Lee does tend to tire as a volunteering day draws on and appreciates the fact that our hours do not extend to a full working day.

### **Quotes from elderly residents:**

The most quoted lines taken from our recent survey results from over 200 isolated elderly people include:

“I’m on my own;

I can’t afford help;

I’m worried about using traders I don’t know/trust;

I don’t know how I’m going to cope with my garden/ DIY/ Decorating;

I’m worried about my neighbours complaining about the state of my garden;

I cannot do my garden and some of my jobs so would have to consider leaving my home”.

### Summary of Achievements:

The Brushes & Spades project has been highly successful in bringing about all the changes we wished to achieve over the last 5 years, which were:

1. To engage socially disadvantaged adults in meaningful volunteering:

A total of 362 socially disadvantaged volunteers (e.g. mental health issues/physical disability/learning disability/long term unemployed/English as a second language/low self esteem etc.) gave their time doing meaningful volunteering (gardening, decorating and DIY) for local elderly or disabled people without family support.

2. To improve access to training and development to improve life skills for volunteers with extra support needs:

A total of 2742 hours of training were completed by volunteers. Training included: basic gardening/decorating/DIY skills, First Aid, communication/confidence building/assertiveness skills.

3. To encourage healthier & more active people & communities:

Volunteers undertook a total of 25,376 hours of physical gardening/decorating/DIY volunteering activity. Many also took up sport, dancing and walking as a result of forming friendships with other people sharing similar interests.

4. To support long term unemployed and those with mental health issues to gain experience & confidence through skills training and personal development to move on to unsupported volunteering & paid work:

35% of volunteers completed 1 to 1 personal development/goal setting sessions which lead to more formal training (fork lift truck licence/chainsaw training/counselling course/tree felling etc.). As a result, a total of 136 volunteers were helped to move on to paid work, un-supported volunteering or full time education.

5. To provide a gardening/decorating/DIY service to elderly/disabled people enabling independent living for longer:

A total of 1,124 elderly/disabled people without family support living across the Daventry District were given gardening, decorating or DIY support by the project. Survey results show our support helped them to remain living independently in their own homes for longer, and increased their sense of health & wellbeing .

## 15. Further Information

Daventry Volunteer Centre  
DDWF Building  
13 New Street  
Daventry  
Northamptonshire NN11 4BT  
Email: [info@daventryvolunteers.org.uk](mailto:info@daventryvolunteers.org.uk)  
Website: [www.daventryvolunteers.org.uk](http://www.daventryvolunteers.org.uk)  
Phone: 01327 300614

Volunteering England (Part of NCVO)  
Society Building  
8 All Saints Street  
London N1 9RL  
Email [ncvo@ncvo.org.uk](mailto:ncvo@ncvo.org.uk)  
Website: [www.volunteering.org.uk](http://www.volunteering.org.uk)  
Phone 020 7713 6161  
Fax 020 7713 6300

## Appendix 1

### Suggested contents for a Volunteer Information Pack

A brief description of the aims of the organisation	This can be taken from literature your organisation already has.
Who does what	A copy of the organisational structure chart or if one isn't available you may like to draw one up.
In case of any questions, who does the volunteer go to?	You should include their name, job title, and telephone or extension number. Don't forget to include second contact, just in case the first contact is ever off sick or on holiday.
A volunteer role description	You should include any specific requirements the role has or special qualities you are looking for in a volunteer.
Volunteer policy/agreement	A copy should be given to the volunteer for future reference.
Examples of paperwork such as expenses claim form	It is good practice to pay your volunteers expenses to cover travel to and from your organisation and also their lunch expenses should they volunteer all day.
Information leaflets on the work of the group and recent newsletters	Give the volunteer current and up to date literature that your organisation holds.
Health and safety policy/guidelines	There is no need to draft a separate volunteer health and safety policy, but it is imperative that volunteers are written in to the organisational policy.
First aid & fire precautions and procedures	All volunteers should be made aware of who the first aider is and who is responsible for fire safety. Where the first aid box and accident book are kept and when testing of the fire alarm is due, also where the fire assembly point is located.

Confidentiality statement	It is important that volunteers are made aware of what your organisation classes as confidential.
Details of support meetings/social gatherings	It is good practice to hold regular support sessions with your volunteers; you may like to schedule them in advance. It is also a good idea to let volunteers know of organised team nights out and special occasions; this will help the volunteer to feel part of the organisation.
Problem solving procedure	In the event of a volunteer having a complaint, or if your organisation needs to resolve an issue with a volunteer, it is important that you have clear guidelines to work from.
Equal opportunities policy	You should provide your volunteer with a copy of your organisation's policy or the volunteer should be made aware of its location.
Some form of identification badge/card	This can make your volunteer feel like a valued member of your organisation. It is vital if you have volunteer befrienders or drivers that you provide one, so that service users can clearly identify your volunteers.
Annual report	A copy of your most recent annual report can be useful so that volunteers are up to date with the activities of your organisation.

**Appendix 2 – Project expense sheets**

**Davertry Volunteer Centre : Volunteer Expense Form**

This form is to be used to record those expenses you incur whilst volunteering for the Volunteer Centre. The types of expenditure for which we provide reimbursement are:

Mileage @ 45p per mile

Volunteer Lunch when volunteering for a whole day

Bus Fare

Materials/equipment needed

Date	Expenditure	Amount

Total \_\_\_\_\_

Expenses will be paid monthly following the Treasurers visit to the office. Receipts should be obtained for all items of expenditure.

**These represent an accurate account of my expenses.**

Name and Address of  
Volunteer:

Authorised by

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature & Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date



## Appendix 3

### Brushes & Spades Project Worker Job Description

**Responsible to** the Manager of Daventry Volunteer Centre

**Salary:** ££,£££'s per annum for 37 hours a week. A contribution of 5% of salary is payable, after six months service, into an existing pension scheme.

**Purpose of Post:** The post will support people who have extra support needs and face barriers to volunteering in traditional volunteering opportunities to undertake meaningful volunteering activity.

The project requires someone with commitment and dedication to work closely with people who face a wide range of barriers to volunteering.

#### **Duties and Tasks**

To run the project office, with responsibility for administration and maintenance of office equipment, including computers.

To liaise as necessary with voluntary and statutory agencies, both those supporting potential vulnerable volunteers, and those requiring volunteers.

To work with volunteers on a 1-1 basis and in small groups, to produce their personal development plans and to support them to carry out gardening, decorating and small DIY jobs with the Brushes & Spades project for elderly and/or disabled people without family help. To offer supervision and training to help volunteers to increase their confidence and skills, and to prepare them to move into unsupported volunteering or paid work as appropriate.

To promote the project, as appropriate (e.g. give talks) and to write reports and publicity articles relating to project work, as required.

To provide information, guidance, help and training to all project volunteers tailored to the individual volunteer's needs.

To visit and assess potential volunteering gardening, decorating and DIY activities, carrying out risk assessments as appropriate, to ensure suitability for volunteer involvement.

To promote an equal opportunities environment.

To monitor and evaluate the project and produce written reports on project progress, as agreed with the Manager.

To maintain confidentiality.

To develop and prioritise the workload.

Responsibility for upkeep, replacement and maintenance of all Project equipment.

To attend meetings, conferences and training where appropriate.

To undertake any other duties that are appropriate for the position, including helping to cover the office if needed.



**Appendix 5**

**Sample Project Monitoring Record Sheet**

<b>PROJECT REPORT TO THE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE – BRUSHES &amp; SPADES PROJECT</b>				
<b>FUNDERS:</b>				
<b>PROJECT WORKER/S (FULL TIME 2x37 hours per week):</b>				
<b>MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE MEETING DATE:</b>				
<b><u>Milestone Description</u></b>	<b><u>Milestone Target</u></b>	<b><u>Target Date</u></b>	<b><u>Target/Progress Achieved to Date</u></b>	<b><u>Comments/Issues/Other</u></b>
<b>Project Outcome 1 Description</b>				
<b>Project Outcome 2 Description</b>				
<b>Project Outcome 3 Description</b>				
<b>Project Outcome 4 Description</b>				
<b>Project Outcome 5 Description</b>				
<b>Unexpected outcomes achieved during the year</b>				
<b>Capital spend (equipment &amp; materials expenditure)</b>				
<b>Project Summary</b>				
<b>Other Activities/Comments</b>				

## Appendix 6

## Sample Project Budget

Costs	Total project cost – Year one	Funders contribution – Year one	Deficit	Notes
<b>Revenue costs</b>				
Salaries, NI, Pension	24,150	24,150		Salary £21,000 plus 15% on costs
Recruitment	500	500		
General running exp.	450	450		
Training	1,000	1,000		Staff and volunteers
Travel	3,000	3,000		45p per mile
Volunteer Expenses	3,600	3,600		15 vol. x £5 per vol.x 48 weeks p.a.
Total revenue costs	32,700	32,700		
<b>Overheads</b>				
Staff (Management)	3,780	3,780		10% of total revenue costs
Accommodation	1,800	1,800		
Utilities	800	800		
Other legal fees	500	500		Independent examination
Project evaluation	2,000	2,000		
Total overheads	8,880	8,880		
<b>Capital costs</b>				
Vehicle	5,000		5,000	Additional Fundraising
Equipment	3,000	3,000		
Total capital costs	8,000	3,000		
<b>Total costs</b>	<b>49,580</b>	<b>44,580</b>	<b>5,000</b>	

