



Report To:	Inverclyde Alliance Board	Date:	1 October 2018
Report By:	Ian Bruce, CVS Inverclyde	Report No:	
Contact Officer:	Catriona Macleod	Contact No:	01475 711733
Subject:	Volunteering Strategy (Draft)		

1.0 PURPOSE

- 1.1 This report introduces Partners to the draft Volunteering Strategy for Inverclyde, produced following discussions and learning over the last year. Partners are invited to comment on the strategy and are asked to respond with commitments on how they can contribute to achieving the strategy.

2.0 SUMMARY

- 2.1 Volunteering is the giving of time and energy for the good of the community, society at large or an individual other than the volunteer themselves or a member of their family. Volunteers choose to do so of their own free will and without expectation of financial gain
- 2.2 For some people in society volunteering is inaccessible and there are insufficient opportunities to volunteer that would result in a quality experience. Those disadvantaged include those with health conditions, those on low incomes and those whose personal circumstances make it difficult for them to volunteer.
- 2.3 The aim of the strategy is to increase the levels of people volunteering within Inverclyde. There are four key priorities to ensure this is achieved:

Volunteering for Everyone – access to volunteering
Volunteering Everywhere – promotion of volunteering
Great Volunteering Experience – quality of volunteering
Volunteering with Impact – strategic impact of volunteering

- 2.4 Alongside the strategy a separate action plan will be developed which will include commitments made by Alliance Partners to achieving the aim.

3.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Alliance Board:

- Notes the draft report
- Recognises the value of volunteering
- Asks individual partners to provide feedback on the strategy
- Asks individual partners to make engage with CVS Inverclyde around discussing individual commitments for the action plan.

Ian Bruce, Manager, CVS Inverclyde

4.0 BACKGROUND

4.1 Volunteering can be both *formal* or *informal*:

- Formal volunteering is undertaken with an organisation such as a charity or a public body. The volunteer has a clear role to fulfil and systems and processes to follow.
- Informal volunteering refers to the wide range of mutual help and co-operation between individuals, for example babysitting for a friend or checking on an elderly neighbour.

4.2 About 25% of Inverclyde's adult population volunteers. That translates to about 15,000 people in the area. These figures are taken from the Scottish Household Survey 2016. These volunteers make an amazing contribution to Inverclyde life, but the volunteering rate is below the national average of 27%.

4.3 The financial impact of work undertaken by volunteers in Inverclyde is estimated to be valued at around £40m per year.

4.4 People on low incomes – are less likely to volunteer (17% in the most deprived quintile against an average of 25%).

5.0 PROPOSALS

5.1 To move forward in developing the strategy and action plan.

6.0 IMPLICATIONS

6.1 Legal: None
Finance: None
Human Resources: None
Equality and Diversity: Improve participation of all groups
Repopulation: None
Inequalities: Reduce participation gap

7.0 CONSULTATIONS

7.1 N/A

8.0 LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

8.1 Draft Volunteering Strategy



**Everyone Volunteering
Inverclyde's Volunteering Strategy 2019 – 2028**

DRAFT

INVERCLYDE ALLIANCE LOGO

PARTNER NAMES / LOGOS

FOREWORD

To be added – Stephen McCabe, Chair of Inverclyde Alliance?

1. Introduction

This strategy aims to develop the culture of volunteering in Inverclyde – recognising the importance of people helping each other as a foundation of a compassionate society. Volunteering has been proven to benefit the beneficiary, the volunteer and society more widely.

Volunteering is the giving of time and energy for the good of the community, society at large or an individual other than the volunteer themselves or a member of their family. Volunteers choose to do so of their own free will and without expectation of financial gain

Volunteering can be both *formal* or *informal*:

- Formal volunteering is undertaken with an organisation such as a charity or a public body. The volunteer has a clear role to fulfil and systems and processes to follow.
- Informal volunteering refers to the wide range of mutual help and co-operation between individuals, for example babysitting for a friend or checking on an elderly neighbour.

Research undertaken by Volunteer Scotland has demonstrated that volunteering has value for the individual volunteer, the beneficiary and society more broadly:

- Individuals gain confidence, skills, self-worth and social connections; all key components of being resilient
- Beneficiaries – including both people and organisations – have access to a wider range of affordable activities and services. Some people find engaging with volunteers less intimidating than more formal structures
- Society gains through the building of connections and a culture of community reciprocity. Volunteering is an essential part of developing a community that is more inclusive and compassionate and developing a participative democracy.

This strategy is targeted mainly towards formal volunteering; while recognising the huge value that informal volunteering plays in our society.

2. Context

About 25% of Inverclyde's adult population volunteers. That translates to about 15,000 people in the area. These figures are taken from the Scottish Household Survey 2016. These volunteers make an amazing contribution to Inverclyde life, but the volunteering rate is below the national average of 27%.

The social impact these volunteers make to society is impossible to quantify; but the financial impact of work undertaken by volunteers in Inverclyde is estimated to be valued at around £40m per year. This is based on 15,000 volunteers, doing an average of 5 hours volunteering a week at £10 per hour).

If we want to increase the number of people volunteering we need to understand the challenges and barriers that are faced. In developing the strategy we have considered:

People with Barriers

Some people find their access to volunteering opportunities is unfairly limited. Those who have barriers to volunteering include:

- People with disabilities or health conditions who may not be able to undertake volunteering roles without additional support to access opportunities or whose condition is perceived as a risk to organisations. Just 11% of those unable to work due to illness volunteer. This includes people with physical disabilities, sensory impairment and learning disabilities.
- Young people – particularly those under 18 years of age where additional safeguards need to be put in place by the organisation before they can allow a young person to volunteer. This reduces the number and type of opportunities available.
- People whose personal circumstances mean they are unfairly assumed to be high risk or challenging to involve in volunteering - including those with addictions, mental ill-health or criminal convictions and those who are homeless.
- Those with cultural barriers to volunteering including asylum seekers & refugees (New Scots)

Demographics

There are key demographics in which people are less likely to volunteer. Of particular relevance in Inverclyde:

- People on low incomes – are less likely to volunteer (17% in the most deprived quintile against an average of 25%)
- Men are less likely than women to volunteer (22% to 27%)

People's Expectations

As society has evolved we need to ensure that volunteering opportunities reflect the priorities of people. Based on our experience within volunteer placement locally; we know that potential volunteers are looking for opportunities that are:

- Dynamic – opportunities that enable people to show creativity in what they are doing rather than being repetitive in nature
- Flexible – including opportunities that are one-off or short term; or can be undertaken from home
- Sociable – opportunities that can be completed with a group of friends or with family
- Valuable – with the chance to learn new skills or gain experience

Inverclyde's Priorities

Volunteering has the potential to contribute significantly to many of Inverclyde's local policy priorities. However:

- the value of volunteering however is not consistently recognised within local strategies
- there are areas in both the voluntary and public sectors with low volunteer participation.

3. Strategic Priorities

This strategy aims to create an Inverclyde where everybody is encouraged to volunteer as part of living in a Compassionate Inverclyde. Our aim is that:

By 2023: The level of volunteering in Inverclyde will match the current national average (increase from 25% to 27%)

By 2028: The level of volunteering in Inverclyde will be in the top quarter of local authority areas in Scotland (currently a minimum of 32%)

To achieve this we have identified 4 key priorities:

- 1) Volunteering for Everyone
- 2) Volunteering Everywhere
- 3) Great Volunteering Experience
- 4) Volunteering with Impact

These priorities are set out in more detail over the next few pages. Alongside this strategy sits our action plan. The action plan contains the commitments that individual Alliance partners have made towards achieving the priorities.

1) Volunteering for Everyone

Everyone should have the right to volunteer regardless of their circumstances. We want to ensure that there are suitable volunteering opportunities for everyone in society.

There are insufficient volunteering opportunities for people under the age of 18. This is because there are real and perceived barriers for volunteer involving organisations around child protection, insurance, management capacity and perceptions of the suitability of young people to volunteer.

Some people are unable to access volunteering opportunities because the condition of their health is such that additional support needs to be put in place to enable them to do so. This could include physical accessibility, sensory impairment such as deafness, or a learning disability. They may require adaptations to be made to the environment or opportunity or a person to support them to volunteer.

Other people are excluded from volunteering because there are less visible barriers to their participation such as lack of awareness of volunteering & its benefits, social isolation, lack of personal confidence and societal stigma. Social groups affected by this include:

- those who are less culturally inclined to volunteer such as those from low income backgrounds, men and those who have immigrated from countries where formal volunteering is less common
- those who are too often perceived as being high risk, low skilled or requiring intensive management such as those with mental health conditions, addictions or criminal convictions and those who are homeless.

	<i>What we want to see</i>	<i>How we will achieve this</i>
1.1	<i>There are more volunteering opportunities for young people aged 13-18</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Follow good practice guidance on the development of youth volunteering opportunities • Make existing and new opportunities suitable for young people
1.2	<i>Fewer people are excluded from volunteering due to a health condition</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create volunteering opportunities within public bodies • Recognise volunteering as a meaningful activity for people to be involved in
1.3	<i>Fewer people are excluded from volunteering due to their circumstances</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promoting volunteering to groups that are traditionally less engaged • Developing opportunities that are more suitable for those who are perceived as high risk • Developing our volunteering practice to better include those with cultural barriers
1.4	<i>The gap between the levels of men and women volunteering is reduced</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop opportunities that appeal to a wider range of interests • Target promotion of volunteering at men
1.5	<i>The gap between the levels of volunteering amongst those in the most deprived 20% of communities and the rest of Inverclyde is reduced</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage all volunteer involving organisations to cover volunteer expenses • Ensure that people don't feel their benefits are threatened by volunteering • Recognise volunteering as a contribution to employability

2) Volunteering Everywhere

If we recognise that volunteering is a valuable building block of our society then we should aspire to enable its benefits to exist in as many environments as possible.

Having volunteering in different types of environments will help us build a society where lifelong volunteering is normal. It is not just about creating volunteering opportunities; it is about ensuring that we promote volunteering to people and clearly demonstrate that we value and appreciate their volunteering.

In particular we want to see volunteering being promoted:

- in education institutions
- in the workplace
- in public and third sector services

Promotion may include:

- Better understanding the levels of volunteering among our people
- Encouraging people to volunteer and promoting its benefits
- Creating space and time for people to volunteer
- Offering volunteering opportunities and consider how service users can be involved
- Using volunteering as an effective development opportunity for individuals or teams
- Clearly valuing the skills and attitudes that volunteering develops and demonstrates
- Recognising and rewarding people's volunteering

	<i>What we want to see</i>	<i>How we will achieve this</i>
2.1	<i>More employers – including all Alliance partners - take action to encourage and support their employees to volunteer</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employer Supported Volunteering (time away to volunteer) • Recognising volunteering within recruitment • Measuring volunteer participation in staff surveys
2.2	<i>All education institutions in Inverclyde encourage volunteering by learners</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Including volunteering in the curriculum • Creating space for volunteering within the institution • Promote volunteering as a personal and professional development tool
2.3	<i>Volunteering is promoted in public and third sector services</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creation of volunteering opportunities • Service design considering how service users can be involved as volunteers • Promoting volunteering to customers / service users
2.4	<i>People's volunteering is valued</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Volunteers are recognised and thanked • The value of volunteering is recognised in recruitment

3) Great Volunteering Opportunities

Volunteering should be both valuable and enjoyable for the volunteer. This requires opportunities that are well designed and supported. This is about practical things like making sure the organisation covers expenses; gives clear leadership and management; supports the individual to feel part of a team and has policies and procedures which create a safe and nurturing environment.

There are quality standards such as Thistle, Volunteer Friendly and Investors in Volunteering that can help organisations improve their practice and demonstrate quality.

We also want to see organisations take into account the changing nature of people's lives and digital technology in the volunteering roles they create. We know that people want volunteering opportunities that are social, use & develop their skills and are aligned with their values.

For volunteering to really grow we need opportunities that are more flexible to people's needs. This will include:

- One-off volunteering – projects where people volunteer for a short period of time
- Irregular volunteering – where people volunteer on an ad hoc basis as it suits them
- Family volunteering - that allows parents to bring their children and include them in the volunteering experience
- Home based volunteering – where people undertake volunteering flexibly at home.

	<i>What we want to see</i>	<i>How we will achieve this</i>
3.1	<i>There is an increase in the number of flexible volunteering opportunities</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creating one-off volunteering opportunities • Enabling people to volunteer from home • Being more flexible around volunteer roles
3.2	<i>There are more opportunities that clearly show how people can develop their skills</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to training for volunteers • More opportunities designed for those looking for work
3.3	<i>There are more social opportunities for people to volunteer</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Team volunteering opportunities • Intergenerational opportunities • Opportunities that challenge social isolation
3.4	<i>Increased number of organisations use a quality standard for volunteering</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Thistle</i> • <i>Volunteer Friendly</i> • <i>Investors in Volunteers</i>

4) Volunteering with Impact

Volunteering can contribute to meeting Inverclyde's challenges – providing there is clear planning and volunteering is embedded through strategy, delivery plans and service design.

Volunteering provides a mechanism for genuine and wide-spread community participation in achieving our local aims. It enables us to access wider skills and community intelligence that is not always available to public or third sector organisations.

The community involvement can improve the capacity of services; but can also help us to make changes at a societal level which could reduce the demands on services. Where service users become involved through volunteering the intelligence gained can be significant. Service user volunteering may also increase the resilience and skills of the volunteer – improving their outcomes.

At any point in time Inverclyde will have a number of key priorities – outlined in the plans of the local community planning partnership and the partner agencies. A relatively small amount of resource could significantly improve the role of volunteering in addressing those priorities.

	<i>What we want to see</i>	<i>How we will achieve this</i>
4.1	<i>More local strategies will demonstrate how volunteering does or could have an impact</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider volunteering as part of the development of each local strategy
4.2	<i>There will be more volunteering opportunities with a clear link to the Local Outcome Improvement Plan Outcomes</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Volunteering opportunities developed to contribute to outcomes • Guidance to volunteer involving organisations on demonstrating the contribution to outcomes
4.3	<i>There will be more volunteering opportunities with a clear link to the Inverclyde HSCP Strategic Plan</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Volunteering opportunities developed to contribute to outcomes • Guidance to volunteer involving organisations on demonstrating the contribution to outcomes
4.4	<i>Partners will consider how they can allocate resources to develop volunteering on key priorities</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promotion of key challenges and the role of volunteering • Volunteering development roles • Include volunteering in commissioning