



Worcestershire

Infrastructure Consortium

Valuing Worcestershire Volunteers

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communities

defra

ChangeUp
Funded by the Home Office

A Volunteering Strategy for the
Volunteering Sector in Worcestershire

June 2006 – May 2007

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Acknowledgements

This strategy has had input of many people working for voluntary and community organisations and groups in Worcestershire. Most of those are Volunteer Co-ordinators and members of the Worcestershire Volunteering Forum and we would like to thank all that had an input via attendance at one or two of the Forum meetings, via email, via filling in the feedback forms, via discussion and words of encouragement. All Volunteer Centre colleagues, including BARN have committed to a lot of work deriving from this strategy and without this willingness to improve the quality and quantity of volunteering the words would be meaningless. Thanks to Chris Hinchley and Alison Mclean for proof reading and comments. And finally the Voluntary and Community Sector Unit of the County Council, Jenny Murray and Julie Bishop, thanks for your support and including this strategy into the launch of the Compact.

Sascha McDonald
7th June 2006

Foreword

Volunteers make an invaluable contribution to the quality of life in Worcestershire.

Their commitment benefits those they work with, the voluntary groups and services they support, local employers, the community, and the environment. Their activities also benefit the volunteers themselves, offering them new experiences and helping them develop new skills, in some cases providing an opportunity to “put something back” into society, in others a chance to re-build confidence and self-esteem.

This strategy “Valuing Worcestershire Volunteers” has been published to give a strong lead to the development of volunteering in the county. It has been commissioned by the Worcestershire Infrastructure Consortium, with funding from DEFRA and ChangeUp, in recognition of the importance we attach to the development of volunteering and the need for a quality approach. The strategy gives impetus to a long term vision for volunteering, with the aim of reducing barriers to volunteering and ensuring that volunteering activity is valued, adequately resourced and well managed.

The strategy offers good practice guidelines on working with and valuing volunteers, including those with specific needs. It also explores how the volunteer centres and other infrastructure agencies which support volunteering can work effectively together across the county to the benefit of voluntary sector organisations and volunteers themselves. We trust it will serve as a valuable resource for partners in both the public and private sectors and will form the basis of the Volunteering Code of Practice of the Worcestershire Compact.



Chair
Worcestershire Infrastructure Consortium

Introduction

Volunteers have been active in Worcestershire, voluntary organisations and community groups have given them opportunities, volunteer co-ordinators have been supporting them and volunteer centres have been attracting them. We all do these jobs as best we can but never have we sat down together to say what it means to value a volunteer. And that is precisely what we did; we – volunteer centres and volunteer co-ordinators – sat down and discussed what it means to 'value Worcestershire volunteers for being volunteers'.

In line with the plans of national government, this strategy works towards reducing barriers to volunteering with the ultimate aim of increasing volunteering activity. The opportunity to write it came when Volunteer Centres (VC's) in Worcestershire formed a sub-group of a larger network of support organisations to the Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) called the Worcestershire Infrastructure Consortium (the Consortium). The VC's are based in Malvern, Wyre Forest, Worcester City, Pershore and Evesham, and they were joined by The Bromsgrove and Redditch Network (BARN) to include these two districts without a volunteer centre.

While working on its Investment Plan under the 'Change-up' programme in 2004, the Consortium recognised the importance of volunteering and included it in its main priorities. The Volunteering Sub-group formed a Volunteering Forum for volunteer co-ordinators in Worcestershire that meets twice a year. As a result we now have this document - the first 'Volunteering Strategy' for the Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) in Worcestershire.

It is a timely document that fits in with many local developments that will ultimately have an influence on volunteering in Worcestershire – the Local Area Agreement, the Worcestershire Compact, a committed Worcestershire County Council and the ten year strategy of the Consortium itself. Additionally, a piece of research that was carried out in 2000 called 'Valuing the Voluntary Sector' will be carried out again and publicised in late summer 2006. This will report on the economic value of volunteers, an aspect that will help raise the profile of volunteering.

All these developments, together with the dedication of the Volunteering Sub-group, and the willingness and enthusiasm of the Worcestershire Volunteer Co-ordinators, will strengthen the implementation of this strategy and achievement of its aims.

Executive Summary

This Strategy is a document that has been produced by the Worcestershire Infrastructure Consortium – Volunteering Sub-group, that consists of all local volunteering infrastructure organisations (Volunteer Centres) and BARN.

Consultation with members of the Worcestershire Volunteering Forum (made up of Volunteer Co-ordinators in the Voluntary and Community Sector) has formed the basis for this strategy.

The strategy will provide the draft 'Volunteering Code of Practice' to the Worcestershire Compact, alongside its main strategic aim:

To enable leaders within the volunteering sector to work together throughout Worcestershire to unite as partners and to support effective volunteering, which is accessible to all.

It has a long term vision: to achieve the outcome of reduced barriers to volunteering in Worcestershire that will result in increased volunteering activity that is adequately valued, resourced, recruited and managed.

Six smaller objectives give the strategy direction:

1. To promote the importance, recognition and value of volunteering throughout Worcestershire
2. To develop, promote and continuously improve standards of good practice in working within voluntary organisations and in supporting all aspects of volunteering
3. To promote equal opportunity to volunteering
4. To improve the accessibility and opportunities of volunteering
5. To clarify the roles and responsibilities of volunteer-placing organisations and those of individual volunteers
6. To unite as partners within the volunteering sector and to seek to work in partnership with other sectors to achieve the overall aim

A strong role for the Worcestershire volunteering infrastructure is recognised throughout. In practice this means volunteer centres will jointly take on tasks like producing basic policy and guidelines, providing information and implementation support on quality practice models and frameworks, initiating joint promotion and marketing on volunteering, improving promotion and accessibility of the Volunteer Centres, and they will continue to facilitate the Worcestershire Volunteering Forum.

For the individual volunteer involving organisations the strategy forms a summary of undertakings:

- Promote volunteering opportunities widely, regularly review how volunteers are recruited to ensure there is equal opportunity to volunteering and to positively encourage volunteers from currently underrepresented sectors of society
- Include reasonable costs for reducing barriers to volunteering in relevant funding bids
- Identify a named person within the organisation to be responsible for volunteer involvement, and for monitoring and reporting on it and identify a trustee board member to act as a champion for volunteering
- Ensure that there is both the time and resources to support and train volunteers
- Encourage the involvement of volunteers in ongoing decision-making and include them in internal communications

And it focuses on appreciating volunteers and overcoming barriers to volunteering, covering the 6 aims:

Value volunteers 'for being volunteers' – 10 commitments

Acknowledge	Include
Promote	Back up
Fund	Inform
Involve	Protect
Support	Thank!

The Volunteering Code of Practice arising from this Volunteering Strategy will then seek to ensure:

- The support and implementation of best practice in the management and recruitment of volunteers.
- That volunteering activity is properly resourced.
- That the role volunteers play in the provision of services to the community is valued.
- Partnerships work to overcome barriers to volunteering.

An action plan will take the strategy forward.

Volunteering Strategy For Worcestershire

Why a Worcestershire Volunteering Strategy?

Overall aim of the Strategy

This strategy aims to enable leaders within the volunteering sector to work together throughout Worcestershire to unite as partners and to support effective volunteering, which is accessible to all

What are we going to do?

More specifically this divides up into 6 objectives:

- 1. To promote the importance, recognition and value** of volunteering throughout Worcestershire
- 2. To develop, promote and continuously improve standards of good practice** in working within voluntary organisations and in supporting all aspects of volunteering
- 3. To promote equal opportunity** to volunteering
- 4. To improve the accessibility and opportunities** of volunteering
- 5. To clarify the roles and responsibilities** of volunteer-placing organisations and those of individual volunteers
- 6. To unite as partners within the volunteering sector** and to seek to **work in partnership with other sectors** to achieve the overall aim

Overall outcome of the strategy

Removing barriers to volunteering in Worcestershire that will result in increased volunteering activity that is adequately valued, resourced, recruited and managed.

Time Scale

- Phase 1** Initial launch of the Volunteering Strategy of the Worcestershire Infrastructure Consortium Volunteering Sub Group and the members of the Volunteering Forum (made up of leaders in the volunteering sector) – 7th June 2006
- Phase 2** Involvement of other volunteering sector partners and other sector partners to develop the Strategy - by March 2007

Background information

1. What is volunteering?

Definition of volunteering used for the purpose of this strategy¹:

'Volunteering is the commitment of time and energy for the benefit of society and the community, the environment, or individuals outside one's immediate family and friends. It is undertaken freely and by choice, without concern for financial gain.'

Principles of Volunteering²

Choice Whether to volunteer should be a choice freely made by each individual. Freedom to volunteer implies freedom not to become involved.

Diversity Volunteering should be open to all no matter what their background, race, colour, nationality, religion, ethnic or national origins, age, gender, marital status, sexual orientation or disability.

Reciprocity or mutual benefit Volunteering is about identifying the benefits for the volunteer and the organisation. Benefits should include not only a sense of achievement, sociability and fun, but also experience, skills and training.

Recognition An organisation should explicitly recognise the value of what volunteers can and do offer not just to their organisation, but to the community, the social economy and wider social objectives.

Scope of volunteering³

Though not an exhaustive list, volunteering can include:

- Helping provide a service as a volunteer within a voluntary or community organisation, or the public sector
- Community activism, campaigning and action to change society or identify and tackle unmet needs
- Befriending and mentoring
- Organising sports and physical recreation
- Taking part in running a voluntary or community organisation as a trustee or member of a board or committee
- Serving as a non-executive member of a public body or participating in civic governance, for instance serving as a school governor or a community representative
- Leading voluntary initiative, usually as part of a voluntary organisation or community group, to improve the quality of life for people in a neighbourhood or community of interest
- Group activity, within a neighbourhood or community of interest, providing a community service, or campaigning for a public cause
- Helping develop public policy through involvement in consultation processes and campaigning
- Volunteering overseas
- Helping raise funds for an organisation

²Worcestershire / National Compact

³National Volunteering Compact

Why do people volunteer?

- Altruism (giving something back, helping others, feeling valued)
- Personal and social reasons
- Developing skills and employability
- Changing the world
- Having a voice
- Integrating into the community

What support do volunteers need?

- Flexibility
- Creativity
- Informality
- Involvement

2. What challenges face volunteering in Worcestershire?

Legal environment of volunteering

- Trustee responsibilities
- Fear amongst unemployed people that their benefits might be under threat if they volunteer
- Concern regarding risk and possible legal action within voluntary activity

Recognition that the demands of volunteers are changing

- the time they have available
- the nature of the volunteering they want to undertake
- their expectations of the organisations they volunteer for
- the expectations of the manner in which their involvement is managed

The impact of government interest

- important to recognise that there is more to volunteering than increasing the numbers of volunteers
- work needs to be done to improve the quality of the volunteering experience
- be aware that some people perceive volunteering as a government controlled activity, which can act as a deterrent to people volunteering

Inclusion in the Worcestershire Local Area Agreement

A Local Area Agreement (LAA) is a three year agreement between central government and a local area. In Worcestershire central government is represented by the Government Office in the West Midlands and Worcestershire by the County Council, the Worcestershire Partnership and other key partners. The Voluntary Sector has been involved in the preparation of the LAA via the Worcestershire Infrastructure Consortium (WIC).

The Volunteering Sub-Group of the WIC has - in consultation with the Worcestershire Volunteering Forum - devised a performance measure towards the following LAA outcome⁴: *To ensure a well-supported, active voluntary and community sector which encourages volunteering and community involvement.*

⁴LAA: F4 page 42 - 17th March 2006

Performance Measure: Number of People engaged in (defined) volunteering activity
– linked to Volunteering Strategy

Baseline	2006/2007	2007/2008	2008/2009
8810 volunteers (based on a survey of 139 VCS groups and organisations)	10855 volunteers (based on a survey of 167 VCS groups and organisations)	15000 volunteers (based on a survey of 300 VCS groups and organisations)	15000 volunteers (based on a survey of 300 VCS groups and organisations)

Worcestershire Compact

Volunteering will be one of the four Codes of Practice within the Worcestershire Compact, alongside Consultation, Funding and Community Groups. The Compact will refer to the Volunteering Strategy and its development as the way to implement and develop the Volunteering Code of Practice. (See 'How are we going to achieve it?')

3. What is volunteering infrastructure?

Infrastructure organisations can be defined as⁵:

"The physical facilities, structures, systems, relationships, people, knowledge and skills that help frontline organisations and community groups to achieve their aims."

Voluntary and community sector infrastructure is, by its very nature, organisationally focused. However, **volunteering infrastructure** is unusual, especially at a local level, in that the primary audience is the individual (whether they be an existing or a potential volunteer), and organisational development is supported to improve the quality and quantity of volunteering.⁶

Worcestershire Volunteering Infrastructure – Volunteer Centres and other volunteer development agencies from the local volunteering infrastructure in Worcestershire. These are based in the following areas: Malvern, Wyre Forest, Worcester City, and Wychavon (in Evesham and Pershore). Redditch and Bromsgrove currently have no local volunteering infrastructure, but a signposting service is available.

All of these Volunteer Centres deliver volunteer development functions. Differing operating methods exist in each area, but all operate according to the same quality system governed by their national umbrella organisation, Volunteering England.

The nationally recognised core functions of volunteering infrastructure are:

- Brokerage

Matching up people interested in volunteering with opportunities and/or volunteer- involving organisations

⁵Worcestershire Infrastructure Consortium - 10 year strategy 2006 - 2016

⁶Building on Success

- Marketing volunteering
Promoting volunteering and community involvement as well as specific volunteering opportunities
- Good practice development
A commitment to promoting good practice in working with volunteers to all volunteer-involving organisations, and actively supporting and maintaining this
- Developing volunteering opportunities
Developing innovative volunteering opportunities for potential volunteers, ensuring that opportunities are available for all
- Policy response and campaigning
Influencing policy development which takes account of the ways this may affect volunteers and volunteering activities.
- Strategic development of volunteering
Taking strategic responsibility for the support and development of local volunteer-involving organisations and networks, good practice development, and support for the development of local policy that facilitates volunteering

How are we going to achieve it?

1. Through Local Agreement

Worcestershire Compact approach⁷

The Worcestershire Compact sets out the previously mentioned 'Principles of Volunteering' and the partners who have signed up to the Compact recognise that these principles are fundamental to volunteering.

The Volunteering Code of Practice arising from this Volunteering Strategy will then seek to ensure:

- The support and implementation of best practice in the management and recruitment of volunteers.
- That volunteering activity is properly resourced.
- That the role volunteers play in the provision of services to the community is valued.
- Partnerships work to overcome barriers to volunteering.

All partners in the Compact agree to abide by the requirements of the Volunteering Code of Practice.

2. Through the Worcestershire Infrastructure Consortium

Voluntary Sector infrastructure organisations in Worcestershire are both generic (offering general support and advice to all comers) and specialist (offering services to specific groups, such as those organisations focused on older people, younger people or black and ethnic minorities, or are focused on specific activities, such as the environment). They may operate county-wide or within a single district.⁸

⁷Worcestershire Copmpact

⁸Worcestershire Infrastructure Consortium - 10 year strategy 2006 - 2016

Fourteen of these infrastructure organisations have formed the Worcestershire Infrastructure Consortium. This Consortium currently has six areas of activity and focus including Volunteering:

Increasing Volunteering in Worcestershire –

initially by developing a county-wide volunteering strategy, forming and facilitating a Volunteering Forum, and improving the quality and quantity of volunteering infrastructure functions

The Consortium is in the process of developing a Ten Year Strategy which will have strong links with the Volunteering Strategy and the role and responsibility of the Volunteer Centres within it.

3. Through adopting a joint Quality Approach

Volunteer Centres will support and work in partnership with volunteer-involving organisations to enable them to:

- Have access to basic policies and guidelines which are adaptable for large and small groups, including:
 - Volunteer policy and handbook
 - Rights and responsibilities of volunteers leaflet
 - Volunteer satisfaction questionnaire
 - Volunteer role descriptions
 - Examples of procedures and guidelines
 - Volunteer induction guidelines
 - Confidentiality statement
- Be informed on various quality practice models and frameworks and have access to implementation support
- Undertake the joint promotion and marketing of volunteering
- Improve the promotion and accessibility of Volunteer Centres and Volunteer Points
- Enable them to have opportunities to share good and successful practice and experience via:
 - facilitating the Volunteering Forum twice a year
 - maintain an email group for communication
 - have a clear presence on the Worcestershire Infrastructure Consortium website highlighting examples of good and successful practice
- Ensure the Volunteering Strategy is strongly linked and reflected in the Ten Year Strategy of the Worcestershire Infrastructure Consortium

What we want to achieve

Agreed summary of undertakings⁹ and commitments¹⁰

Volunteer involving organisations in Worcestershire from within the Voluntary and Community Sector undertake to:

- Promote volunteering opportunities widely, regularly review how volunteers are recruited to ensure there is equal opportunity to volunteering and to positively encourage volunteers from currently underrepresented sectors of society
- Include reasonable costs for reducing barriers to volunteering in relevant funding bids
- Identify a named person within their organisation to be responsible for volunteer involvement, and for monitoring and reporting on it and identify a trustee board member to act as a champion for volunteering
- Ensure that there is both the time and resources to support and train volunteers Encourage the involvement of volunteers in ongoing decision-making and include them in internal communications

Volunteer involving organisations in Worcestershire from within the Voluntary and Community Sector commit to:

Value volunteers 'for being volunteers' – 10 commitments

1. Acknowledge
2. Include
3. Promote
4. Back up
5. Fund
6. Inform
7. Involve
8. Protect
9. Support
10. Thank!

⁹ National Volunteering Compact Code of Good Practice

¹⁰ Drawn from the 'Condensed Notes from the second Worcestershire Volunteering Forum' 26/4/06 and the National Volunteering Compact Code of Good Practice

Monitoring and evaluation

This document is a combination of two separate pieces of work; a 'strategic part' with clear tasks for the different partners involved and a 'good practice part' with guidelines and tips on how to value volunteers. Both elements require an adapted approach.

The strategic part

The attached action plan (appendix 2) will be developed into a work plan with performance measures, time scales and risk assessments against every objective. It will indicate what partner will carry responsibility for what tasks. Monitoring will be done against that work plan and will support the evaluation of the strategy in one years' time.

The good practice part

A good practice questionnaire will be carried out amongst the Volunteering Forum, attendees of the launch event of the Worcestershire Compact and via voluntary and community sector networks facilitated by the infrastructure organisations. The data coming from that exercise will form the baseline of good practice carried out in Worcestershire. In two years time this will be repeated to see where improvements and developments have taken place.

The Volunteering Forum meets twice a year, and once every year we will build in a way of assessing progress of the strategy and updating the document if necessary.

Contact ideas and reference - Volunteering Infrastructure

Bromsgrove & Redditch Network (BARN) – Ann Sowton

A: Room 9, Ecumenical Centre
6 Evesham Walk
Redditch B97 4EX
T: 01527 60282
E: barn36@hotmail.com
W: launched by end of June 06 – see Consortium website for address

Community Action Malvern & District - Diane Bellamy

A: 28-30 Belle Vue Terrace
Malvern WR14 4PZ
T: 01684 580638
E: comact@malvernca.solis.co.uk
W: www.communityaction.org.uk (launched by end of June 06)

Community Action Wyre Forest – Sascha McDonald

A: Burgage Lodge
184 Franche Road
Kidderminster DY11 5AD
T: 01562 67008
E: cawf@onetel.com
W: www.communityactionwf.org.uk (launched by end of June 06)

Evesham Volunteer Centre – Helen Gray

A: Oat Street
Evesham WR11 4PJ
T: 01386 40165
E: helenl.gray@btopenworld.com
W: www.eveshamvolunteers.org.uk (launched by end of June 06)

Pershore & District Voluntary Help Centre – Kate Walton

A: 16 Priest Lane
Pershore WR10 1EB
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E: admin@pershirevolunteers.org
W: www.pershirevolunteers.org (launched by end of June 06)

Worcester Volunteer Centre – Sally Ellison

A: 33 The Tything
Worcester WR1 1JL
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E: sally.wcvb@btconnect.com
W: www.worcestervolunteercentre.org.uk

Worcestershire Infrastructure Consortium (WIC)

Chair: Elspeth Rolls – Community First

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Malvern WR 14 2AN

T: 01684 573334

E: elspethr@comfirst.org.uk

W: www.winc.org.uk (launched by end of June 06)

WIC – Volunteering Sub-group and Worcestershire Volunteering Forum

Chair: Sascha McDonald - Community Action Wyre Forest

A: Burgage Lodge
184 Franche Road
Kidderminster DY11 5AD

T: 01562 67008

E: cawf@onetel.com

W: www.winc.org.uk (launched by end of June 06)

Compact

National www.thecompact.org.uk or www.activecommunities.homeoffice.gov.uk

Worcestershire www.worcestershirepartnership.org.uk

Volunteering

www.volunteering.org.uk for anyone who works with or manages volunteers as well as those who want to volunteer

www.do-it.org.uk if you are looking for a volunteering opportunity in your local area

www.energizeinc.com specifically aimed at volunteers' leaders

www.russelcommission.org the national framework for youth action and engagement

www.voluntarysectorskills.org.uk skills development in the voluntary and community sector – for paid staff, volunteers and trustees

References

Building on Success – Strategy for Volunteering Infrastructure in England 2004-2014, *Volunteering England, 2004*

Growing a strong and dynamic voluntary and community sector, ten year strategy 2006-2016, *Worcestershire Infrastructure Consortium, 2006*

Voluntary Strategy – Angus Council, Scotland

Volunteering Code of Good Practice, *Compact Working Group and Active Community Unit*

Worcestershire Compact, *Worcestershire Partnership, 2006*

Appendix 1 - Volunteering code of practice

Underlying principles of good practice

Code of practice 1

Guidelines for management and recruitment of volunteers

When seeking to involve volunteers the following guidelines will be considered:

- Offer a start date without unnecessary delay
- Give a period of induction
- Treat personal information confidentially
- Develop a Volunteer Policies and Induction Pack
- Give guidance on health and safety issues, adequate protection from risk and insurance arrangements
- Have an awareness of roles and work situations deemed inappropriate for volunteers
- Recognise time needs to be set aside for updating skills and/or training sessions
- Set time aside of staff to manage the volunteering role and offer individual support
- Consult with volunteers on organisational changes and the impact on their contribution
- Provide references when volunteers want to move on to another organisation

Code of practice 2

Guidelines for ensuring properly resourced volunteering activity

- When applying for funds, wherever possible, build in resources for recruitment, management, volunteer expenses and other costs to reduce barriers to volunteering and to value volunteers
- Offer adequate reimbursement of expenses
- Create a culture of claiming expenses to include those who do need to claim and encourage those who don't want to claim to donate back
- Recognise that volunteering is freely given but not cost free. Resources, development and promotion for volunteers may incur costs

Code of practice 3

Guidelines and tips for valuing the role of volunteers

1. Acknowledge

- Diversity in people; specific needs need specific approaches, be flexible, listen
- Their career paths; provide references, offer training, enforce short term placements, create short term opportunities, offer support to move on
- Experiences, to avoid unnecessary training, support and procedures
- Long term volunteers; by using them in training others, (peer-to-peer) support and induction
- Paid staff might feel threatened in their job by volunteers and need reassuring
- Distinctiveness of volunteering; voluntary activity should never be a substitute for paid work
- That volunteering can help tackle social exclusion through individual improving their skills and employability, making a contribution to society. It can also bring people together from different backgrounds

2. Include

- Work to put in place equalities schemes or other means to effectively remove unfair discrimination
- Review opportunities and adapt to individuals
- Be prepared to do things differently
- Ensure there is enough to do

3. Promote

- Use a variety of marketing tools,
- Target different groups in different ways
- Use Volunteer Centres
- Approach others to learn from their approach in volunteer recruitment
- Make the opportunity attractive and different from work
- Champion volunteers and volunteering
- Make visible the value of volunteers' contributions, for example in publications
- Demonstrate that the contribution of volunteers is recognised as having more than economic value

4. Back up

Develop formal volunteer procedures

- Volunteer Handbook / Charter
- Role description
- Expectation questionnaire
- Volunteering Policy
- Volunteer Agreement
- Interview, induction, support structures, review progress, exit interview / questionnaire
- Negative CRB Procedures

Research good practice in doing so

Work towards recognized Quality Standards

Keep good data on volunteering

5. Fund

- Provide realistic (travel) expenses
- Create a culture of claiming expenses to include those who do need to claim and encourage those who don't want to claim to donate back
- Attract funding to fund volunteer expenses and support

6. Inform

- Communicate with personal approach
- Adapt information provision to needs
- Provide newsletters, briefings, memos

7. Involve

- At committee level
- In decision making
- In team activities
- Consult and ask for feedback
- Value their opinion

8. Protect

- Hand out a 'rights and responsibilities' leaflet
- Set clear boundaries
- Don't replace a paid post / tasks by a volunteer
- Be aware of your legal responsibilities
- Carry out CRB checks to protect volunteer and client
- Carry out risk assessment on placement, and if appropriate client

9. Support

- Via support meetings, social events, support calls
- Provide mentoring /supervision
- Identify training needs and offer training
- Provide transport if needed

10. Thank

- Tell volunteers how their volunteering has benefited the organisation or group / individual they are volunteering for
- Formal via recognition scheme, certificates
- Informal via (birthday) cards, saying thank you and being a good host
- Celebrate volunteering via supporting national events

Code of practice 4

Guidelines to overcome barriers to volunteering

'Be flexible, supportive, understanding, considerate and willing to adapt'

Individual organisations

- Carry out a risk assessment of volunteer placement and when appropriate of client circumstances for a good match
- Be proactive in promotion of volunteering – go out and talk to people – listen to what their barriers are and solutions to them
- Offer a sympathetic recruitment process; talk and listen to identify strengths and difficulties without assumptions
- Ensure that adequate and individual support is available, train and raise awareness amongst staff of different needs of volunteers and have a fall back position ready if a volunteer experiences a difficult period in their personal life
- Be prepared to do things different to how you have always done it; i.e. investigate alternative ways of volunteering – adapted roles, home volunteering, out-of-hours volunteering
- Be prepared and informed to signpost a volunteer to an alternative opportunity outside the organisation if this is more beneficial to the volunteer
- Be prepared to offer high support levels and recognise unexpected side benefits from working with a diverse range of people
- Be flexible regarding time available (when possible), transport and building access
- Acknowledge the limitations of the organisation in the amount of volunteers it can properly manage

In partnership

- Communicate, put 'addressing diversity' on the agenda and learn from each other
- Refer only those people to a volunteering opportunity or VC who are 'suitable and ready' for volunteering, or check if a 'supported volunteer scheme' or specialist staff member is in place
- Challenge volunteer-involving organisations to offer opportunities that match volunteers' motivation and abilities and that are diverse and inclusive

Volunteer Centres

- Create a model of assessment for all organisations to use
- Ensure good and increased knowledge of organisations which have volunteer placements and share this knowledge when possible
- Work to link different / complimentary organisations to network, share and learn
- Aim to establish a good coverage of outreach work
- Address diversity through promotion, awareness raising, facilitation of discussion, and campaigning

Appendix 2 - Action Plan

Overall Aim:

To enable leaders within the volunteering sector to work together throughout Worcestershire to unite as partners and to support effective volunteering, which is accessible to all

Objectives	Activities	Time Scale
<p>1. To promote the importance, recognition and value of volunteering throughout Worcestershire</p>	<p><i>Individual organisations:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - work towards implementation of the agreed undertakings and commitments - (if available) provide yearly figure of total volunteers working for the organisation for the LAA count <p><i>Volunteering Sub-group and Forum¹²:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - provide support and data to the LAA <p><i>Volunteering Sub-group (Volunteer Centres)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - facilitate the Worcestershire Volunteer promotion campaign (see below) - link the strategy with the Ten Year Strategy of the Worcestershire Infrastructure Consortium - ensure a clear presence on the Consortium Website with reference to good and successful practice examples and policies <p><i>All in partnership:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Worcestershire wide campaign to promote the 'Worcestershire Volunteer' 	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Jan/Feb 07</p> <p>By March 07</p> <p>Start June 06, Finish Nov 06</p> <p>June 06 and ongoing</p> <p>From June 06</p> <p>Competition</p> <p>Ongoing</p>
<p>2. To develop, promote and continuously improve standards of good practice in working within voluntary organisations and in supporting all aspects of volunteering</p>	<p><i>Individual organisations:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - work in line with the 'Volunteering Code of Practice' - consider using a Quality Standard Model and/or action plan for continuous improvement - access the basic example policies provided by the Volunteering Sub-group when relevant 	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Website available from June 06</p> <p>From June 06 – March 07</p> <p>June 06</p>

¹²Volunteering Subgroup is a subgroup of the Worcestershire Infrastructure Consortium made up of Volunteer Centres and partners that has as one of its responsibilities the facilitation of the Worcestershire Volunteering Forum.

	<p><i>Volunteering Sub-group:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - develop basic policies and guideline examples and make them accessible via a website, email and in paper format - promote the use of Quality Standards and offer or refer to support available <p><i>Volunteering Forum:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - continue to put good practice on the agenda and aim to learn from each other 	<p>From June 06 – March 07 June 06 Forum meetings</p> <p>Nov 06 and April 07</p>
<p>3. To promote equal opportunity to volunteering and</p>	<p><i>Individual organisations:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Be prepared to do things differently - Use a variety of ways of promoting volunteering opportunities in line with the Volunteering code of practice (Don't) refer when not appropriate <p><i>Volunteering Sub-group – volunteer centres:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - develop and implement joint improved promotion and accessibility of Volunteer Centres and Volunteer Points - create a model of assessment - maintain or increase (knowledge of) volunteer placing organisations - link different / complimentary organisations 	<p>Ongoing From June 06</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>By March 07</p> <p>By March 07</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Forum meetings, local meetings By March 07</p>
<p>4. To improve the accessibility and opportunities of volunteering</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - test and when relevant establish a plan to cover VC coverage and outreach throughout Worcestershire - work with volunteer placing organisations to adjust opportunities considering being inclusive and accessible <p><i>All in partnership:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - continue to put 'addressing diversity' on the agenda and aim to learn from each other - improve knowledge of each other's organisations 	<p>Ongoing on individual basis</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Forum meetings and other network meetings</p>

<p>5. To clarify the roles and responsibilities of volunteer placing organisations and those of individual volunteers</p>	<p><i>Individual organisations:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - follow training, raise awareness among staff and volunteers when relevant <p><i>Volunteering Sub-group:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - produce and make available 'Rights and Responsibilities of Volunteers' leaflet 	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>During 06</p>
<p>6. To unite as partners within the volunteering sector and to seek to work in partnership with other sectors to achieve the overall aim</p>	<p><i>Individual organisations:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - endorse the Worcestershire Compact within the organisation and seek mediation if needed <p><i>Volunteering Sub-group:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - facilitate the Volunteering Forum twice a year - maintain and email group for communication - take the lead in finalising the Volunteering code of practice as part of the Worcestershire Compact - take the lead in implementation, roll out, update and monitoring of the strategy <p><i>All in partnership and Forum:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - continue to be involved in email group and forum (whenever possible) to provide a strong voice - roll out of the strategy to the statutory and private sector 	<p>From launch 7th June 06</p> <p>Nov 06 / April 07</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Dec 06</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Start June 06, finish Dec 06</p>
<p>Monitoring and evaluation</p>	<p><i>Good Practice Questionnaire</i> (Attendees launch, Forum members, infrastructure networks)</p> <p><i>Assessment of progress</i> (Forum meeting)</p>	<p>7th June 06, July 06 / 08</p> <p>1st Forum meeting in 2007/2008</p>
<p>Overall Outcome of the strategy: Removing barriers to volunteering in Worcestershire, that will result in increased volunteering activity that is adequately valued, resourced, recruited and managed.</p>		

