

Joining the dots

A triple impact volunteer strategy
for Brighton and Hove
2010 – 2015

Appendices



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Brighton and Hove Volunteer Strategy

Methodology

In view of the importance of volunteering to so many aspects of social life this strategy has sought to respond to as many of the City’s strategic objectives as are relevant. A scoping study was carried out that examined the objectives within the City’s LSPs Community Plan. Pieces of research that indicated volunteering would have an impact on these objectives were also reviewed. The scoping study also reviewed the Community and Voluntary Sector Forum Position Statements in relation to volunteering.

Key themes

5 key themes were selected for consultation that would enable us to identify and make recommendations towards supporting a flourishing volunteering environment in the City

1. Reducing the barriers to volunteering: enabling choice, opportunity and access for all
2. Promoting, recognising and valuing volunteering and volunteers; the celebration of volunteering and all involved within it and touched by it
3. Providing a good volunteering experience; a meaningful and positive experience for all involved in volunteering; volunteers, organisations and end beneficiaries
4. Resourcing volunteering and the links to employment; the cost of volunteer-involvement and enhancing the opportunity of volunteering as a pathway to work and gaining skills
5. The impact of volunteering; the benefits of volunteering to volunteers, organisations, their service beneficiaries and the wider community

Stakeholder groups

An extensive consultation was carried out with an identified group of stakeholders that were:

- Organisations that use volunteers
- Volunteers
- Community activists
- Employers
- Organisations that don’t currently use volunteers (apart from trustees)
- Service users

- Organisations that broker volunteering and other volunteering agencies
- Statutory organisations and Commissioners
- Job Centre Plus
- Groups at risk of social exclusion

Format of consultation and who participated

The following consultation work took place across January – April 2009:

Workshops

- A workshop was carried out at a Community and Voluntary Sector Forum Your Space event. This involved 14 people mostly from voluntary sector organisations.
- Workshops held at Brighton Unemployed Families Centre project event (The Power of Volunteering Networking Event) with one of the focused discussions around volunteering and the recession. Attended by approximately 60 people; 19 organisations and the remainder volunteers.

Survey

A survey was carried out across April 2009 using both hard copies and the web based Survey Monkey. This survey was disseminated widely via the Steering Group networks, Community and Voluntary Sector Forum list, and organisations and volunteers registered with the Volunteer Centre Brighton & Hove.

21 Jobcentre Plus staff completed a hard copy questionnaire based around the 5 key themes.

547 people completed the web based survey broken down as follows;

Managers of volunteers/volunteer co-ordinators	170
Volunteers	272
Community activists	51
Business, statutory or voluntary sector employers	28
Organisations that don’t currently involve volunteers	15
Service users	11

The range of volunteer activity reflected in responses was extensive and included art and culture, families, environment, homelessness and housing, education and literacy, to name but a few. But by far the largest area (18% of on-line volunteer respondents) in which volunteers were involved was older people, health and hospices followed closely by sport and outdoor activity (13% of volunteers respondents). Community activists most commonly identified themselves as participating in 'community work' (55.9% of community activists respondents), but beyond that there was a similar spread of activity in areas including the environment, children, disability, social care, youth, sport and outdoor activities.

Volunteer-involving and non-volunteering-involving organisation respondents also came from a wide range of activity areas, with a large representation from sport and outdoor activities (16.7% of volunteer-involving organisations, 40% of non-volunteer-involving organisations).

In relation to Employers, 10 respondents were employers within the statutory sector, 6 voluntary sector and 3 the business sector.

The 11 service users who participated in the on-line survey were accessing services related to animals, children, homelessness and housing, legal aid, mentoring and befriending, older people, sport and outdoor activities, information, advice and guidance.

Focus groups

Focus groups were held with the following people:

- People with mental health issues
- Disabled people
- Lesbian, Gay, Bi-sexual, Transgender people,
- Black, Minority, Ethnic people and refugees
- Older People
- Volunteering Brokerage
- Council Officers

Faith groups and youth volunteering were represented on the strategy steering group although focus groups were problematic on account of resources available and timing in relation to the academic year. Central government has invested heavily in the area of Youth volunteering and Brighton & Hove is a nominated 'v' Talent area. However, both of these areas may benefit from

further investigation.

Specialist input and expertise

Input into the strategy was sought from a variety of people with expertise in the Volunteering sector. This included people from the following organisations; Volunteer Centre Westminster, Volunteer Centre Kensington and Chelsea, Red Foundation, Dare to Change, and the Sports sector.

The findings of the consultation were scrutinised and recommendations were developed by the City Volunteering Strategy Steering Group.

The Draft Strategy was drawn together and circulated to stakeholder groups for comment and feedback across July 2009.

Volunteering infrastructure in Brighton & Hove

Volunteers are active in all areas of Brighton & Hove life and are having an impact across the voluntary and community, statutory and the business sectors. In June 2004, funding awarded through the national programme ChangeUp was allocated to write a Brighton & Hove Infrastructure Development Plan (IDP) - a 10 year plan for improving support services to the Third Sector. The IDP includes a target for "Improved awareness of and access to good practice information on involving volunteers". The members of the ChangeUp Consortium are responsible for ensuring the delivery of projects outlined within the plan and there is membership representation from organisations providing infrastructure support commonly associated with that of a more traditional Council for Voluntary Service (CVS) structure.

The functions of a CVS and volunteering infrastructure support to the sector are delivered locally across the following organisations;

Volunteer Centre Brighton & Hove – a project of Impetus, providing generic brokerage of volunteering across the City and appointed by ChangeUp consortium as lead agency on developing volunteering

Performance Development Service – a project of Impetus, providing management and governance consultancy to the sector

Community & Voluntary Sector Forum – providing a representation and networking function for the sector

Working Together Project – providing training to the sector

This support is delivered in partnership with other ChangeUp Consortium members including The Business Community Partnership, the Trust for Developing Communities, the Resource Centre, Sussex Community Internet Project and organisations representing communities of interest such as BMECP, Spectrum and the Federation of Disabled People.

Local volunteering brokerage

Brokerage of volunteering opportunities is currently delivered by the following agencies;

Service/Agency	Volunteer Criteria	Volunteering activity/setting
Volunteer Centre Brighton & Hove (Impetus)	Open to all	All types of volunteering across a range of settings
Brighton & Hove Volunteers	16-25yrs old	All types of volunteering across a range of settings
Active Student	Students of University of Brighton	All types of volunteering across a range of settings
Project V	Students of University of Sussex	All types of volunteering across a range of settings
Voluntary Services South Downs Health NHS Trust	Open to all	Wide range of activities within health-care settings
Brighton & Sussex University Hospitals NHS Trust	Open to all	Wide range of activities in hospital settings
Community Service Volunteers	16-27yrs old	All types of volunteering across a range of settings
The Business Community Partnership	Local businesses and their employees	Varied opportunities in Employee-volunteering and pro-bono support
Sussex County Sports Partnership	Open to all	Wide range of activities within sports settings
Trust for Developing Communities	Local residents	Various activities within own neighbourhood

There is also the provision of an on-line database of volunteering opportunities;

Organisation	Information type/source
Community Base	Brighton & Hove Volunteer Search: a free on-line database service putting people interested in volunteering in touch with a wide range of local community and voluntary groups looking for volunteers

Brighton and Hove Volunteer Strategy

Findings from consultation process

Theme 1: Reducing the barriers to volunteering

Choice and diversity are central principles of volunteering and breaking down the barriers to volunteering is key to enabling those, who wish to do so, to volunteer. By breaking down barriers it gives people the opportunity to choose volunteering and to then pursue that choice. Obstacles exist not just for volunteers but for organisations that involve them. Breaking down the barriers for organisations should enrich the range of volunteering opportunities available to people by broadening and diversifying the ways in which they involve volunteers.

Whilst Brighton & Hove has a thriving Third Sector with approximately 19,200 volunteer positions, giving 57,600 per week of volunteer hours (an annual salary equivalent of £24 million), there are barriers that exist for both organisations and individuals if we are firstly to address the principles of diversity and choice and secondly realise the double benefit of volunteer involvement; that to the volunteer and that to those they are volunteering for.

Volunteers and Community Activists – barriers and benefits

Volunteers

The roles and skill-level of volunteer survey respondents was extensive. In particular, there was a range of statutory settings (health and education) that were directly (e.g. front-line support to health-care professionals) or indirectly (e.g. supporting schools with sporting activities, raising awareness of LGBT issues) supported.

Volunteers felt that their activities brought about a number of positive changes to the organisations they were with including increasing and enabling service delivery, generating income through fund-raising activities, relieving pressure on paid staff and bringing fresh ideas;

“Very positive to the Office I am working within. They always say they would be lost without me! Although I only work one session per week, it means the Dietician’s don’t have to get bogged down in simple admin tasks. This obviously means they have more time to devote to the children’s problems. In the greater scheme of things it is also saving the NHS precious funds.”

Further benefits to service users were raised including reducing the isolation of those vulnerable in the community, being the first and only place a person can access for support, providing cheap/no-cost services to people who would otherwise not have access to them, and increasing confidence in service users and themselves alike;

“I hope I provide an understanding - listening ear to women seeking either guidance towards their next step or just a feeling they are not alone in their struggle.”

And not least, there were benefits that could be summed up as the building of social capital. Volunteers and community activists felt their activities benefited the community through awareness raising of the cause they were supporting e.g. positive messages relating to health and the environment, reducing community costs where volunteering is seen as preventative, and by being the driving force behind the survival of community ventures such as revitalising community buildings and sports activities. They also felt that they helped to spread the volunteering message by example and brought strategic influence to how activities are developed within the community;

“I’m meeting my community instead of casting my eyes down as I pass them in the street. I benefit through receiving training and I pass on my life skills”

Community Activists

Over half of community activists described their area of activity simply as ‘community work’. Where these roles were expanded upon they included involvement in more ‘formalised’ community organisations such as residents/tenants associations and Neighbourhood Watch schemes (roles ranged from editing community newsletters to Chair of Board), encouraging participation in others, participation in governance roles and, often, involvement in multiple activities;

“I am involved in a lot of activities: an amateur dramatics group, a community allotment, an arts and crafts group, a cooking club, a park group.”

As with volunteers, community activists felt that their activities brought about positive changes by enabling access and improving communication, promoting involvement and inclusion, and building social capital;

“Disabled parents and any parent or parent to be with difficulties leaving the place they live to play with their children can now be part of the community as part of a group enabling play for children up to age 5 years.... Parents and children are now part of their community and some had not left their home for quite sometime.”

“Making contact with the local community and wider interaction is great. Sometimes just the satisfaction of helping someone do an everyday task easier or without hassle is enough e.g. helping an elderly lady collect new glasses from their optician and then going for an impromptu cup of coffee and a cake sitting in the sunshine on the seafront.”

Equally they felt they brought about educational benefits, such as increasing awareness of specific disability and its impact and that they brought sustainability to local groups/organisations through good governance;

“Trustees are becoming better informed and more empowered. Paid workers are becoming more accountable than they have been previously. With better planning, clear goal/task setting and better financial management, the organisation is set to overcome its crisis situation and become more sustainable in the long term.”

Lastly 9 out of 11 survey respondents said that they had just started delivering services on their own because there was a need. As one respondent so succinctly put it;

“These services were not available in Brighton and Hove until I started my group.”

The passion and commitment of volunteers and community activists was evident, not least shown by the number of survey respondents. It is notable that of predominant importance to them was feeling their activities brought about benefits to those with which they were directly involved and the wider community. But the consultation also clearly revealed barriers to volunteering; for those currently volunteering and potentially those seeking to volunteer. These can be summarised as;

Summary of findings

- Volunteers experience a lack of flexibility in the times that are made available for them to volunteer
- Volunteers and community activists are put-off getting involved most as a result of poor organisational responses to enquiries
- People experienced a number of practical barriers including volunteer expenses not being paid, travel to volunteering placements not provided for or fully covered by expenses, and overly cumbersome bureaucracy such as repeated CRB checks
- There was inconsistency in advice relating to volunteering whilst on benefits and examples of incorrect application of sanction processes
- Both volunteers (20.7%) and community activists (28%) felt that their skills were being under-utilised

Supporting people with additional needs and encouraging diversity

Based on the Index of Deprivation 2007, Brighton ranks as the 79th most deprived authority in England (out of 354) and ranks 4th within the South East region. It has very high levels of mental health issues and one of the highest suicide rates in the country as well as communities vulnerable to mental ill-health and/or exclusion including a large LGBT community (14%), BME residents and disabled residents , .

These groups have all been identified as being under-represented within volunteering. ‘Taking Account’ reveals that LGBT people account for 3% of volunteers, BME people account for 3% of volunteers and disabled people account for 4% of volunteers. Taking Account further reveals that a comparatively low percentage of men

(34%) volunteer as opposed to women (66%).

Approximately 1 in 4 visitors to the Volunteer Centre Brighton & Hove come with support workers and require additional support both in matching to placements and during their volunteering role.

The ‘Volunteering for all’ research paper shows that where the barriers facing the above groups have been overcome there is a double benefit from volunteering. In relation to the volunteers, it has enabled people at risk of social exclusion to combat their feelings of personal isolation, empowered them and through gaining skills and confidence, enabled them to subsequently change their environment and themselves and provided a sense of self-worth through contributing to their community. The benefits to organisations of involving these volunteers were revealed through the consultation;

“I think it has a positive impact on our organisation. It makes the volunteer team more reflective of society and the student body and is a good opportunity for the volunteers to learn to work with a variety of people with differing abilities.”

“... It would add a dimension of understanding of need that could be a real benefit.”

“... The benefits are that staff get experience of dealing with volunteers with varying support needs. Plus ultimately volunteers with extra needs can bring different life experience/skills which can be beneficial when volunteering, as often they may be able to relate to the needs/difficulties faced of those they are visiting.”

“It helps to promote understanding between staff, volunteers and service users. We promote inclusion of all and try to find a suitable role for volunteers with support needs. It requires us to take more time to monitor and help develop these volunteers and as long as we have the time and staff capabilities to do so.”

But as with volunteers, the consultation focus groups (and the on-line survey) revealed barriers to the involvement of those with additional support needs and at risk of exclusion.

The recession has increased the number of people applying to volunteer. Many of these people come with skills and competencies that may make them more attractive to organisations who have limited capacity to manage volunteers with additional needs. Therefore there is a danger that some of the people who would most gain from volunteering will be displaced if the capacity of the sector is not increased to enable it to accommodate all those who want to volunteer.

Summary of findings

- There is a willingness amongst organisations to involve volunteers with additional support needs but a lack of capacity to do so
- Volunteers felt that volunteer-involving organisations do not always have awareness and knowledge of volunteer needs
- Providing ‘safe’ environments which allow for disclosure (e.g. mental health issues) and alleviate fear and vulnerability is

important to volunteers at risk of exclusion

- Tailored and expert support that addresses and effectively meets need is important to volunteers with additional needs
- Volunteers are more likely to approach organisations where equalities and diversity are embedded as values in practice not just policy. This needs to be demonstrated at point of entry for volunteers
- Where the volunteering experience is good, volunteers feel it can promote the integration of marginalised people
- BME groups can experience racism as an issue when volunteering outside of the BME community in addition to cultural differences between BME groups
- Disabled volunteers and/or those with health problems find physical access to placements a major barrier and there is often a lack of practical equipment that would enable them to perform roles and a lack of flexibility in accommodating the unpredictability of health problems
- Volunteers at risk of exclusion often want to re-invest in a particular service area, but at times experienced tensions between being a service user and a volunteer in that area
- Volunteers with mental health issues or disabled volunteers are sometimes not understood to have significant other skills and competencies

Organisations – barriers and benefits

The benefit of volunteer involvement within organisations came through clearly throughout the consultation work. By far the strongest emerging benefit related to service delivery. Organisations stated that volunteer involvement was the only way in which core services/project/outputs were possible and that volunteer involvement enabled the service to develop core services and offer additional services that would not otherwise be possible;

“The majority of our services are run wholly by volunteers. Without the dedication and commitment of our volunteers we wouldn’t be able to offer the services we do.”

“The work of the volunteer adds a great deal of extra capacity specifically in delivering IT training or supporting learners.”

For a number of organisations, volunteer involvement IS one of their core service areas;

“For the Neighbourhood Care Scheme, the involvement of volunteers IS the work of the organisation.”

Beyond that organisations said that volunteers brought enthusiasm, vitality and energy to their roles as well as skills and experience. They often brought service user experience and perspective that enabled them to identify service user needs more effectively and kept the service more “real”;

“They are our local champions and are the connection between the strategic work we do and the actual delivery on the ground. Our work would not have the same quality without the input of our volunteers.”

And no less importantly, organisations also said that volunteers;

- had a positive impact on paid staff

“I work with volunteers in a range of community settings, but I have found that having a volunteer with a learning disability can boost staff morale, gets employers thinking ‘outside the box’ as to the type of work they can offer and the skills needed to do the job.”

- added another dimension to their work; a fresh perspective and ideas

- allowed direct stakeholder representation and diversity

“We actively seek volunteers from the LGBT community to ensure strategic work in the City is informed by an inclusive range of voices, identities and needs groups. These volunteers are crucial in connecting developments to the actual lived experiences, needs and concerns of those who need and use services and can face multiple marginalisation. They ensure that services are accountable, and committed to improving the quality and access to what they provide.”

- and, (in relation to employer supported volunteering) gained raised self-esteem, confidence and skills from their volunteer experience that could then be pooled back into the organisation

The willingness of organisations to involve volunteers came through strongly throughout the consultation work but equally strong throughout was the need for additional capacity to manage them. In particular disabled volunteers and other volunteers with additional support needs emphasised how important it is for organisations to make the reasonable adjustments necessary to enable them to perform. Good practice development and application in the management of volunteers is an important element of reducing the barriers experienced both by organisations and volunteers, but staff capacity to manage volunteers is also critical.

Managing volunteers requires similar capacity and skills as managing paid staff. Although volunteers do not incur any salary costs they do incur overheads. In addition managing volunteers with additional support needs will require specialist training.

Summary of findings

- Volunteer-involving organisations, non-volunteer involving organisations, and employers would be able and willing to involve (more) volunteers and/or implement employer-supported volunteering but will need additional resources to do it
- There are gaps in volunteers’ skills set required by organisations seeking volunteers that is often described as a shortage in ‘highly-skilled’ volunteers

- There is a volunteer shortage in certain role areas namely; sports related roles, administration, mentoring and befriending
- A mismatch exists between the times some organisations need volunteers and the times volunteers are available to volunteer
- Additional management support is needed in order to improve staff experience of employer-supported volunteering programmes

Volunteer Brokerage

Nearly half the volunteers consulted found opportunities by word-of-mouth and through approaching organisations directly. Effective marketing and volunteer brokerage is fundamental to a flourishing volunteering environment. A lack of clarity in the role of local brokerage agencies or an absence of assessment tools with which to broker volunteers effectively presents a huge barrier to volunteering. Development of these tools is needed if more people are to be aware of the range of local brokerage support available to them. Brokerage support needs to assist people to make volunteering choices that meet both their needs and motivations and the needs of organisations which require volunteers. This is particularly relevant to involving a diverse range of volunteers and in effectively brokering people with additional support needs into appropriate opportunities.

Summary of findings

- There is poor awareness and usage of local volunteering brokerage services across volunteers, community activists, volunteer-involving organisations, and employers with a lack of clarity around the roles each organisation plays
- There is a lack of co-ordination, communication and partnership between agencies involved in volunteering across the City
- Respondents felt there were gaps in information sharing and access to information

Theme 2: Promoting, recognising and valuing volunteering and volunteers

Spreading the volunteering message

“We believe more is required to promote volunteering to the wider public and to demonstrate the value of volunteering to individuals and to society at large.”

Manifesto for Change, Jan 2008

An excellent idea will go nowhere if it is not shared and understood. 51 volunteer respondents and the majority of community activists felt that access to volunteering could be improved through better marketing and communication. Over 87% of volunteer-involving organisations felt there was a need for the increased promotion of volunteering that exploited various media. Consultation participants wanted publicity to;

- promote the benefits of volunteering, in particular highlighting the skills that could be gained, and the links to employment
- promote inclusivity and for inclusivity to be demonstrated upfront
- be extended to specific stakeholder groups including Employers and in particular to groups at risk of social exclusion e.g. the LGBT community
- promote a vision of volunteering as a ‘normal’ part of every day life

Views shared throughout the consultation also pointed to the fact that in addition to a promotional campaign co-ordinated by the voluntary sector, the marketing of volunteering should be a shared activity undertaken by volunteers themselves and non voluntary sectors who are supported by volunteering activities.

“More open recognition and advertising of the work load that volunteers take on for the council in this City and other high level statutory organisations. I suspect that the public would be surprised to see just what front line services are dependent on the good will of others.”

Summary of findings

- Volunteers, community activists and volunteer-involving organisations felt there was a need for greater promotion of volunteering in general
- Volunteers at risk of social exclusion wanted the promotion of volunteering to reach out to groups at risk of social exclusion and for any marketing campaign to demonstrate inclusivity upfront, using positive images that give recognition and may incentivise others
- There is a gap in the promotion of employer-supported

volunteering programmes to employers and the benefits of such programmes to employees

- Volunteering recognition events across the city are seen as important in raising the profile of volunteering

How volunteers and those involved in community activity feel valued

Whilst consultation respondents said that a range of ‘thank you’ approaches was important in valuing people, both volunteers and community activists said that full inclusion into an organisation alongside the paid staff was most important. The ways in which this became tangible to them was through increased responsibility, involvement in the organisation’s team and involvement in decision-making. Recognition and accreditation certificates were also supported (although less so amongst community activists) as was knowing that their volunteering involvement had a demonstrable impact.

Summary of findings

- The majority of volunteers and community activists feel valued in their roles
- Volunteers stated that the highest reason for leaving a role was not feeling valued

Theme 3: Providing a good volunteering experience

Whilst the recipe for success will differ from individual to individual, good volunteer management is the core ingredient of a good volunteering experience. Beyond an effective match, volunteers need to be managed and supported well and to a large extent this is dependent upon organisations being able to access adequate support and training in volunteer management themselves. The success of a good volunteering experience is often measured in retention rates. However, it is perhaps more helpful to focus on the expectations of the volunteer matching those of the organisation. If goals are agreed and achieved on both sides then a good retention rate could as well be 1 hour as 1 year.

This part of the consultation asked about the support that stakeholder groups found useful and where they accessed it, problem-solving and training awareness and uptake.

Organisations

Whilst the majority of volunteer managers (78%) were paid in their role it was notable that nearly a third (35 out of 106) did

not have volunteer management as part of their job description and approximately a third of Employer respondents did not have Employer-supported volunteering responsibility within their job description. Furthermore, approximately 30% of volunteer managers were managing in excess of 50 volunteers each.

Summary of findings

- The role of Volunteer Co-ordinator is not always well recognised
- Organisations found a 'range' of support services helpful, if not, very helpful including web-based services (88 respondents), volunteer management training (87 respondents), Volunteer Co-ordinators Forum (86 respondents) and one-to-one Good Practice support (81 respondents)
- A quarter of Volunteer Co-ordinators do not know where to go if they have a problem
- Organisations tend to rely heavily upon 'informal chats' as a means of supporting their volunteers
- Less than half the organisations consulted have regular volunteer team meetings or involve volunteers in wider staff meetings
- There is generally poor awareness and uptake of training
- Monitoring and evaluation, impact assessment and working with volunteers with extra support needs are identified by volunteer-involving organisations as areas in which they require further training
- The legal aspects of volunteer involvement is identified by organisations that don't currently use volunteers as a training need
- Organisations, volunteers and service users want organisations to conform to a minimum standard of practice

Volunteers and Community Activists

There was a strong correlation between volunteers and community activists having a good experience of volunteering and their feeling valued, included, and their skills being fully utilised. In addition, volunteers most strongly (90.4% of respondents) wanted to know that what they were doing genuinely helped other people. Clarity around role and responsibilities was identified as a key element of a good experience for both volunteers and community activists. These findings support the importance of matching the expectations of volunteers with that of the volunteer-involving organisation.

Knowing who to speak to was identified by both groups as most important in supporting them in their role. Whilst there was relatively low support for 'supervision', 39.5% of volunteers said this was 'not important', there was strong support for 'informal chats'. This raises a question mark over the use of management terminology within volunteering settings. The content and focus of one to one contact, or 'informal chats', can be used to ensure expectations, motivations

and needs are being met and goals achieved for both parties. This is particularly relevant to volunteers at risk of social exclusion and volunteers with additional support needs. The consultation focus groups revealed that in a significant number of cases people re-invest in the particular service area with which they identify. Re-investing in a service area through volunteering in can give rise to tensions such as volunteers not feeling valued and these need addressing.

Summary of findings

- Volunteers and community activists most want to know that what they do genuinely helps the people or cause they offer their time to
- Clarity around role and responsibilities are very important to volunteers and community activists in ensuring a good experience
- The support most readily identified by volunteers and community activists as being important is knowing who to speak to, having informal conversations and regular team meetings
- Community activists value access to networks of like-minded individuals
- Practical support in starting up a group is needed for community activity
- For volunteers at risk of social exclusion, roles need to reflect motivations for volunteering and accommodate the needs of some volunteers to invest in a specific service area
- BME groups said it was important to recognise the role that cultural values may play in community activism
- Volunteer and community activists generally have poor awareness of training providers but comments revealed a good range of other training accessed including provision through statutory and national bodies and other learning networks

Theme 4: Resourcing volunteering and the links to employment

Resourcing Volunteering

"Volunteering may be freely given but it is certainly not cost-free, and organisations need to invest financial and human resources properly in order to unleash the passion, goodwill and experience of those that manage volunteers and the volunteers themselves".

Justin Davis-Smith, CEO Volunteering England

The Institute for Volunteering Research report launched in April 2008 'Management matters: a national survey of volunteer management

capacity', reveals that over a quarter of organisations do not have funding for supporting volunteers and that large organisations, including NHS trusts, were most likely to have budgets for volunteer involvement and dedicated staff time to support volunteers. In addition, a 'Third Sector' report issued in May 2009 reports that the cost of volunteer-involvement is not always recognised by those wishing to access its benefits with 85% of businesses enquiring about employee volunteering programmes backing off when they discover there is a cost involved.

The consultation findings reflect this picture and indicate that full-cost recovery is seldom implemented, not least because organisations often do not know what their volunteers cost to manage.

Summary of findings

- 61% of volunteer-involving organisations do not know how much their volunteers cost them
- Half of volunteer-involving organisations have specific funding to cover volunteer management
- Less than half of employer respondents have a specific budget head for employee volunteering

Links to employment

The City of Brighton & Hove faces a number of issues around worklessness including a high, static number of people claiming Incapacity benefits, a high churn of people on and off Job Seekers Allowance and an above-average number of young people not in education, employment and training. The current economic climate brings about additional pressures, with a rising growth in unemployment in the 18-24 age group and an increase in people facing unemployment for the first time. All of this brings challenges and opportunities for organisations and individuals alike and the spot-light has been turned on to volunteering as a means to addressing those challenges.

Volunteering has long been regarded as a successful route into paid employment, irrespective of a recession, but additionally so when the economic climate is poor. Research, shows that people acquire a range of vocational and soft interpersonal skills through their volunteering, which for some facilitates the route to paid employment and for others provides an alternative to employment. It is an excellent way for young adults to develop the transferable skills that employers find valuable; leadership, team working, self-confidence, initiative and organisational skills recognised by some of the UK's leading employers in actively developing volunteering programmes for their employees.

"Because of my history of volunteering, I was able to get the job that I'm in, through experience although I had never done this previously!"

- Volunteer, Consultation survey

The consultation revealed that the strongest motivation for people volunteering or becoming active in their community was for 'personal satisfaction and a sense of social meaning' and it is important to recognise that paid employment is not the end goal for everyone. Equally it is important to recognise that whilst it is often not cited as the initial motivation, people still then go on to accrue skills, competencies and confidence in the course of their volunteering and often paid employment is a previously unforeseen outcome. However for many, the connection with paid employment at the outset is very strong. 42.5% of volunteers who participated in the consultation process were hoping volunteering would lead to paid employment by gaining skills and increasing confidence. Volunteering is not only used as a pathway back to work; nearly a third of volunteer respondents were using it as part of their career development, and a fifth to explore a change in career direction. The role of volunteering in the career development of staff was described by the Director of one local organisation as follows;

"I encourage my staff to volunteer as a way of developing skills e.g. becoming part of a management committee to develop finance and management skills or experience with a different client group (e.g. volunteering with older people for those working with children). I am especially keen to consider how supporting potential voluntary sector managers to be involved in Boards/Management Committees of local organisations can both up skill the individual providing them with a useful insight into governance and provide local community groups with much needed volunteer Board members".

Disabled people, older people, younger people, those from the BME community and the LGBT community are amongst those who face a number of barriers to employment and often find themselves most distanced from the labour market. The focus groups revealed that volunteering is often a key means of people gaining a sense of purpose and overcoming social isolation. Equally they felt that it provided a pathway to the labour market that enabled them to build confidence, self-worth, skills and experience in an environment that is more flexible, less pressured, and generally more inclusive and aware of the needs of vulnerable people.

"Provides flexibility and less pressure than paid work. Builds confidence and self-worth and enables us to build skills and explore possible areas of work".

- Disabilities consultation group

It is worth noting that, as a result of the recession, the influx of volunteers with fewer barriers to employment may make access to both volunteering and paid employment harder for groups at risk of social exclusion most distant from the labour market.

Summary of findings

- Volunteers made clear links between volunteering and paid employment. They said it allows them to gain direct experience in a chosen work area and explore new areas, diversify their current experience, demonstrate interest, motivation and commitment that can be supported at interview, provide networking

opportunities and allows them to 'keep a hand in'

- Volunteers and community activists report a lack of employer recognition of volunteering and community activity in their recruitment processes
- The experiences of disabled volunteers found that private sector employers often do not see volunteering as 'legitimate' experience
- For those at risk of social exclusion volunteering provides a particularly valuable route to paid work but a sense of purpose and overcoming social isolation are equally as important
- For community activists, the links with employment were less strong and a 'sense of involvement in the local community' is as important as is personal satisfaction

The Impact of the Economic Downturn

Across the country, 2008-2009 saw record numbers interested in volunteering, illustrated locally by a 50% rise in enquiries at the Volunteer Centre Brighton & Hove.

For individuals facing or experiencing redundancy volunteering can be hugely positive not least because it provides a sense of purpose, an opportunity for social contact and structure to life of which the positive benefits towards mental health are clear. However, the threat of redundancy may also add to the long-standing concerns of some paid staff that volunteers are or will be used as a 'substitute' for paid staff. This concern is not new and the issue of 'job substitution' by volunteers has been long debated. This strategy acknowledges the job substitution concerns voiced both by volunteers and paid staff throughout the consultation work and does not seek to endorse in any way the replacement of paid staff by volunteers in its recommendations. Rather the strategy hopes to place emphasis on enabling people to volunteer as a pathway to work where appropriate, to acknowledge and enhance the 'added' value that volunteer delivery brings to services. We support Volunteering England's recommendation for;

- Volunteer-involving organisations to maintain their investment in volunteer management and not to replace paid staff with volunteers;

The recommendations throughout this strategy regarding good practice in volunteer management seek to ensure that volunteer-involving organisations are well-supported in the development of their volunteer programmes. As such they are able to explore new and diverse ways of involving volunteers that is not a threat to organisations and their staff but that builds a more inclusive society with higher levels of social capital.

The heightened interest in volunteering was reflected in the consultation results and organisations said they are experiencing an increased demand for services, a decrease in funding available and are expecting to involve more volunteers in service delivery with

a possible shift in the motivations and skills of volunteers coming forward. Whilst this is an opportunity to address the gap in highly skilled volunteers that organisations seek, organisations struggling to harness this interest re-emphasises capacity issues e.g. the LGBT focus group revealed that the local LGBT youth organisation Allsorts, after setting up a programme funded through 'v', had been overwhelmed with enquiries.

Utilising highly-skilled volunteers

'Resilience and the Recession. How is the Third Sector Managing?', echoes findings from the strategy consultation in that 60% of organisations reported that the recession had had some kind of effect on volunteering. Most notable is that, "the variety of skills that people come with has increased" and the deployment of highly-skilled volunteers (or arguably volunteers with 'areas of expertise') in helping charities to survive the recession has had high profile support. It may also be the preferred way for the private sector to continue support to the voluntary sector in times where monetary support is more difficult.

However, whilst half of the organisations consulted within this strategy work did currently utilise volunteers at high levels of responsibility, almost half said that they most often turned volunteers away due to the volunteers' skills not matching the role. Organisations experienced barriers to involving volunteers at higher levels and these included the difficulty of embedding volunteers into the organisation where the volunteer's hours were limited, issues around job substitution and accountability, a shortage in the competencies that they need and problems in supporting people with expertise and skills beyond the knowledge of the volunteer co-ordinator.

IT4 Communities, an organisation which matches IT volunteers with charities, report a record interest from potential IT volunteers. Equally, where businesses have downsized staff teams to a more technical base, they are looking to use volunteering as a means for their technical employees to gain 'softer' vocational skills.

Summary of findings

- Organisations are experiencing an increase in demand for services and a decrease in funding due to the economic downturn
- Paid staff can have fears around being 'replaced' by volunteers and that these fears can impact negatively upon both volunteers and paid staff
- Organisations are, and are expecting to, involve more volunteers in service delivery due to the economic downturn
- Organisations said that clarification of roles for highly-skilled volunteers, a database of these volunteers, and extra capacity and training to support them would support their future involvement of volunteers at higher levels of responsibility
- Organisations most needed IT support from intermediately

skilled volunteers in databases, website development and desktop publishing but concerns were raised around security, data protection, skill level of volunteer and lack of volunteer co-ordinator knowledge to support people in these roles

- The benefits of volunteering to employees are not always known to employers

Employer Supported Volunteering

“[It is my vision]... for our country to pioneer and be the first to achieve the day when it becomes the norm for... every employer [to have] a volunteering scheme for their employees.”

Gordon Brown, 2006

Employer-supported volunteering (also known as ESV and employee volunteering) often forms part of an organisation’s Corporate Social Responsibility Policy.

Volunteering England describes three main ways in which employers promote community involvement amongst their staff :

- Companies operate an ESV scheme in which a dedicated member of staff proactively identifies and develops volunteering opportunities with local voluntary and community organisations. Employees can volunteer during working hours, whilst not incurring any financial penalties. This type of activity often involves ‘team challenges’ e.g. a staff team decorating a community hall
- Employees are encouraged to find their own volunteering opportunities within the community, and are given the flexibility to fit their work around the volunteering opportunity. In some schemes, employees can take sabbaticals, whilst others volunteer on an ongoing, regular basis
- Employees enable voluntary and community organisations to benefit from their business skills and experience. Such employees may undertake pro bono work, provide voluntary consultancy services, or serve as trustees

There are many benefits associated with employer-supported volunteering schemes. For the employer such schemes can help shape a positive public image of the business, increase staff commitment, motivation and skills, improve recruitment and retention by providing a positive business culture and open up networks for future development. Employees also benefit from gaining new skills, developing their experience and networks and doing something that provides personal satisfaction.

In 2003, 1.5 million people volunteered through an employer-supported scheme worth £0.8 million (at the national average wage). In 2007, 36% of employees had an employer supported volunteering scheme available to them, up from 24% in 2005 . Notably, 11% of all volunteering is carried out ‘within’ the private sector .

However, there are often costs associated with the implementation

of employer-supported volunteering schemes. For example, management of the programme can require an investment in a volunteer manager role, release of staff from core business may have hidden costs and the considerable organisation behind ‘team challenges’ usually requires broker involvement at a fee.

Consequently, the current economic climate has had an impact on this activity. Whilst there is a reported increase in enquiries to the national Volunteer Centre network from employers seeking volunteering placements , others are cutting back on their employer-supported volunteer programmes, often removing the role of volunteer co-ordinators and showing reluctance to pay for the cost of volunteering activities such as team challenges. Employers are also increasingly looking to where volunteering may fit with their business objectives . Recognising this, Volunteering England’s 9 point “Recession challenge” to the Office of the Third Sector asks for;

- The Private sector to recognise social responsibility as ‘standard’ and to not withdraw support to third sector organisations
- Private, public and voluntary organisations to encourage their employees to volunteer and explore the opportunities that involving volunteers may bring

Of the consultation respondents, 6 out of 12 had a corporate responsibility plan of which 5 included volunteering. Where an employer-supported volunteering programme was in place, the benefits it brought with it included a broadening of organisational perspective, an increase in capacity and impact, increased staff moral, development of employee skills and opportunities for network building.

“It offers our employees the opportunity to get different experiences. It also allows employees to use some of the activities as team building exercises and networking opportunities through the company. It offers a different option for staff development, both soft skills and enhancing business skills and it embeds the ethos of the company as a friendly society to ‘do the right thing’ and get involved in our local community - raising moral with staff.”

Employer, Consultation Survey

The remainder of organisations were interested in developing an employer-supported volunteering scheme and saw it as a means of staff development and improving staff retention but 7 out of 12 cited a lack of operational capacity as a barrier to its implementation.

Summary of findings

- Lack of capacity impacting on employers implementing employer-supported volunteering programmes
- Employers were most likely to utilise web-based resources and there was good support for social networking sites as a support/sharing tool
- Over half of the organisations did not have a person clearly

responsible for employer-supported volunteering within their job description

- Organisations said that an increased variety of opportunities would improve their staff’s experience of employer-supported volunteering programmes, particularly including opportunities that met their business objectives
- Employers found it difficult to measure the impact of employee involvement in volunteering

Theme 5: The impact of volunteering

A wealth of existing research supports the fact that volunteering has an impact upon the volunteer, the organisation that hosts them, the service beneficiaries and the wider community. The value of volunteer involvement therefore needs to be seen in this broader context and the social return on investment that funders are increasingly seeking should include the benefits to volunteers as well as other outcomes.

A recent study at Crisis charity showcases this multiple impact of volunteer-involvement, noting;

- The positive benefits to volunteers where there was an increased understanding of service user issues (namely homelessness), an increased positive attitude towards homeless people, an increased understanding of homelessness issues, the opportunity to gain skills and for career development
- The positive benefits for service users who re-invested their time as volunteers; bringing them new opportunities, helping them to develop skills and providing structure in their lives
- The positive benefits to service users where volunteers were seen to provide support and inspiration, encouraging service users to think more positively about their own lives
- The positive contribution volunteers make in increasing service capacity and the economic value attached to this

The measurement and impact of the Third Sector locally (and associated volunteering activity), is currently addressed through;

- 1) Taking Account - A Social and Economic Audit of the Third Sector in Brighton & Hove September 2008 and the Value for Money follow up research funded by the PCT
- 2) The Place Survey
- 3) The monitoring and evaluation activities of local volunteering agencies and volunteer-involving organisations

However, the consultation revealed that where volunteer-involving organisations and employers were carrying out monitoring and evaluation there was a tendency to think in terms of numbers and

hours. For employers this is particularly pertinent as their targets are often set against these criteria. Whilst this information is helpful in putting a crude number on volunteering levels and the economic value it lends, it doesn't capture the wider value of volunteer-involvement as discussed above.

The monitoring and evaluation activity of organisations has implications for the local measurement of volunteering. Only a half (approximately) of organisations monitor where their volunteers come from, and a fifth monitor what they go on to do. Therefore tracking the volunteer journey, including tangible outcomes such as paid employment, becomes problematic. Reasons for under activity in this area were clarified by voluntary organisations and employers as a lack of capacity to do it, a lack of knowledge of effective impact measurement toolkits and difficulties in engaging volunteers in the process.

Difficulties in measuring the impact of volunteering (and the application of appropriate toolkits) is not specific to Brighton & Hove and the national adoption of the Place Survey, as a means of measuring of volunteering activity has placed a somewhat narrow view on how we view volunteering.

Volunteering and Local Area Agreements (Report for Volunteering England March 2008) concludes that improved partnership working is 'key to developing volunteering through the LAA process' and suggests that the Compact, and a volunteering code within that, be used as a mechanism to achieve successful partnership work.

With respect to impact measurement, it is therefore perhaps a first priority to have a shared understanding of what impact means locally, with methodologies and means of collecting data that are agreed across partners.

Summary of findings

- Half of organisations are systematically carrying out monitoring and evaluation of volunteers that they manage
- Half of organisations did not have any impact measurement in place

Evidence that supports the role of Volunteering within four of the 2020 Sustainable Community Strategy areas

LSP Priority Area 1: Promoting Enterprise and Learning

City Employment and Skills Plan

Target

Increase the number of people with labour market disadvantage accessing and remaining in sustainable employment

- 2bviii Encourage volunteering as a route to gaining skills and gaining confidence

Improve the skills and employability of Young People

- 3a (xi) Support programmes that develop the employability skills of young people at risk of becoming NEET

Improve the skills of disadvantaged adult residents in the City

- 3c (vi) Strengthen community based learning initiatives through the voluntary and community sector to improve employability skills

Research Findings

People acquire a range of hard (vocational) and soft (interpersonal) skills through their volunteering.

For some people volunteering provided a route to employment, for others it provided an alternative to employment.

Volunteering is an excellent way for young adults to develop the transferable skills that employers find valuable. Leadership, team working, self-confidence, initiative and organisational skills that can all be effectively nurtured through voluntary activity. Some of the UK's leading employers recognise this fact and that this is one of the reasons why they actively develop volunteering programmes for their employees.

LSP Priority Area 2: Reducing Crime and Improving Safety

Sustainable Community Strategy

Target

The proportion of people who feel safe or very safe in their local area continues to increase

Research Findings

Volunteering builds social capital and higher levels of social capital are associated with lower crime rates. Social capital indicators explain about 10 percent of the observed variance in crime. Communities play an important role in crime prevention by providing informal social control, support and networks. As Dilulio (1996) puts it, the presence of social capital provides community-oriented solutions to the crime problem and these solutions are more important than increasing expenditure on police or incarceration.

LSP Priority Area 3: Improving Health and Well-being

Mental Health Promotion Strategy for B&H 2008-11

Target

Increased opportunities for mental health promotion with unemployment projects. Support in place for people who are off work with mental health problems to return to work that include healthy living aspects.

Research findings

Overwhelmingly supports the health-benefits associated with volunteering. In relation to mental-health, research shows that 85% of research participants, all of whom experience mental illness, reported a positive outcome from volunteering. 17% report improved confidence while 15% reported improvements in meeting and socialising with people.

These benefits have been previously substantiated in a 2003 survey (NCVO) of volunteer with mental health issues whereupon half said "they thought that volunteering might make them feel better" as motivation for volunteering, and subsequently, almost all reported that it had had a positive effect.

In delivering health-related services, locally it is found that the voluntary sector is, '...trusted by users, works in a preventative way promoting recovery and its projects are felt to lead to important outcomes such as giving hope/building a sense of community'.

Service User and Carer Involvement Strategy

Provide opportunities for individuals who engage with service user and carer involvement will include: Training in aspects of involvement / Further education in related subjects / Volunteering / Opportunities for employment in related fields There are already volunteering schemes, such as the Neighbourhood Care Scheme, that deliver to this target.

City Sports Strategy 2006-12

Strategy cites Volunteers as one of seven key drivers of change Volunteering is one of the major resources that supports the current level of sporting activity in the City.

LSP Priority Area 4 – Strengthening Communities and Involving People

Community Engagement Strategy 2008

Target

Improve engagement activity that ensures opportunity for all including annual 'Get Involved' campaign culminating in a celebration of active citizenship event

Research Findings

"From our evidence it is clear that volunteering is an excellent way for young adults to develop the transferable skills that employers across the UK find valuable. Transferable skills include leadership, team working, self-confidence, initiative and organisation that can all be effectively nurtured through voluntary activity. This Inquiry has discovered that some of the UK's leading employers recognise this fact and that this is one of the reasons why they actively develop volunteering programmes for their employees." Morgan Enquiry

Improve engagement that enhances the lives of people and their communities Robust evidence that volunteers are more satisfied with their life than non-volunteers.

A Charter for Strengthening Relations between Paid Staff and Volunteers: Agreement between Volunteering England and the TUC

This Charter sets out the key principles on which volunteering is organised and how good relations between paid staff and volunteers are built. It has been developed jointly by Volunteering England (VE) and the Trades Union Congress (TUC) and has been endorsed by the wider volunteering and trade union movements.

Its starting point is that volunteering plays an essential role in the economic and social fabric of the UK. It is estimated that some 22 million people volunteer each year, contributing around £23 billion to the economy. Volunteering helps build social capital and community cohesion and plays an important role in the delivery of key public services. Volunteering is also good for the volunteer: it helps improve health and wellbeing and provides opportunities for individuals to acquire skills and knowledge that can enhance career development or employment prospects.

This Charter demonstrates the value and importance that both organisations place on voluntary activity and the time, skills and commitment given by volunteers. This Charter recognises that voluntary action and trade unionism share common values. Both are founded on the principles of mutuality and reciprocity, leading to positive changes in the workplace and community. The trade union movement itself is built on the involvement and engagement of volunteers.

Volunteering England and the TUC acknowledge that on the whole, relations between paid staff and volunteers are harmonious and mutually rewarding. They can, however, be enhanced by good procedures, clarity of respective roles, mutual trust and support. This Charter sets out the key principles to help underpin good relations in the workplace.

These principles should be used as a guide by individual organisations to develop more detailed policies and procedures which reflect local needs and circumstances. This should be done, wherever possible, between local union representatives, employers and volunteering managers.

Paid work is any activity that is undertaken at the direction of an employer and is financially compensable

Volunteering is freely undertaken and not for financial gain; it involves the commitment of time and energy for the benefit of society and the community.

Charter Principles

- All volunteering is undertaken by choice, and all individuals should have the right to volunteer, or indeed not to volunteer;
- While volunteers should not normally receive or expect financial rewards for their activities, they should receive reasonable out of pocket expenses;
- The involvement of volunteers should complement and supplement the work of paid staff, and should not be used to displace paid staff or undercut their pay and conditions of service;
- The added value of volunteers should be highlighted as part of commissioning or grant-making process but their involvement should not be used to reduce contract costs;
- Effective structures should be put in place to support and develop volunteers and the activities they undertake, and these should be fully considered and costed when services are planned and developed;
- Volunteers and paid staff should be provided with opportunities to contribute to the development of volunteering policies and procedures;
- Volunteers, like paid staff, should be able to carry out their duties in safe, secure and healthy environments that are free from harassment, intimidation, bullying, violence and discrimination;
- All paid workers and volunteers should have access to appropriate training and development;
- There should be recognised machinery for the resolution of any problems between organisations and volunteers or between paid staff and volunteers;
- Volunteers should have the option to join a trade union of their choice;
- In the interests of harmonious relations between volunteers and paid staff, volunteers should not be used to undertake the work of paid staff during industrial disputes.

This Charter stands between Volunteering England and the TUC as a statement of principles and good practice. It is also a model for use by individual unions, volunteer involving organisations in the public, third and private sectors and other bodies in discussions around the use of volunteers.

Volunteering England and the TUC have produced some case studies, examples of local agreements and practical ideas to help trade unions and organisations. We have also set out some of the legal background relating to volunteering. These case studies will be available from the Volunteering England web site shortly.

Engage's Employer Engagement Directory

In a City where there is high unemployment, many employers still experience difficulty when trying to recruit suitably skilled people. Engaging with the priority groups enables a business to access individuals from the local community which benefits the local economy, the individual and enables the business to meet its Corporate Social Responsibility targets. This is just one of the many business benefits of recruiting from these groups.

There are many different reasons why individuals find it difficult to access employment and the organisations involved in employer engagement seek to address any issues and work closely with employers, offering advice and guidance, including relevant legislation information, whilst ensuring that the client has the necessary skills to carry out the placement / position available.

For more information please contact Claire Mitchell at Engage: claire.mitchell@engagesolutions.org.uk



Unemployed people in receipt of Health Related Benefits

A4e Pathways
01273 823145
CTyrer@a4e.co.uk

A4e is a successful international business and a market leader in global public service reform. We work with government and the private and third sectors to design, develop and deliver front line public services that benefit individuals, organisations and communities. A4e is a provider on the 'Pathways to Work' contract for the region and deliver a holistic approach to ensuring that those in receipt of Incapacity Benefit receive the support they need to return to work. 'Pathways to Work' increase the chances of the individual returning to sustainable, progressive employment while providing additional support through a Condition Management Programme, Occupational Support, Employer Engagement, work focused activities and work focused interviews.

Disabilities

Brighton and Hove City Council
- Supported Employment Team
01273 295961
maureen.pasmore@brighton-hove.gov.uk

The Supported Employment Team is a Brighton & Hove City Council service to work with disabled people and people with long term health conditions who need intensive support to gain or sustain employment. The service can also provide support for people on permitted work or supported permitted work. The service helps people to prepare for work and to develop within their job. They also support employers.

Youth Offenders

Brighton and Hove City Council - Youth Offending Team
01273 296164
mick.petrovic@brighton-hove.gov.uk

Arranging fully paid, full-time work experience placements for young offenders (16 - 18 yrs) towards securing positive references or permanent jobs.

Homeless

Brighton Housing Trust
01273 645459/07919484616
nikki.homewood@bht.org.uk

First Base Catering Training Project: Project providing catering training for homeless / exhomeless people and internal and external placement service. Learning Links: Training for homeless/exhomeless people to move onto qualifications in literacy and numeracy and then to work placements. Service User Consultancy: Service User involvement across BHT service users; training for service users and work placement service.

Homeless

Business Action on Homelessness
01273 770089
baoh@bhbc.org.uk

A project providing pre-employment training with a minimum two-week unpaid, supported work placement for individuals with a homeless background to increase confidence, gain work place experience and a current reference with a well known local employer. Post placement support assists clients to take constructive steps towards gaining sustainable employment.

Mental Health & Catering

Care Co-ops - Catering
01273 267552
catering2020@careco-ops.org.uk

The Care Co-ops Catering Project provides kitchen and restaurant work experience placements at the 20/20 cafe based on The Brighton General Hospital site. We also offer the following high quality training opportunities; Foundation Food Hygiene Training (CIEH), Catering NVQs, and nutritional training. These opportunities are open to anyone with mental health or learning difficulties, refugees and 16-25 year olds. A placement at the 20/20 cafe offers volunteers the support, encouragement and qualifications to gain the confidence and skills required for their journey to employment.

Unemployed or Economically Inactive or Mental Health

Care Co-ops - Routeway Service
01273 685300
routeway@careco-ops.org.uk

The Routeway service provides work-focussed opportunities for unemployed and economically inactive adult residents of Brighton and Hove, in particular those with learning disabilities and mental health issues. It currently offers work placement opportunities across the City, volunteer opportunities within Care Co-ops, plus assistance to adults with mental health support needs to either set up a social enterprise or volunteer/work within a social enterprise setting.

Unemployment

Careers Development Group (CDG)
01273 735970
adam.nicholson@cdguk.org

As trainers for Jobcentre Plus CDG provides Careers Guidance and Job specific training to the long-term unemployed and those seeking a new career path. Work Placements and Job Trials play a significant role in our programmes; for those with little experience it can be a great way to secure a job and for employers a work placement can help to give an idea of a client's abilities beyond their CV.

Offenders & Ex Offenders

Sussex Probation (Creating Futures)
01323 746200 / 744079
sandie.macdermott@sussex.probation.gsi.gov.uk

Giving information, advice and guidance for employment training and education for offenders under orders of HMP Lewes and Ford and ex-offenders under Sussex Probation

Unemployed; Parent Returners; Offenders; Disabilities; Young Adults ; Below average qualifications; Individuals at risk of employment vulnerability; Graduates / Redundancies

CK Futures
0800 298 3525/ 07780 680300 (Charlotte Eve)
service@ckfutures.co.uk

Specialist CV, Covering Letter, Application Form & Interview support to individuals of all ages who are unemployed and are at risk of being vulnerable in the employment market due to: long periods of unemployment, criminal records, disabilities, sickness, no or low level qualifications.

Unemployed Individuals: We can work 1-1 with individuals in Brighton and Hove areas and also offer regular workshops for job seekers in CV preparation, Job Searching and Interview Coaching.

Employees of back to work organisations: We train employees of organisations nationally who are dedicated to helping people back to work, in CV Preparation and Interview Coaching.

Employers: We work with employers who are making redundancies, providing workshops for employees to enable those affected to find their next position quickly.

Training for managers nationally in best practice recruitment and selection procedures to promote the fair selection of all candidates.

Health Related Benefit Claimants

Shaw Trust (Hove Pathways)
01273 415686
sue.john@shaw-trust.org.uk

Our focus is on gaining sustainable employment for people with health-related and disability issues. We also offer access to a resident Adviser from the Surrey & Sussex Hardest to Help Programme. We operate Pathways to Work and Nextstep programmes for mandatory and voluntary clients. Whilst the majority of our clients come from Hove, Portslade & Shoreham, we welcome people from the wider geographic area.

Unemployed Single Parents; Parents returning to work; Homeless; General Public without existing L2 qualification; Employed – Pre-level 2 (NVQ only) All of our learners must be over the age of 19 and have lived in the EU for the previous consecutive three years.

Futures Training
Main Office: 01273 605090
Corporate: 01273 311314/ 07748 188379
stephen.burkes@futurestraining.co.uk

Futures Training, through Learndirect, offer Skills for Life programmes in both English Literacy and Numeracy at levels I and II. These courses cover numeracy, shape and space, percentages, spelling, letter writing, grammar, and punctuation. Based on an initial assessment an individual programme is designed for each learner.

ECDL is offered as a full qualification or in its modular parts, which include modules on word processing, databases, electronic communication and spreadsheets. The course carries BCS unit certificates for individual modules or a full BCS ECDL qualification on completion of all modules.

NVQ's that are funded through either Learndirect or Train to Gain can be undertaken at level II in the following subjects, ITQ, Customer Service, Business Administration and Health & Social Care.

Unemployment

Maximus Employment & Training UK Ltd
01273 358380
jguest@maximusuk.co.uk

MAXIMUS is a Prime Contractor of Flexible New Deal - helping customers move off benefits and back into sustained employment across Surrey, Sussex, and Kent. MAXIMUS Employment & Training (UK) specialises in helping people who are disadvantaged in the labour market to gain employment. We operate primarily within the statutory and voluntary sector contracting to provide a range of services. As a company, Maximus supports more than 200,000 customers a year worldwide and operating in the UK, US, Australia, Canada and Israel, MAXIMUS remains passionate about its focus on helping vulnerable people to achieve employment and improve their lives.

16-18 year olds Not in Employment, Education & Training (NEETs)

Nacro
01273 704010
carol.mckay@nacro.org.uk

Run National Vocational Training programme called 'Entry to Employment' to help NEET (Not in Employment Education or Training) 16 - 18yrs into education, employment or training.

Employers and Individuals Wanting Work-based Training

Pitman Training
01273 220229
ian@pitmanbrighton.com

Administration, Business and Technical training offered at our training centre near the sea front or in your offices. Available 7 days a week. Short courses to full diplomas leading to qualifications.

Disability Unemployment

RBLI Employment Solutions
01273 827580
employmentsolutions@rbli.co.uk

We offer tailored support for people wanting to gain and sustain employment who have health needs and or disabilities. We offer Pathways, Workstep and Workprep in the Brighton area and have advisers who work specifically within the Brighton and Hove area with clients and employers.

Employers and Individuals Wanting Work-based Training

Rewards Training
01273 739028
info@rewards-trc.co.uk

A range of training solutions offered in the work place, home, or at Rewards Training Centre located in Central Brighton. Training advise and a wide range of courses offered to the public requiring IT and other support training leading to qualifications. Rewards also offer a recruitment service targeted at 16-18 year olds.

Unemployed

Skills Training UK
01273 688442
CatrinaLynch@skillstraininguk.com

Skills Training UK is one of the fastest growing training and job placement businesses in the country, with a widespread reputation for professionalism and integrity, and a real passion for bringing out the best in people. We help individuals find work, and enhance their long-term career prospects with improved skills and recognised qualifications. We also help businesses recruit, train and retain the staff they need – now and for the future.

Our knowledge, experience and pioneering approach helps individuals and businesses achieve more, making us a powerful enabler, and an influential voice for today's policy-makers.

Graduate Recruitment

The Careers Centre - University of Brighton
01273 642461 / Careers Centre Desk - 01273 642855
s.rhodes@brighton.ac.uk

The Careers Centre is responsible for providing careers guidance and information to current University of Brighton students, graduates and alumni. It also supports graduates who have left education within the last 2 years from other HE institutions. It collects and distributes vacancy information - mainly part time for current students and full time jobs for students seeking their first position after leaving university. The Careers Centre works closely with other staff and projects within the university that provide employability support for students such as Placements Officers, Knowledge Transfer Partnerships and initiatives supporting students seeking self employment.

Unemployment

Working Links
01273 774010
beverley.foard@workinglinks.co.uk

A free service to support the real needs of today's jobseekers and employers. Working Links is a very different back to work programme that is flexible and meets the individual's needs. Whether it is training or work experience, help with your CV or interview skills, or even funding to pay for practical things like transport and childcare. Working Links is that next step back into sustainable employment