

Camden's partnership volunteering strategy 2013-16



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Foreword

The time, skills and expertise that exists amongst those who live, work and study in Camden are the greatest assets that we have in the borough. We are delighted to bring you Camden's refreshed Volunteering Strategy for the next three years. This strategy is the means by which we hope to tap into our assets to the best advantage of our residents.

As more and more people recognise the value of volunteering, we anticipate an increase in demand not just for volunteering opportunities, but also for different and innovative ways of volunteering that allow a wider range of people to make a contribution.

This strategy aims to create the conditions that will enable volunteering to grow and flourish and meet current and future challenges for the borough. Volunteering makes Camden stronger, more resilient and a better place in which to live, work, study or even just visit. It helps people connect with each other, reduces isolation and increases social capital and community cohesion. It is estimated that the value that volunteers bring to the organisations and groups they work with run well into millions of pounds, so the economic benefits are also clear.

We would like to thank everyone who participated in the development of this strategy. However, this is not the end of your involvement – we will need to continue to work together in partnership to deliver what we have set out in this strategy.

Cllr Siddiq
Cabinet Member for
Communities & Culture
Camden Council

Russell Brooks
Chair
Volunteer Centre
Camden



1. Introduction

Camden's partnership Volunteering Strategy was published in 2009. It was an ambitious three year document that set out the borough's vision for volunteering in the medium-term. This document is a refresh of that strategy and sets out our plans for the next three years from 2013 to 2016.

This strategy is being developed as part of our response to the current social and economic climate. As more and more people face the challenges of finding work, volunteering could be a key first step to build people's skills and give them valuable work experience.

This is a partnership document because we want to capture the enthusiasm, skills, experience and innovative thinking of a broad range of stakeholders. It is being developed to support positive outcomes for Camden residents, those who work and study in the borough, Camden communities, our voluntary and community sector, charities and local businesses.

The strategy encompasses the work with the voluntary and community sector (VCS) through formal volunteering; the work with businesses through their corporate social responsibility programmes; and the work with academic institutions to encourage student volunteering. It also embraces innovative approaches to encouraging new more creative ways of volunteering.

The strategy sets out to harness the skills, experience and time of the people living, working and studying in Camden. These are key assets and resources that can be unlocked to enhance life within the borough and improve life outcomes for our residents.

This document articulates how we hope to work with residents, businesses, the VCS and academic institutions to identify new and innovative ways to encourage more and a wider range of people to volunteer. Given the forecast demand on services, in tandem with economic pressures, more than ever there is a need for local communities to support themselves to meet some of the challenges on the horizon

We want the role of the council to be that of a strategic enabler that works with Volunteer Centre Camden and others to facilitate volunteering in the borough rather than directly leading on initiatives itself. In addition, as an organisation that involves volunteers in the delivery of some of its public services, the council wants to develop itself to be an exemplar volunteer involving organisation.

This strategy covers *voluntarily* undertaken unpaid activities. This type of volunteering does not involve any compulsion, nor is it a mandatory requirement for a professional occupation or for gaining university credits. Although they have links to volunteering, this strategy does not include such activities as internships and work placements or court imposed community sentences.

This strategy has been developed in conjunction with the full spectrum of our stakeholders – the voluntary and community sector, our business partners, higher education institutions, health services and existing and prospective volunteers. The priorities and areas of focus on which we want to concentrate our efforts over the next three years are those that have been identified by our stakeholders.

2. A Volunteering Strategy for Camden

Why Camden Needs a Volunteering Strategy

Camden has a strong tradition and history of volunteering. We are a rich borough in terms of the skills, experience and enthusiasm that we have. These assets can be harnessed to make significant difference to individuals, organisations, communities and businesses. Co-ordinated effectively, the potential exists to make the positive impacts of volunteering go wider and deeper. This is why we need a volunteering strategy – to ensure that across all relevant sectors, there is strategic and joined up working.

At both local and national levels, volunteering is regarded as a key mechanism by which communities can be strengthened. Demographic trends indicate huge increases in the numbers of vulnerable people, particularly older people, in Camden over the coming years. In addition, there are a significant number of unemployed people in the borough, particularly young people¹. Volunteering can provide an opportunity for them to develop transferable skills and experience that can improve their employability. Volunteering has a critical role to play in meeting these challenges.

We have a large pool of potential volunteers and many partners across Camden that deliver volunteering services. For example University College London funds a specialised unit that connects its students with volunteering.

¹ In 2012, 8.1% of young people (16-19) were not in education, employment or training. 11% of young people aged 16-24 were recorded as unemployed (on Job Seekers' Allowance)

The Purpose of the Volunteering Strategy

The purpose of our strategy is to broaden and deepen the pool of volunteers and volunteering opportunities in Camden, and to improve the quality of the volunteering experience in the borough. It will also equip Camden Council, Volunteer Centre Camden and Voluntary Action Camden to support, encourage and promote volunteering to Camden residents, those studying in the borough, the voluntary and community sector and local businesses. As well as this, the strategy will help us explore new forms of volunteering and utilise available electronic and social media and emerging new technologies to enhance the promotion and marketing of volunteering across the borough.



3. The Camden context

Patterns of volunteering in Camden

In December 2012, the council undertook a volunteering survey. Of those who responded 42% said that they are involved in formal volunteering². This is an increase from the 25%³ who said that they volunteered formally over the preceding 12 months in 2009⁴. Current Camden levels of volunteering compare reasonably with the most recent London figure of 41%⁵ and the national figure of 49%⁶ of people volunteering formally at least once a year.

Fifty-five per cent of those who volunteer in Camden are female, with 40% being male⁷. Fifty-three per cent of those who volunteer are from a White background, while ethnic minorities' volunteering levels are at 38%⁵. Seven per cent of volunteers identified themselves as being disabled.

People volunteer for various reasons. The most popular reason given amongst those who responded to the survey was to help within the community. The second most popular reason was that the volunteer had a personal interest in the area in which they gave their time, while social reasons (e.g. meeting new

² Formal volunteering in this instance means volunteering at least once in the past year for a group, organisation or club.

³ Place Survey 2009

⁴ Different methodologies were used for the Place Survey 2009 and Volunteering Survey 2012. This could account for some of the variation in the two figures.

⁵ Cabinet Office, Community Life Survey: Q2 2012/13

⁶ Cabinet Office, Community Life Survey: Q2 2012/13

⁷ Some respondents preferred not disclose their some of their personal information.

people, making friends, connecting with their community) was the third most popular reason for volunteering. A significant number of respondents felt that volunteering would improve their skills and employability.

Although there should be no compulsion in volunteering, there are instances where the motivation to volunteer might be a feeling that there is no other option available or people might volunteer through a sense of obligation. For example, people may volunteer because services are being reduced or closed and they would like to support continuation of provision. For example, community-run libraries and play services.

The overwhelming reason given for not volunteering was that people felt that they did not have the time to do so or had other commitments, for example childcare. The next two highest reasons were that that people simply had not thought about giving their time and they did not know how to.

Supporting Volunteering in Camden

Camden council has a strategic role in facilitating and promoting volunteering in Camden. The Camden Plan 2012-17 sets out the council's five year vision for the borough. At its heart is a bold ambition to tackle long-term inequality and make a real and lasting difference to people living in Camden. There are five strategic objectives within the Camden Plan. The Volunteering Strategy supports delivery of four of these:

- Developing new solutions with partners to reduce inequality
- Creating the conditions for harnessing the benefits of economic growth

- Investing in our communities to ensure sustainable neighbourhoods
- Delivering value for money services by getting it ‘right first time’

The volunteering strategy is being refreshed as part of the Camden Plan ambition to invest in our communities and neighbourhoods. An important feature of sustainable communities is a healthy level of volunteering. The refresh of this strategy also builds on our Olympic legacy.

Volunteer Centre Camden is the council’s strategic and operational partner in the delivery of volunteering services and support across the borough. It exists to support and encourage volunteering and promote equality of access to volunteer opportunities for all people in Camden. Volunteer Centre Camden works with organisations to develop volunteering opportunities, ensuring high standards in volunteer management.

There are other organisations in the borough that provide support and brokerage services. Voluntary Action Camden supports, develops and promotes voluntary and community activity that enhances the quality of life in Camden. University College London funds the Volunteering Services Unit, based at its students’ union; a dedicated facility for students who want to get involved with volunteering projects in the local community. Camden Shares is an online marketplace that provides a brokerage service that helps put people in touch with others people and organisations to resource volunteering ideas and projects.

We also have several national charities and cultural, health and educational establishments located in Camden that provide

many and diverse volunteering opportunities. For example, Action on Hearing Loss (formerly RNID), Royal National Institute of Blind People, the British Museum and British Library are all based in the borough. Camden NHS (hospitals and GP surgeries) is also the provider of a wide range of volunteering opportunities, some of which are essential (e.g. feeding patients, A&E support work). Our schools, nurseries and children’s centres offer a number of opportunities for parents and residents to give their time and support (e.g. school governors and parent helpers to enable off premises activities).

The varied faith institutions within the borough also provide numerous volunteering opportunities to support the communities in which they are located, for example, befriending schemes, supplementary schools and play services.



4. Looking back (2009-12)

Over the past three years the council, Volunteer Centre Camden and our partners have promoted the benefits of volunteering and supported volunteer involving organisations, local businesses, schools and community groups to ensure a more effective volunteering offer within the borough and enhance the volunteer experience.

The council has invested significantly in improving the volunteering offer across the borough. In 2011 we set up the Volunteering, Giving and Exchange fund and Volunteering Small Grants programme to increase and/or improve the positive impact of volunteering giving and exchange in Camden⁸.

There has also been more innovation in volunteering since 2009. The council's Innovation and Development Fund supported a number of initiatives that put forward new ways of involving volunteers in supporting their communities. For example, the Good Gym combines meeting the needs of older people with providing socially beneficial physical activity opportunities for volunteers.

In the last three years the council has developed volunteering opportunities that are available to residents and people working in Camden to support the delivery of its services. Such opportunities have included sports and health volunteering, the Citizens' Panel, Quality of Life Panel, Green Gym volunteers, Welcome the World Olympic and Paralympic volunteers, Parents' Council and Safer Neighbourhood Panels. We also provide resources to enable tenants' and residents' associations and friends of parks groups to run.

⁸ Camden Shares is an example of one of the initiatives supported by the Volunteering, Giving and Exchange fund

Volunteer Centre Camden has undertaken a wide and varied range of activities to promote volunteering and support organisations over the past three years. Key achievements since 2009 include an open brokerage service where potential volunteers can drop in and meet with organisations that are currently recruiting volunteers; speed matching sessions for those interested in becoming trustees where they "speed-date" organisations that are looking for trustees to join their management committee; and Hands On!, a programme that supports Camden residents with mental health issues into volunteering.

Through their Volunteer Centre Charter, Volunteer Centre Camden has encouraged volunteer involving organisations in the borough to sign for volunteer management good practice. They have also delivered Mind the Gap, a one-to-one organisational support service that provides bespoke guidance to improve how the organisation involves volunteers.

University College London, working with Camden Shares (a timebank), has established the Creating Connections programme, the aim of which is to bring UCL's academic staff and postgraduate researchers together with representatives of the voluntary and community sector, to find areas of common interest and projects they can collaborate on. The unit also has an Innovations Programme for students to create volunteering projects based on ideas that could have an impact on the local community. Their Hall Volunteering scheme connects students housed in UCL halls with their local community.

There has also been a significant increase in the number of timebanks⁹, providing mutual exchange volunteering within in Camden. In 2009 there were four timebanks in the borough. Since

⁹ For more information about timebanking, please see Appendix 1

then five more have been established. They are all very different but follow the same basic practice of valuing everyone's time equally. Some, like Castlehaven, are open to all, others are more specialised, with Camden TIME online being for the over fifties, Holy Cross primarily for people with mental ill health and West Euston for local families. Camden Shares helps people and organisations to exchange their resources and ideas.



5. Camden's Volunteering Strategy 2013-16

While a lot has been achieved over the past three years, there is still room for improvement in the volunteering offer for the borough. We need to take account of the current national and local climate and consider what needs to be achieved to address existing and future challenges for our residents.

What we hope to achieve

Through delivery of the volunteering strategy we hope to achieve the following outcomes:

- Camden is a place where the full range of economic, social, environmental and personal benefits volunteering brings is recognised by residents, organisations and businesses;
- Volunteering is encouraged and undertaken by a high proportion of people across diverse backgrounds;
- Volunteering is supported, rewarding and where everyone feels that they can make a difference;
- Volunteering brings people together and makes a significant contribution to all aspects of life.

Our priorities and areas of focus

In order to be most effective in improving the volunteering offer in Camden, we need to direct our efforts and resources on the volunteering priorities for the borough. These priorities have been developed in collaboration with our partners and stakeholders across all sectors.

Although these are our priorities and areas of focus, it does not mean that the existing work being done around volunteering is

any less important. These areas of focus are more about addressing the most pressing challenges and crucial gaps in the borough's existing volunteering programme.

Priority 1: Encouraging the development of volunteering approaches and structures that effectively support a mutually beneficial volunteer experience.

Priority 2: Developing pathways to employment

Priority 3: Promoting individual resilience, health and well-being

Priority 4: Building stronger, more resilient communities

Priority 5: Supporting business/ organisations in delivering corporate social responsibility programmes that include employee volunteering

Priority 1: Encouraging the development of volunteering approaches and structures that effectively support a mutually beneficial volunteer experience.

There is often a level of mismatch between the requirements of those who wish to volunteer and what opportunities are available. The traditional approach to volunteer recruitment reinforces the idea that it is the role of the organisation both to define the needs and to select the ways the needs will be met. This can sometimes create barriers and make it difficult for people to volunteer if they do not fit into the parameters set by volunteer-involving organisations. Fluidity of opportunities and minimal bureaucracy are key in removing some of these barriers. We need to find ways of allowing volunteering to have a better fit in people's lives. Organisations need to develop greater flexibility in their volunteering opportunities and training to allow people to give time and still meet their other commitments.

There is currently a limited view of what volunteering is, and therefore huge scope for volunteering to connect groups with particular skills to groups who need those skills, that has not occurred to either group to do. Anecdotal evidence shows that, for many, the term 'volunteering' conjures up a fairly limited list of tasks or interactions. Volunteering needs to be much broader in people's minds and refer to knowledge and skills exchange.

Demand for short term volunteering opportunities and one-off activities (sometimes described as 'episodic volunteering') is increasing. Although long term commitment to organisations is falling as people's participation becomes more fluid¹⁰, the latest figures show that there has still been an increase in formal

¹⁰ Third Sector Foresight "Trends in Volunteering" National Council of Volunteering Organisations 2011

volunteering¹¹. This suggests that there is an upsurge in demand for more flexible volunteering opportunities that do not require the giving of fixed and regular long term time commitments.

As a basic, volunteers should have an enjoyable, rewarding and effective volunteering experience. Volunteers should be engaged in meaningful activity – responding to their passions and interests, and acknowledging and making best use of their skills and experience. For volunteering to be of benefit both to the volunteer and the volunteer involving organisation there must be an effective infrastructure in place to support the organisation, enabling them to effectively support their volunteers.

Areas of focus

- Developing new approaches to volunteering to make giving time easier.
- Improving the promotion, communications and marketing of volunteering as a mainstream activity, making better and more creative use of new technology and electronic media to reach as wide an audience as possible.
- Supporting those (individuals and organisations) with responsibility for managing and co-ordinating volunteers.

¹¹ Cabinet Office, Community Life Survey: Q2 2012/13

What we are going to do

- Work with volunteer involving organisations to take a more assets based approach to the skills that exist within the community.
- Work with our partners to encourage them to take a more entrepreneurial approach to volunteering that encourages creative solutions to community challenges.
- Explore ways to engage with individuals who might not be interested in traditional volunteering service roles.
- Find cost effective ways to recognise and reward our volunteers and the best practice in volunteer management amongst volunteer-involving organisations.
- Enhance volunteer co-ordinator/manager support mechanisms.



Priority 2: Developing pathways to employment

Given the current economic climate, the role of volunteering in supporting employment has become ever more important. Volunteering can be an alternative route into employment that prepares those furthest away from the job market for the work environment and the routine of employment. In times of economic hardship, volunteering can help individuals to develop the skills and experience they need to enter into employment or return to work. Volunteering can lead to valuable references and experience that employers find useful.

Employment is also a priority identified by Camden's Equality Taskforce¹². The taskforce identified access to employment as an increasing problem in Camden, especially for women and young people. Although there are a high number of jobs in the borough young people and women face significant barriers in accessing them. Volunteering is one route to remove these barriers, particularly where they relate to ensuring that people have the right skills for the modern labour market. Volunteers can also support young people and residents who are unemployed in gaining skills (e.g. IT, digital and technical skills) that would enhance their employability.

Areas of focus

- Young people not in education, employment or training (including those who are care leavers or have special education needs and disabilities)

- Those furthest away from employment¹³.

What we will do

- Develop volunteering mentoring programmes aimed at getting young people in to work.
- Create better links between volunteering and apprenticeships
- Support the voluntary sector to develop volunteering opportunities for young people that enhance their work readiness.
- Promote volunteering opportunities to those who are furthest away from employment through the support organisations that help them.
- Encourage further recognition of the value of volunteering in increasing the skills, experience and networks of benefit claimants.
- Use every opportunity to link volunteering opportunities to the achievement of nationally recognised accreditations and qualifications.

¹² Camden Equality Taskforce Interim Report, 2012

¹³ Those furthest away from employment are ex-offenders, care leavers, 19-25 year olds with special educational needs and/or disabilities, social housing tenants, carers, lone parents and low income families. In addition, adults within complex families also need employment support through volunteering, which would help to build their confidence.

Priority 3: Promoting individual resilience, health and well-being

There is evidence of the beneficial impact of volunteering not just on those who receive the time of others but also on the volunteers themselves. Research¹⁴ shows that volunteering improves self-rated health, life satisfaction, social interaction and a person's coping ability (or resilience). Volunteering can create a sense of belonging and contentment that an individual is in control and doing what they really want to of their own free will. They can directly see the impact of their contribution on the lives of others, their community or the group to whom they have given their time. For those who are unemployed, volunteering is also a way for people to feel that they are still making a valuable contribution and have a purpose to their lives.

Despite the vulnerability to isolation of older people in Camden (including the risk of digital exclusion)¹⁵, they are also the biggest group of volunteers in the borough. Volunteering is an opportunity to promote active ageing and to enable older people to use their skills and assets (e.g. 50+ project, networkers etc.)

There is also evidence¹⁶ that volunteers can make a difference to the health and well-being of service users, including increased self-esteem, disease management and acceptance and mental health. There is also the benefit of connecting the volunteer recipient with the wider community, boosting their personal resilience and social capital and enabling them to access services, advice and support.

¹⁴ Dr Casiday, R "Volunteering and Health: What Impact Does It Really Have?", University of Wales 2011

¹⁵ Camden Equality Taskforce Interim Report, 2012

¹⁶ Dr Casiday, R 2011

National austerity measures have affected a significant number of Camden residents and families. Young Foundation research¹⁷ commissioned by Camden Council in 2012 found that there are a number of groups¹⁸ in the borough that have been pushed into poverty due to the current economic climate. Fears of isolation and loneliness dominated conversations with disabled people and their carers. Many rely on the respite of day centres and local support networks made up of people who 'understand', most of whom are volunteers. The young people they spoke to felt helpless, angry and victimised by the funding cuts. Many felt disengaged from their communities and disenfranchised. Welfare reforms are likely to add to the pool of residents who are tipped into poverty. There is evidence¹⁹ to suggest that those at risk of poverty are less likely to volunteer because they often experience a sense of shame, failure and despair and lose hope of affecting their circumstances. They often exclude themselves from the wider community compounding their isolation, thus further reducing their levels of confidence. We believe that volunteering can reduce isolation and support local people re-connect to their communities.

Families with multiple challenges can also benefit from volunteering. Research²⁰ has shown that increasing the availability of social support to these especially vulnerable families can act as a supplement to a social casework service. Importantly, some families perceive intervention from adult services based in the voluntary sector, as less threatening or

¹⁷ Russell, C et al "An Insight into the Impact of the Cuts on Some of the Most Vulnerable in Camden", Young Foundation, 2012

¹⁸ Young people (14-24 years), families on low incomes and disabled people or those with low to moderate needs (and their carers)

¹⁹ Clark, H "Volunteering as a Force for Social Inclusion" Chapter 5, State of the World's Volunteerism Report, United Nations Volunteers 2011

²⁰ Ghate D and Hazel, N "Parenting in Poor Environments: Stress, Support and Coping" 2002

stigmatising. Volunteer mentors and advocates for vulnerable families and children can be an important way of building trust with these families²¹.

Areas of focus

- Reducing isolation amongst vulnerable older people and those with mental and physical health issues.
- Those most severely affected by the changes in welfare provision.
- Supporting complex families through volunteering

What we will do

- Work with community groups to explore new ways to encourage more vulnerable older people and those with mental and physical health issues to get involved in volunteering to encourage connections between them and the wider community and reduce levels of isolation.
- Support the voluntary sector to develop more flexible and innovative befriending and peer support programmes and opportunities to encourage people to volunteer to reduce levels of isolation.
- Promote the benefits of volunteering to those most severely affected by the changes in welfare provision, to build their resilience to the impacts of the reforms.

²¹ Stanley N, et al 'The impact of domestic violence, parental mental health problems, substance misuse and learning disability on parenting capacity' (2009)

- Enhance complex family volunteer support schemes²² that contribute to building family (and individual) resilience.



²² Homestart provides support and mentoring to families with children under five, Friendship Works support children over five. These projects in Camden have been funded through our Volunteer Giving and Exchange fund.

Priority 4: Building stronger, more resilient communities

Generally, people want to live in better connected communities in which individuals are working together for the common good. Volunteering is an opportunity to unlock the potential for those living within communities to support one another to build stronger more resilient communities. Volunteering can build trust, social capital and community cohesion within neighbourhoods, improving the lives of local people and the overall well-being within the community.

With the anticipation of more and more people investing their time and energies in their local communities to deliver local services, it is essential that they are able to provide effectively for their users. If volunteers are able to provide good quality services, this would reinforce community links and increase the sense of pride and belonging within the community, as they take ownership of and responsibility for their own amenity.

Camden's Clinical Commissioning Group was established in April 2013 as part of the transition to GP commissioning. With patient involvement in health currently a high priority in the NHS, the support of volunteers through patient participation groups is crucial to the delivery of health outcomes for individuals and the whole community.

Crime and fear of crime is one of the factors that can lead to reduced levels of community cohesion and lack of trust between neighbours. Volunteering can help tackle the causes of crime by offering those at risk of offending a stake in their community. By doing so, the community will be made safer for all. Volunteers can also have a role in reducing crime in their community, for example by joining their Safer Neighbourhood Panel, becoming a

Police Community Support Officer or by being sworn in as a Magistrate.

People living their lives in a context of tolerance, trust and mutual respect, with volunteering as a key aspect of community cohesion are more likely to avoid being drawn into conflict situations and should they be, are more able to recover from such conflict. One important facet of cohesion is reciprocal participation and mutual help in community life.

Areas of focus

- Targeting professionals to use skills locally to help increase levels of community cohesion and economic growth
- Developing mutual exchange schemes to support our aging population
- Ensuring appropriate skills amongst volunteers running community services
- Supporting individuals and communities to take responsibility for their neighbourhoods

What we will do

- Work to develop and promote trusteeships as a valued volunteering activity.
- Find and implement innovative ways to target the professional assets within the community to encourage them to invest more of their time in their neighbourhoods.

- Build on our existing timebanks provision.
- Support those community groups that have successfully bid to run community services to ensure that they are able to provide their volunteers with appropriate levels of training and support.
- Work with the groups and organisations that support those at risk of offending to ensure that these people have the opportunity to volunteer within their local communities.
- Support communities to enable them to come together to create self-organised volunteering opportunities to address particular local challenges.



Priority 5: Supporting business/ organisations in delivering corporate social responsibility programmes that include employee volunteering

Camden's businesses have an important role to play in deploying their employees as volunteers to support local communities and groups through delivery of their corporate social responsibility (CSR) programmes. Volunteering by employees makes a tangible difference – to individuals, by improving their skills and experience development; to the organisations where they volunteer by providing them with their expertise; and to the organisations that employ them by enabling them to build stronger links with the communities in which they are located.

There is currently a disjointed approach to employer supported volunteering through CSR in Camden. This work already goes on across Camden, both within the Council (a large number of staff volunteer – some in Camden and others in the boroughs where they live) and externally. However, this is not joined up into one coherent offer for business and, because of this, the various relationships with businesses are not fully maximised. We are developing a more cohesive approach that could reap greater CSR rewards for the community and potentially reduce duplication of efforts across the borough.

Areas of focus

- Providing a more coherent infrastructure that encourages and supports business and other organisations in their efforts to promote employee volunteering.

What we will do

- Work with businesses to make it easier for them to develop employer-supported volunteering schemes.
- Promote the benefits for businesses of developing their employee leadership skills through VCS trusteeships.
- Work with the private sector to provide business peer-to-peer support for one another to enable learning around successful employer supported volunteering.
- Upskill VCS organisations and schools to ensure they have the right 'sell' to business and make the most of opportunities available.



6. Delivering the Strategy

The objectives and priorities of this Volunteering Strategy will be used to drive a programme of work which will support its implementation. A three year action plan that sits underneath this strategy will be developed with our partners to deliver this programme of work throughout the life of this document.

The action plan will comprise actions that will be implemented by the council, Volunteer Centre Camden, VAC, Camden's academic institutions, the voluntary and community sector and local businesses. Responsibility for delivery will be shared by all within the partnership.

The action plan will be a living document, continually updated, reviewed, revisited and agreed across all sectors through the life of the strategy.



APPENDICES

Appendix 1

What is volunteering?

There is no legal definition of volunteering. However, for the purposes of this strategy, volunteering is understood to be:

*unpaid activity **voluntarily** undertaken for the direct benefit of individuals (other than, or in addition to, close relatives), the community or organisations and to the volunteer themselves.*

With this understanding of volunteering, there is no compulsion involved in giving the unpaid time, nor is the volunteering a mandatory training requirement for a professional occupation or for gaining university 'credits'. By this definition this strategy will not be focussing on the following activities:

- Internships
- Work placements
- Court imposed community sentences

Types of volunteering

There are three main types of volunteering

Formal volunteering

Formal volunteering refers to activities organised through an organisation, be it a small community group consisting entirely of volunteers, or through major organisations such as Health Trusts or national voluntary organisations. Private sector employer supported volunteering through corporate social

responsibility programmes is also a form of formal volunteering. This type of volunteering also includes one-off and episodic volunteering activities that, although not regular in nature, are still organised through a group or organisation.

There are cost implications for formal volunteering as resources need to be expended to co-ordinate and support volunteering activity. Whilst formal volunteering is not a contractual arrangement, it does involve rights and responsibilities

Timebanking

Timebanking is based on a mutual exchange model between individuals, individuals and organisations. Under timebanking, the amount of time volunteered is the principal currency. For every hour volunteers 'deposit' in a timebank, perhaps by giving practical help and support to others, they are able to 'withdraw' equivalent support in time when they themselves are in need. In each case the participant decides what they can offer and everyone's time is equal, irrespective of whatever activity is exchanged.

Informal volunteering

Informal volunteering refers to a wide range of different kinds of mutual help and co-operation between individuals within communities, for example babysitting for a friend or doing shopping for an elderly neighbour. Although informal, this type of volunteering does not include support given to relatives.

The benefits of volunteering

There are many benefits to volunteering for the individual, community organisations, the community itself and even to local businesses and the private sector.

For the individual, volunteering contributes to a greater understanding of other communities and groups; improved social opportunities; the development of greater skills, opportunities and positive experiences; personal development, such as self-confidence; improved well-being, mental and physical health and a sense of pride, belonging and achievement.

In the wider community volunteering adds to stronger community cohesion, reduced crime rates, less tension; reduced levels of unemployment and higher participation rates in a range of activities and it gives people positive activity during periods of unemployment. In addition to this it aids better engagement with communities, better representation of views and opinions at decision-making level; and disengaged and disempowered people are encouraged back into 'civil' society, contributing to stronger and more resilient communities and neighbourhoods.

Many Camden volunteers support the borough's voluntary and community sector. The sector is vital in supporting positive outcomes for local people through the delivery of community-based services. They would not be able to provide this role without the help of volunteers. The use of volunteers also helps the VCS have a better understanding of service users' needs. It also enables them to provide services which are not funded or are only part-funded by national or local government.

Businesses also receive benefits where they encourage their staff to volunteer through employer supported volunteering. They gain a more motivated, empowered and productive workforce. Their staff gain more skills and experience development that can be used within the company to improve their business. Businesses also develop stronger links with community and enhanced corporate social responsibility. And, nowadays, more and more consumers are making decisions on which businesses to buy products and services from based on their CSR commitments and the impact the business has on its local community.

Appendix 2

Economic Value of Volunteering

There is a significant economic value to volunteering.

Research carried out in 2007 by Volunteer Centre Camden estimated the monetary value of the time given by volunteers who worked for 49 sample voluntary organisations in Camden. Using the average full-time hourly wage rate for Camden at that time of £18.89 and the part-time rate of £14.28, it approximated a value of £2.84m for just these 49 organisations.

When assessing the hourly rate of volunteers' time, the role that is being undertaken should also be taken into account. There is a considerable variance in the monetary value of the different volunteering roles in Camden. For low skilled volunteering roles, the cost of a paid employee doing this work would be £8.55²³. However, there are also highly skilled professional volunteers providing voluntary and community sector organisations with specialist pro bono support, like legal advice or accountancy services. Lawyers practicing in Camden are paid from £121 to £317²⁴ per hour, while accountants' hourly rate in London ranges from £18 to £110²⁵. This would be a substantial cost if the volunteer involving organisation had to pay for these services.

There are two main ways of measuring the economic value of volunteers, simple calculation of economic value and the, more

²³ London Living Wage

²⁴ Judiciary.gov.uk

²⁵ "Salary Review: Accountancy and Finance Professionals – Sector and Region" RK Accountancy, 2011

sophisticated, Volunteer Investment and Value Audit (known as VIVA).

1. Simple economic value

The simple economic value is calculated by multiplying the number of volunteers by the average number of hours volunteered by the average hourly wage. The current average hourly wage in Camden is approximately £20²⁶.

In 2011 to 2012, Volunteer Centre Camden calculated that for their organisation:

“Involvement of volunteers at the organisation makes a significant financial contribution. A total of 9,180 volunteer hours helped us to deliver our services and support the running of the organisation. In monetary terms this is equivalent to £256,400 in kind support to Volunteer Centre. Our volunteer team includes administrative volunteers, volunteers offering their professional skills such as financial and statistical analysis and volunteers who help match people to volunteering roles and ensure that our database of volunteering roles remains up to date.”²⁷

The total volunteer hours at Volunteer Centre Camden is equivalent to an additional 5.1 full time employees.

²⁶ Ashe and Pay check tables 2012

²⁷ Volunteer Centre Camden Annual Report 2011-12

2. VIVA (Volunteer Investment and Value Audit)

The Volunteer Investment Value Audit or VIVA is more accurate and involves looking at the type of work done by volunteers and estimating the going wage rate for that work, as well as the costs of involving volunteers, such as management time. This produces a ratio showing how much value is generated from each pound invested in volunteering. Research using the VIVA method in 12 small UK social welfare voluntary organisations showed returns of between £2 and £8 for each pound invested²⁸.

For example

Natural England has calculated²⁹ the value of its volunteers in 2010/11 using VIVA as follows:

- 2853 (2384 active) volunteers provided 211,552 hours of their time (over 29,300 days)
- The market value of this volunteering time was over £3.5 million
- For every £1 spent supporting our volunteers a value of £8.48 was returned
- The average expenditure per volunteer was just under £174
- The average value per volunteer was over £1,475

Volunteers gave an average of 10 days each aggregating to over 29,300 days. The value of volunteering was £2,365,999 and volunteer Batworker (sic) time is valued at £980,000. The total value of all volunteering time for Natural England was £3,516,798. The cost of the volunteer programme was just over £414,000. **VIVA ratio 1:8.48**

The ratio is calculated by dividing the total value of volunteering by the total expenditure on supporting volunteering. This means for every £1 we spend on volunteers, a value of £8.48 is returned – an almost nine fold return on our investment.

²⁸ Institute for Volunteering Research

²⁹ Natural England “Volunteering for people, for places, for nature, Volunteer Investment & Value Audit 2010 – 2011”

Volunteering Strategy Development Group

Aims of the Volunteering Strategy Development Group

The purpose of the development group was to support the development of Camden's Volunteering Strategy 2013-16. The working group ended its activities when the refreshed strategy was published in April 2013.

Objectives

The objectives of the group were to work in partnership to produce a refreshed Volunteering Strategy.

Outcomes

A refreshed Volunteering Strategy for the London Borough of Camden that includes the relevant issues relating to volunteering from all key stakeholders.

Membership

The membership of the development group consisted of the following:

- Communities & Third Sector, London Borough of Camden
- Economic Development, London Borough of Camden
- Integrated Early Years Service, London Borough of Camden
- Public Health, London Borough of Camden
- Volunteer Centre Camden
- Voluntary Action Camden
- Community Service Volunteers
- Camden Shares
- University College London Union Volunteering Services Unit
- Inmidtown
- Camden volunteers x 2

Frequency of Meetings

The development group met three times.

Volunteer Management Charter

Rights for Volunteers

The ten key areas of volunteer management listed on the Charter were identified by the Greater London network of Volunteer Centres working in collaboration with the Experts in Volunteering team. Volunteer Centre Camden now incorporates the Charter, and its accompanying Health Check, into their work with volunteer-involving organisations.

As part of membership of Volunteer Centre Camden organisations are asked to commit to the charter and undertake to incorporate it into their volunteer management practice.

The 10 points of the Charter are:

Equality and Diversity

Volunteering is open to all; volunteers are treated with fairness.

Expenses

Travel, and any other agreed, out of pocket expenses are reimbursed.

Induction

Volunteers are introduced to the work and ethos of the organisation.

Organisational Involvement

Volunteers have influence and an informed voice on organisational issues.

Personal Development

Identified needs are met by relevant training and development opportunities.

Recruitment process

Recruitment procedures are fair, efficient and consistent.

Resolving difficulties

Volunteers are aware of how to raise a concern, and how it will be handled.

Reward and Recognition

The organisation expresses its appreciation of the volunteers' contribution.

Safe Volunteering Environment

The physical and emotional risks of volunteering are identified, minimised, and covered by adequate insurance.

Support

A named supervisor ensures ongoing support appropriate to need.

Appendix 5

Volunteering Contacts

Volunteering Support Organisations

Volunteer Centre Camden
020 7424 9990
info@volunteercentrecamden.org.uk
volunteercentrecamden.org.uk

Voluntary Action Camden
020 7284 6550
vac@vac.org.uk
vac.org.uk

University College London Union Volunteering Services Unit
020 7679 2512
volunteering@ucl.ac.uk
uclu.org/volunteers

Timebanks

Bloomsbury Timebank
020 7916 1720
kimmorrissey01@aol.com
purplepoets.com

Camden TIME Online
020 7624 8378
communitytimecamden@abbeycc-kilburn.org.uk
abbeycc-kilburn.org.uk/neighbours

Origin Timebank Camden
020 7209 9268
ben.frimston@originhousing.org.uk

Castlehaven Timebank
020 7692 2240
timebank@castlehaven.org.uk
castlehaven.org.uk

West Euston Timebank
020 7383 4382
info@westeustontimebank.org.uk
westeustontimebank.org.uk

King's Cross Timebank
020 7278 8687
contactus@hcct.org.uk
hcct.org.uk/what-we-do/timebanking

Youth Time Bank
020 7681 8643
youthtimebank@castlehaven.org.uk
castlehaven.org.uk/projects/youth-time-bank

Other local, regional and national organisations

Camden Shares
020 7278 4437
james.mackie@hcct.org.uk
camdenshares.org.uk

Community Service Volunteers (CSV)

CSV is the UK's largest volunteering and training organisation. It aims to involve young people aged 16 to 35 in voluntary service in the UK, to enrich the lives of volunteers and those they help and to generate social change.
csv.org.uk

Do-it!

An online database of UK-wide volunteering opportunities for people of all ages.
do-it.org.uk

vinspired

An online database of volunteering opportunities for 16-25 year olds.
vinspired.com

Greater London Volunteering

The regional umbrella organisation for volunteering in London.
greaterlondonvolunteering.org.uk

Retired and Senior Volunteer Programme (RSVP)

Provides volunteering opportunities for the over 50's.
csv-rsvp.org.uk

REACH

Offers volunteering opportunities for people with professional or managerial skills.
reach-online.org.uk

Acknowledgements

We would like to thank all the organisations and people who contributed to this draft of Camden's refreshed Volunteering Strategy. The content of the strategy, our priorities and areas of focus have been developed out of the workshops, meetings and conversations with our stakeholders.

External Stakeholders

Age UK Camden
Camden Shares
Camden volunteers (x23)
Central St Martins
Citizens' Advice Bureau
Clean Break
Community Services Volunteers
Foundation 66
Friends of St George's Gardens
Hampstead Wells & Campden Trust
Home Start Camden
Inmidtown
London Community Foundation
London Irish Centre
New Horizons Youth Centre
North London Cares
Training Link
Voluntary Action Camden
Volunteer Centre Camden
University College London Union
University College London Union Volunteering Services Unit
Unison

WAC, Performing Arts & Media College
Zenith Optimedia

Camden Council

Culture & Environment

- Arts & Tourism
- Communities & Third Sector
- Community Safety
- Economic Development
- Emergency Management
- Libraries
- Parks & Open Spaces
- Sports & Physical Activity
- Strategy & Improvement
- Sustainability

Children Schools & Families

- Adult & Community Learning
- Complex Families
- Integrated Early Years Service
- Integrated Youth Support Services
- Strategy Performance & Information
- School Improvement Service
- Training & Development

Housing & Adult Social Care

- Assessment & Care Management - Adults
- Camden PCT
- Housing Management
- Promoting Independence

- Strategic Planning & Joint Commissioning
 - Learning Disabilities
 - Carers
 - Long Term Conditions & Complex Care
 - Mental Health

Strategy & Organisation Development

- Corporate Strategy
- Public Health

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