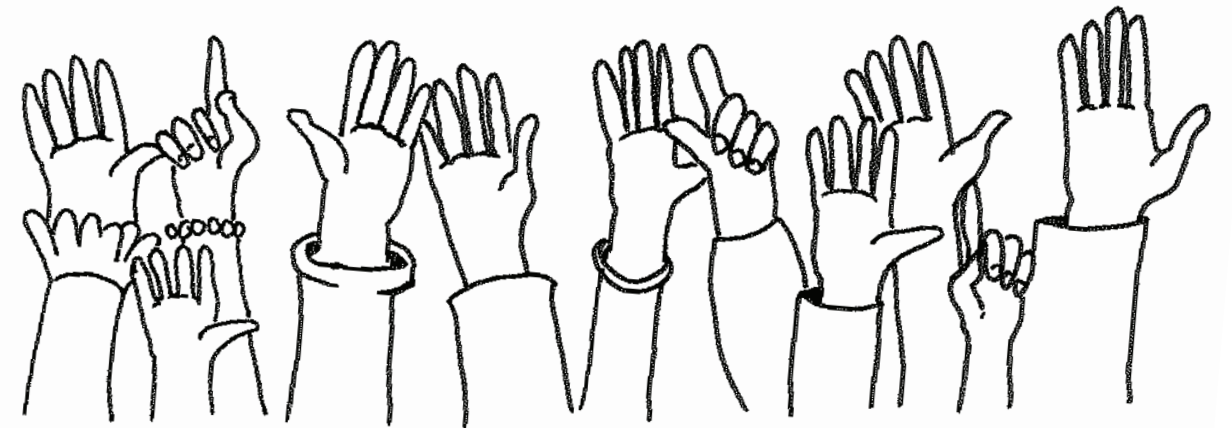
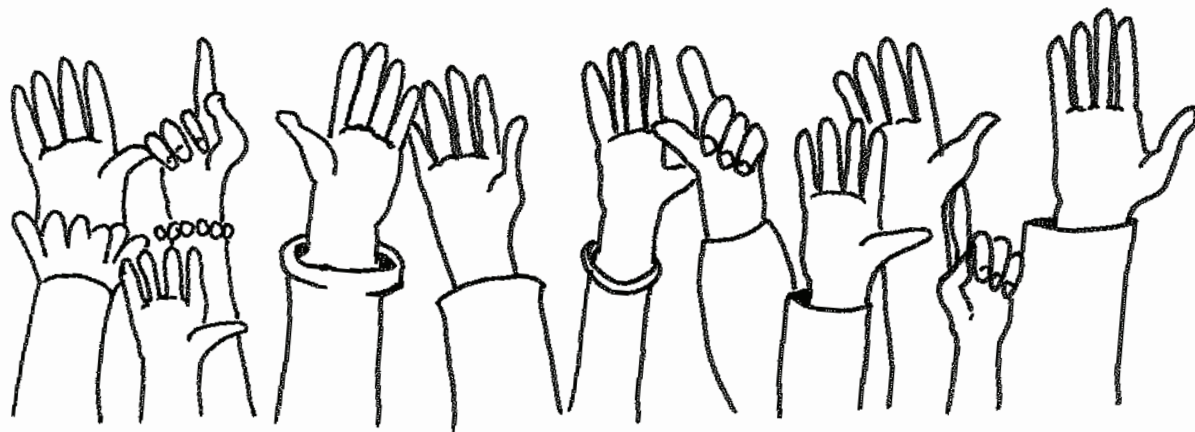


Volunteering for Parishes



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Diocesan House
Quarry Street
Guildford
GU1 3XG

Tel: 01483 790324 Fax: 01483 790333
e-mail: DSR.administrator@cofeguildford.org.uk



Diocese of Guildford



Department for Social Responsibility

**Diocese of Guildford
Department for Social Responsibility**

TRAINING

Surrey Community Action (details on previous page) run short training courses on all aspects of volunteer management and project organisation for the voluntary sector.

Surrey TEC, Technology House, 48 -54 Goldsworth Road,
Woking, Surrey GU21 1LE Tel: 01483 728190.

Hampshire TEC, 25 Thacheray Mall, Fareham,
Hants PO16 0PQ
Tel: 01329 230099.

The National Youth Agency, 17 - 23 Albion Street,
Leicester, LE1 6GD
Tel: 0116 242 7350

FURTHER READING

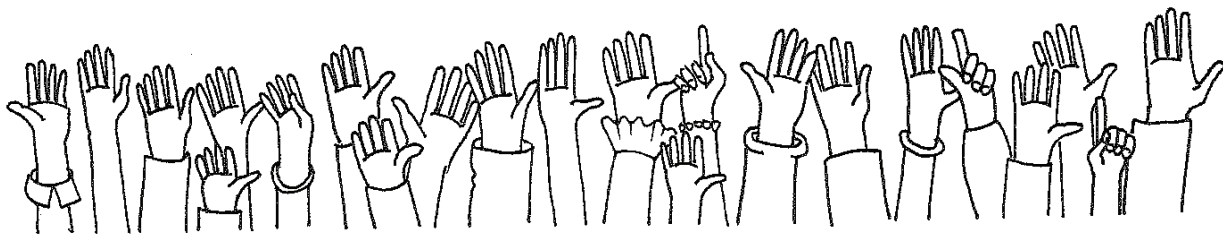
The voluntary sector has its own publications which are a useful source for training courses and events, for example:

Third Sector, Arts Publishing International Ltd; 4 Assam Street,
London E1 7QS
www.thirdsector.co.uk

Voluntary Voice, London Voluntary Sector Resource Centre;
356 Holloway Road, London N7 6PA
www.volresource.org.uk

NCVO News, NCVO; Regents Wharf, 8 All Saints Street, London N1 9RL
www.ncvo-vol.org.uk

Charity, 48 George Street, London W1H 5RF
Third Force (SCVO) News, 18/19 Claremont Street,
Edinburgh EH7 4QD
www.scvo.org.uk



RESOURCES

National Council for Voluntary Organisations:

NCVO has several specialist teams who provide information, advice and support to others working in or with the voluntary sector. These teams produce publications, briefing papers and guidance notes; run conferences and seminars, and offer a range of practitioner forums.

www.ncvo-vol.org.uk

Email: helpdesk@askncvo.org.uk

Freephone: 08002 798798.

Volunteering England:

Various pdf leaflets and information regarding many aspects of working as, or with volunteers. Information can be downloaded free from www.volunteering.org.uk along with many other hints and tips, books, and ideas.

Freephone/textphone: 08000 283304.

E-mail: information@volunteeringengland.org.

Regent's Wharf, 8 All Saints Street, London N1 9RL.

VolResource:

provides information for voluntary and community organisations

www.volresource.org.uk

Email: webinfo@volresource.org.uk

25 Willow Grove, Malvern, Worcs, WR14 2SE.

Community Action Hampshire

www.action.hants.org.uk

Tel: 01962 854971

Beaconsfield House, Andover Road, Winchester SO22 6AT.

Community First East Hampshire

is a resource for voluntary and community groups in East Hampshire.

www.communityfirst-easthampshire.org.uk

E-mail: admin@communityfirst-easthampshire.org.uk.

Tel: 01730 710017.

The Tilmore Centre, Tilmore Road, Petersfield, Hampshire GU32 2HG.

Surrey Community Action

aims to resource voluntary and community groups of all sizes across the county, by offering advice, information, training and advocacy.

www.surreyca.org.uk

Tel: 01483 459292 Fax: 01483 440508

Astolat, Coniers Way, Burpham, Guildford GU4 7HL.

Your local CVS/CVA. If you don't have their details, go to

www.NAVCA.org.uk.

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PREFACE

The Church is full of volunteers. It is a natural response of our Christian faith to want to use our time, talents and skills in the service of our local church and our local community. Within our parishes there is a wide variety of tasks to be undertaken and, as we engage with our local communities, we become aware of a wide range of needs to be met.

Sometimes a distinction is made between “volunteering” and “stewardship”. “Volunteering” is understood as unpaid work undertaken for organisations, trusts or charities which may or may not include church or faith organisations. Christian stewardship adds the dimension that our volunteering contains a thoughtful decision to commit our time and God-given talents to Christian service. Often this will be in our local Christian community but it may be in some other place where we sense God’s call: in the home, the workplace or in the local community.

For the purposes of this handbook, the term “volunteering” covers any work or role which is undertaken without payment by, with or for a local church or parish, and which falls within the auspices or responsibility of a church or parish. The handbook seeks to help you to think about all the aspects of the work for which you may have some responsibility, especially if you are setting up a new project.

Please don’t be daunted by the sheer amount of information contained in this resource – you may not need all of it! Some people may have concerns about the “professionalisation” of what should be a spontaneous response to a request or need, and be reluctant to consider policies and procedures, checks and references. We would advocate a common-sense approach, in proportion to the task you wish to undertake.

Whatever the project with which we are engaged, we want to perform the work to the highest possible standard, if it is to the glory of God and in the service of our local communities.

- The National Council for Voluntary Organisations (NCVO) also publishes material about governance and carries a database of useful short resources related to trusteeship and governance on its website www.ncvo-vol.org.uk or telephone 0800 279 8798.
- Finally, wherever you live, there is likely to be a local council for voluntary service or CVS, and sometimes a county one. In Surrey the county one is Surrey Community Action, www.surreyca.org.uk, telephone 01483 566072, and in Hampshire it is www.action.hants.org.uk or telephone 01962 854 971. These organisations frequently offer training, support and advice for trustees and committee members. To find your local CVS, you can search on www.navca.org.uk

There are different ways of finding out about organisations in need of trustees.

- There are websites that advertise vacancies; try www.do-it.org.uk or the Governance magazine website, www.charitygovernance.co.uk or the online database of charities, www.guidestar.org.uk
- You can also find out about vacancies from your local volunteer bureau. Contact details should be in the telephone directory or ask your local CVS or Surrey Community Action.
- Vacancies are advertised in *The Guardian* in the Wednesday supplement.
- You could ask charities you know or support whether they have any vacancies and what kinds of skills or experience they are looking for.

If you are exploring whether to become a trustee or committee member, or you have been asked to take on this role and are considering what it involves, there are a few key points to consider:

- Be clear about what you can offer, in terms of time and help with any specific tasks. Trusteeship is often less time-consuming than other voluntary roles but it is more crucial that you can attend regularly.
- Check out the expectations of trustees in the organisation; what else is expected as well as attendance at meetings?
- Familiarise yourself with good practice so that you can ask for it; for example, there should be an induction process for new trustees; expenses should be paid; there should be policies on issues such as conflicts of interest; there should be clarity about terms of office etc. To find out about good practice, go to some of the websites noted above.
- If you are unsure about what is involved, ask if you can observe a meeting of the trustees, and/or talk to someone who has significant experience of being a trustee.

Finally, there is one essential requirement for trusteeship to work, both for the trustee and for the organisation; make sure the cause – the work of the organisation – is something you believe in and one to which can made a personal commitment. This will make the role worthwhile for both of you.

VOLUNTEERING IN GOVERNANCE ROLES

One way that volunteers can make a difference to a particular voluntary group or project is by getting involved in governance. This could mean becoming a trustee or board member for organisations that are registered charities, or being a member of a committee for smaller voluntary groups that do not need to register as a charity. One of the most common governance roles is that of school governor, but the range of organisations in need of trustees is very broad, ranging from small local projects to well established national charities.

Being a trustee or committee member is a valuable form of service to a local community and indeed to society as a whole. Trustees' job is to ensure that the charity achieves its objectives and is well run. They are also ultimately responsible in law for the charity. The same is true for committee members even though their role is not a legal one. It can be a challenging task if the organisation is facing difficulties but it is also rewarding and worthwhile.

It is known from research that many charities have difficulty in recruiting trustees, so it is always worth considering whether this is a role you could take on. There are some areas of skills and experience which are particularly valuable in trustee roles; these include financial or fundraising experience or skills; marketing or management experience or skills; and human resources skills. But organisations also need on their boards people with knowledge of the communities or groups they help and people who believe in their vision and will champion their work.

There is a great deal of information available about being a trustee, and many readily available sources of information.

- The best guide to being a trustee is the Charity Commission's publication *The Essential Trustee*, Code CC3. This is available from the Charity Commission by post or can be downloaded from their website www.charitycommission.gov.uk or telephone 0845 3000218. The website also contains details of all the other Charity Commission publications which cover a vast range of governance issues.
- The Governance Hub website also contains valuable resources and information, many of which are downloadable. These include the *Code of Governance*, a set of standards outlining good charity governance, and a guide to trustee liability. Go to www.governancehub.org.uk or telephone 0800 652 4886.
- *Charity Trustee Networks* is an organisation set up fairly recently to support trustees and build networks. Based in Guildford, it also has a website which is an online trustee network www.trusteenet.org.uk, or telephone 01483 230280. Resources and information about events and networks can be found there.

THINKING OF VOLUNTEERING?

Volunteer profiles

Here is an opportunity to read about some of the volunteers working in our Diocese.

Val writes about being a volunteer:

"We need one or two more people to join the cleaning team on the fourth Friday in the month- can you help?" I was working 4 days a week when I read this in the weekly pew sheet notice in our church.

I had been going to the services for some time, but partly because of a busy job that meant evening meetings, and a family to run, I had not felt able to get more involved in all the church did. However, I was aware that I was missing out by not being part of things and I was not a full member of our church's 'family'. However the children were older, so I had a little more time and I thought that I could at least wield a duster - and it was only once a month for one hour.

That was the start. I joined a small team of people whom I had never met before, and found that there can be fun with a tin of polish, although it is not so good on a cold February morning!

One thing has led to another, so now I am making coffee after services, and have been part of the team making things for the Christmas Fair, and one or two other things.

Through my involvement with these very practical jobs I have not only met some really lovely and interesting people, but now feel that I am part of our church by helping with the way it runs and supporting my faith.

I have also been involved with the Citizens Advice Bureau both as a volunteer adviser and now as a Trustee, and this is another way of helping people who may have no other source of help with their particular problem. Being involved with the CAB is a mental challenge and can be quite demanding at times, both through the amount of skills, knowledge, and understanding needed at times, and the time commitment, but it is another way of feeling that in some small way you can help to make a difference.

When I retired, through my contacts with both the CAB and my local church, I became interested in the work of the Department for Social Responsibility in Diocesan House, and now I am a volunteer there. I may be stapling and collating leaflets, helping at a seminar or be part of a number of other projects.

For six years now I have been a volunteer with the Samaritans. This can be a challenging role, but I like to think that by being there for people at their most difficult moments I can lend a listening ear and provide some comfort and support.

Through these varied activities I hope that I am supporting my faith in a practical way by giving of my time and whatever talents I might possibly possess.

A volunteer with the Surrey Appropriate Adults Volunteer Scheme (SAAVS) writes:

My Background

I have been very fortunate to have had the support and love from my family in everything I have done and achieved. That is not to say that life has been without its challenges. For example, my father died when I was 13 years of age. My mother worked tirelessly to ensure that my two sisters and I were given the love and support so needed throughout our adolescent and early adult life. This was not easy for our mother, either financially or emotionally, but she stuck at it and we have all prospered as a result.

Until I retired nearly four years ago, I spent the majority of my working life in the Information Technology industry, ending up in a senior management position for a global multi-technology company. My wife and I are blessed with four grown up children and three wonderful grandsons. We have a close and loving family relationship that allows us to share in the good and bad times that life brings us.

So, why am I bothered about volunteering and is it worth it?

Although I can look back on my life and be grateful I know that this is not the case for everyone. There are far too many people suffering, even in Surrey, from the lack of love, support or advice they so dearly need – that's why I bothered to volunteer.

First, I became a volunteer business advisor and mentor three years ago for an Enterprise Agency. I provide advice and support one day per week in Guildford to people (often long term unemployed or disadvantaged) wanting to start their own business.

Then early in 2006 I saw an article in my local church magazine about the Surrey Appropriate Adult Volunteer Scheme (SAAVS) providing support to young or vulnerable people who are being held in police custody. After further investigation and some long conversations with the SAAVS Manager, I decided to join the ranks as an Appropriate Adult. Since then I have attended the Police Custody centre in Woking and latterly Guildford (where I am now the team representative) for one week out of five based on hours to suit.

SAAVS have provided some excellent training which to date has covered a wide range of subjects including the criminal justice act, police procedures, mental health issues and child protection issues.

Professional Indemnity

This is particularly important for organisations or projects which give advice and counselling. Ensure that it covers your volunteers - you must be seen to have taken "reasonable care".

Motor Insurance

If your volunteers are driving vehicles owned by the church or organisation, you need to check restrictions on your policy relating to volunteers. Many state that you cannot use people under 25 or over 75 years of age, or require clean driving licences. Some companies may cover those under 25 although this may require an extra premium. It is your duty to check this and see that they fulfil the requirements of the policy.

If a volunteer uses their own transport to help you (do not forget vans, motorbikes and pedal bikes here!) then you must see a copy of their licence and insurance. If a volunteer drives for you, for example - collecting for a charity shop, taking people to hospital, or delivering posters, then they should not pay an extra premium as it is not for profit - however the insurers may feel differently, so volunteers must check.

There are policies by which you can protect no claims bonuses for volunteers. This is a reasonable expense for you to pay. If you have volunteers who travel in connection with their volunteering with you by motor or pedal bicycles, then they must wear helmets. If a volunteer is involved in a crash then you could still be held liable, so consider taking out a Contingent Liability Policy.

ROSPA has a document called Managing Occupational Road Risk in Voluntary Organisations. Although a pilot study, it does have some useful information. It is downloadable from:

<http://www.rospa.com/morr/information/voluntary.htm> .

Special Events or Activities

Many agencies require other specialist policies for special events or occasions, especially if there may be extra risks involved. Check that your policies cover volunteers at all venues for everything you ever do.

If in doubt

Check with your insurance company.

Most churches in the Diocese are insured with **Ecclesiastical**, who are able to offer advice and assistance with any matters relating to insurance in relation to people, buildings or special events. For specific enquiries, you can contact Ray Soule on 0208 876 7634, the Ecclesiastical representative who covers the Diocese of Guildford.

For further information on all these aspects of Insurance, look at Ecclesiastical's website:

<http://www.ecclesiastical.com/ourproducts/riskservices/index.aspx>

Remember to tell them everything that is out of the ordinary e.g. if your youth group goes on an outward bound trip for the first time when their normal activity is an evening meeting in a hall.

Risk assessments carried out regularly by PCCs should include assessment of possible risk to volunteers, as well as staff, who undertake activities under the auspices of the church. This should include the risk of personal injury from accidents or assault; claims for damages arising from accidents which result in injury or damage to property; loss or damage to a volunteer's personal property, and so on.

Every church can take a few basic steps to help protect itself from liability to its volunteers and to protect itself and its volunteers from liabilities to clients and members of the public. In addition, insurers are more likely to consider that the church has met its "duty of care" if the following is in place:

- a selection procedure which is designed to eliminate unsuitable volunteers and which is rigorously followed, including the taking up of references and the use of probationary periods
- the provision of adequate training, support, and supervision for volunteers
- a clear definition of the tasks that a volunteer is to perform, the limits of these tasks, and the proper introduction of the volunteer to them
- accurate record keeping on volunteers and the matters set out above
- a safe work environment for the volunteer, as far as possible, including checking for hazards in the office, or other working places (this may need to be extended to clients' homes where appropriate)
- the provision of guidelines to volunteers, particularly for the occasions when they handle a client's property or money
- the provision of suitable storage facilities for volunteers' belongings
- regular checking of volunteer drivers' insurance and other relevant documents

Protection for a church and its volunteers can be obtained by taking out an appropriate package of insurance which reflects the tasks of the church and the risks facing it and its volunteers. The different kinds of insurance and the areas they cover are:

Public Liability Insurance

This covers your project against claims arising from accidents to persons or damage to property. If you use other premises even if only for a half day then you must check that they have cover.

Employee Liability Insurance

You must have this if you employ staff and possibly also to cover volunteers (check with your policy.) You may be required to give detailed information on the numbers of volunteers that you involve, their roles and tasks etc.

Personal Accident Insurance

This will cover volunteers for injury arising from activities carried out on your behalf.

But all the training and knowledge in the world cannot replace the fundamental things that an Appropriate Adult should give – these are friendliness, compassion and non-judgmental support. These are not always well received, but I am happy to report that more often than not, they are – that's why it's worth bothering!

For more information about SAAVS contact:

SAAVS, Dean House Farm, Church Lane, Newdigate, Dorking, Surrey RH5 5DL.
Tel: 01306 631143. Website: www.saavs.org.uk.

Tracey writes:

Most of my adult life I have volunteered for things for one reason or another. When I worked at a building society, part of my job was to talk to all the customers about the products and services available for them. I became aware of three regular customers who were profoundly deaf, with whom I could not chat, and felt this was terribly wrong. Curious about how I could resolve this I had a look at the adult education classes to see if there were any sign language ones available. Waverley Borough Council were subsidising their courses that year and it was only £9 to study British Sign Language (BSL) Level 1 for the year. Well there was no excuse not to learn, so I "signed" up. On the course I began to realise the barriers the deaf community come up against and a real sense of injustice grew within me and I was hooked!

I grew up believing in God but not going to church. During my BSL course we were given the opportunity to practice our skills by interpreting at the deaf church and so my experience of deaf ministry began. My story about how I found Christian fellowship is another one but in my journey with Christ I have developed a real passion for helping the deaf and now I interpret our services at St Saviour's and encourage others.

When I got married and had children I got involved with volunteering for the local NCT (National Childbirth Trust). It helped me meet people and I felt useful. Whilst continuing my sign language studies I was encouraged to get involved with Dorothy Miles Cultural Centre and I became a trustee for a time. Despite working and having a family I have always found time to volunteer my services to something. In return I have made some wonderful friends, developed my various skills and had a real sense of purpose and worth. I would say to anyone, there is always something you can do for others, no matter how small, but it can make so much difference. My advice is do not wait to be asked, offer yourself in whatever way you can because in doing so you will grow closer to God.

Reasons for Volunteering

Every person's reasons for getting involved as a volunteer are different. It may help to be aware of your own motivation as it is often the key to finding the right voluntary work for you.

Personal reasons may include:

- Feeling strongly about a charity's cause and wanting to help out
- Filling a gap year between school and college
- Wanting to make new friends
- Wanting to develop your gifting in a particular area
- Recently retired and wishing to serve the local community
- Career development - Learning new skills or trying out a new field of work
- Improving employment prospects by adding the experience to your CV
- Gaining practical experience before applying for a training course



Miss Clutterbuck was delighted to be asked to play the piano for the Toddler Group

The **Environmental Health Department** of your local authority will have information and advice about many of the above issues, in particular food hygiene.

The **National Council for Voluntary Organisations (NCVO)** produces many useful resources regarding health and safety issues including:

- Health and Safety law—Overview
- Directors' responsibilities for health and safety
- Health and Safety practices and systems
- Health and Safety best practice
- Office equipment
- Manual Handling
- Safe use of Computers
- Violence in the workplace
- Safety representatives
- Reporting injuries and accidents
- First Aid
- Health and Safety checklist

www.ncvo-vol.org.uk.

email: helpdesk@askncvo.org.uk

freephone: 08002 798798

Most churches in the Diocese are insured with **Ecclesiastical**, who are able to offer advice and assistance with any matters relating to health and safety in relation to buildings or special events. For specific enquiries, you can contact Ray Soule on 0208 876 7634, the Ecclesiastical representative who covers the Diocese of Guildford.

For further information on all these aspects of Health and Safety, look at Ecclesiastical's website:

<http://www.ecclesiastical.com/ourproducts/riskservices/index.aspx>

Insurance and Protection for volunteers

Churches owe a "duty of care" to their volunteers and clients, or those in receipt of the volunteers' services. Broadly speaking, this is a legal duty to avoid carelessly damaging property or causing injury to anyone. Churches should take reasonable care to prevent injuries or damage to people or property. This is more easily done if a risk assessment has been carried out.

A church may be considered to be liable if someone is injured or property damaged by a volunteer acting incompetently or improperly, and if the task they were engaged in was "authorised". The same is true of course of employees.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

Introduction

Every church should have a Health and Safety policy to protect all staff, volunteers and other users of the building and facilities, as well as a person or persons appointed to oversee matters relating to health and safety. Although the ever-increasing volume of legislation can seem daunting, it is important to comply with this, as it provides a framework for good practice for your responsibilities towards all users of your premises and facilities, including volunteers.

First Aid

At the volunteer's place of work there should be someone who is trained to give first aid (a qualified First Aider) or to take charge of any situation that arises, for example, to call an ambulance, if serious injury or illness occurs.

Reporting an Accident

If a volunteer or a person in their care has an accident, however minor, it must be reported and recorded, even if no action need be taken at the time. Volunteers must be advised how to report an accident and what action to take if they discover faulty equipment on the premises.

Fire

All volunteers should be made familiar with location of fire exits, and also receive instruction on action to take in the event of a fire, or if the fire alarm sounds.

Food hygiene

This is another area of ever-increasing legislation, and it is important to keep up to date if you serve food on your premises. Under the Food Safety Act you may be required to register your church and/or church hall with the local authority unless all you do by way of serving food is to have provision for tea and coffee with the occasional biscuit. Those who prepare meals, including any volunteers, must have had training in food hygiene and safety, and to have gained the relevant certificate. You can get help and advice from the Environmental Health Department of your local authority about this.

Further information and advice

The **Health & Safety Executive** provides an Information and Advice Line: 08453 450055. Also free leaflets and a publication ordering service: 01787 881165. You can buy their publications from HMSO.

<http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/index.htm>.

The **Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (RoSPA)** has a great deal of useful information about safety in a wide variety of settings.

<http://www.rosipa.com>.

The Next Step

Once you have identified your reasons for volunteering, the next step is to decide whether opportunities to achieve your aims are available within your church activities or outside, within a community service or project.

Whatever option you decide on, these are the kind of questions to ask:

- What are the organisation's aims and objectives? Do I agree with these?
- What will be my tasks and what time commitment will be expected of me?
- Are training and support provided?
- Will I work on my own or with others in a team?
- Will the experience provide the kind of personal/career development I hope to gain?
- Do I have the skills to do this?

Before offering your services, be very clear in your own mind as to what you can give, for example:

- How much time do you have to give?
- How often?
- For how long?

What do you have to offer?

This may not be immediately obvious or directly related to your current or previous working life. Your own lifetime experience equips you in all kinds of ways. For example:

- Helping in the classroom
- Befriending
- Being a good neighbour
- Doing odd jobs
- Talking and listening
- Gardening
- Driving
- Acting as a role model/mentoring
- Shopping
- Visiting
- Providing advice or information

It is a good idea to offer a **limited** period of time, such as 3 to 6 months, or whatever is right for you. This provides you with a trial period in the first instance but also means that if your circumstances change, you are able to leave the work/project without letting anyone down.

Negotiating Terms and Conditions

Once accepted for a post you will need a definite understanding of your role.

- Ask for an outline of the role and tasks
- Check the hours/times you are expected to work
- Identify who will be giving you support and guidance
- Enquire what training or preparation will be available and what opportunities there may be for development
- Find out what expenses will be paid, e.g. travel/out-of-pocket/lunch

What would you gain through volunteering?

- Meeting new people
- Joining in with community life
- Being part of a team
- Realising that your contribution is valued
- Increased confidence in new areas
- Making a difference to the community
- Having fun and enjoyment

Guidelines for Volunteers

- Do** make sure you find out exactly what the work is that you are expected to do.
- Do** stick to any arrangements you have made.
- Do** think and pray about your reasons for wanting to work on the project.
- Do** be aware of the rules governing confidentiality; see the section on this below.
- Don't** over commit yourself. Offer only as much time as you are able to give. Reliability is very important. It is easier to increase the time you work than to cut back once you have committed yourself.
- Don't** keep any anxieties to yourself. Share them honestly with your team leader and/ or clergy.
- Don't** give or lend money or presents or receive them. The team leadership and/or clergy will have a general policy in this area. If you think it appropriate to consider making an exception to that policy, discuss the circumstances first with your leaders and come to a joint decision as to the best way to respond.
- Don't** carry out a task if you think it unreasonable or for which you feel you don't have the necessary skills. Talk it through with the leaders. They may be able to offer you further support or training.
- Don't** panic if anything goes wrong. The project leader will help you sort the matter out and discuss how best to continue in that area.
- Don't** forget – your contribution makes a real difference to those you help, those you work alongside, and to the team leaders and clergy.

3. *If it is not possible to resolve difficulties informally, and the supervisor has serious concerns about the volunteer's work, the formal process of a disciplinary procedure will be initiated. If the concerns arise from incidents or behaviour which the supervisor has not personally seen, he/she will investigate. The volunteer will be informed in writing of the concerns and invited to a meeting to discuss them*
4. *At this meeting, the concerns will be discussed, using the results of any investigation. The meeting will aim to find a way forward which resolves the concerns. This may involve alternative work, or closer supervision, or training. If the volunteer wishes to remain in his/her present task, clear and precise objectives for improvement will be agreed, and a timescale for review set. The volunteer will be warned that if the concerns are not addressed by meeting the objectives agreed, dismissal may follow.*
5. *When the review time arrives, a further meeting will be held. If the agreed objectives have not been met, the volunteer will be given a final warning and a further timescale.*
6. *If the desired progress has not been made at the end of the timescale set, the volunteer will be asked to leave the role and the project.*

Summary dismissal

1. *Summary or instant dismissal will take place if the volunteer has done something which damages the project, or which is dishonest or illegal; this includes theft, violent actions or words, malicious damage, failure to respect the confidentiality of clients, sexual or racial harassment.*
2. *Summary dismissal can only be decided by the project manager or the chair of the management committee, following an investigation or in the light of clear evidence of the offence. During any investigation, the volunteer will be suspended.*
3. *The volunteer may appeal against the decision. Any appeal should be in writing within 2 weeks of the dismissal notice. The chair of the management committee will set up an appeal committee of 2 persons who will interview the persons concerned and reach a decision. The volunteer will be informed of the outcome within 2 weeks.*

Various pdf leaflets and information regarding Problem Solving Procedures for volunteers can be downloaded free from www.volunteering.org.uk, along with many other hints and tips, books, and ideas.

Guildford Diocese Care Group

Grievance and Disciplinary Procedures for Volunteers

GDCG recognises the valuable contribution made by volunteers to its work. In order to ensure fair treatment of volunteers, it has established grievance and disciplinary procedures which protect both the volunteer and the project.

Grievance procedure

1. *Any volunteer with a complaint or grievance should first of all raise the matter informally with his/her supervisor. If the grievance relates to an incident, this should happen as soon as possible afterwards.*
2. *The supervisor will investigate the matter and try to resolve it, normally within 2 weeks. If this is not possible, the supervisor will advise the volunteer to make a written complaint to the project manager.*
3. *The project manager will then undertake a confidential investigation, including meeting with the volunteer. The project manager will respond to the complaint within 2 weeks of receiving the written complaint.*
4. *If the volunteer is unsatisfied with the response, he/she may appeal to the chairperson of the management committee. The chairperson will arrange a meeting to hear the complaint and appeal, normally involving at least one other committee member, and listening to both the complainant and the supervisor and any other relevant people. The chairperson will make a decision about the outcome and communicate this in writing and in person to the volunteer, normally within 2 weeks of the appeal meeting.*

Disciplinary Procedure

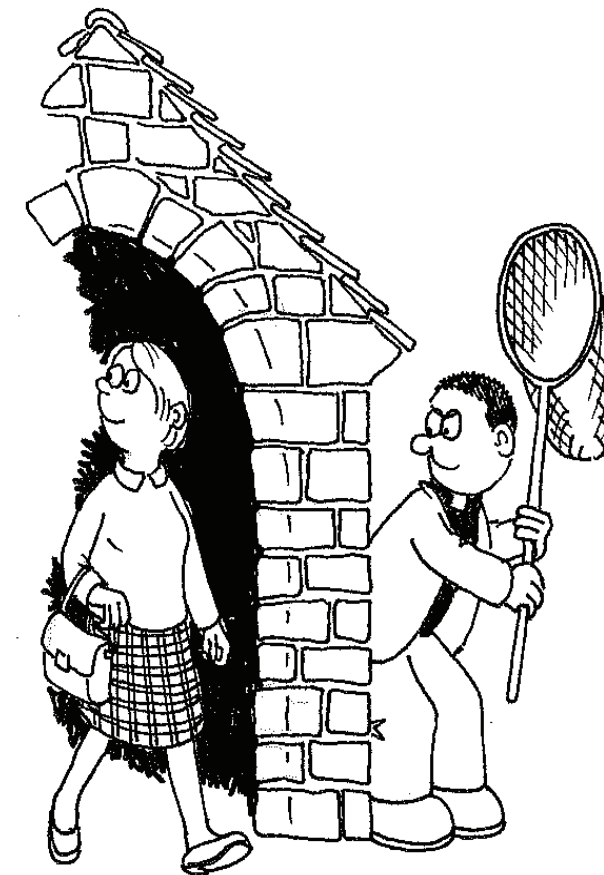
1. *If a volunteer's work with the project proves seriously unsuitable, the project will take action to address this. Such action may also be taken if volunteers act in ways that damage the project.*
2. *Volunteers should protect themselves by ensuring that they are clear about the task taken on; and about the rules and policies to be followed by all those working on the project. As far as possible, any difficulties that arise will be resolved in regular meetings involving each volunteer and his/her supervisor.*

LOOKING FOR VOLUNTEERS

Introduction

This is often seen as the hardest part of setting up a new project or indeed of revitalising one which has been established for some time. So many of our church members are already busy enough with their own work, their established church commitments, family responsibilities and other interests, and it is right to resist the temptation to ask one more thing of those who are already over-committed.

However, an exciting and innovative project will attract people in its own right, so it is worth thinking about what will attract volunteers to the cause itself or the work involved.



The vicar was always thinking of new ways to attract volunteers

What are you looking for?

Before you approach potential volunteers you may have in mind, or start to recruit volunteers from a wider audience, you should consider the following:

- What will the volunteers' role(s) be?
- Will it be an occasional or regular commitment?
- What is the minimum reasonable time commitment?
- How much time is needed each week or month?
- Would volunteers be working alone or in a team?
- Will checks such as CRB be required?
- What preparation or training would be needed?
- What expenses will be paid?

Good news spreads

Research indicates that most volunteers still come by word of mouth - if you treat volunteers well they really will attract others! How often do the members of the women's group get helpers from their friends, family or neighbours who are impressed by the community outreach of the church? This is obviously easier when you have a project to enthuse about rather than one which has not got off the ground yet. If you already use volunteers, then involve your current team. Ask your present volunteers if they can approach anyone who might help. This can be a particularly good way to get short-term volunteers or helpers for fund-raising events, as friends and family will often help on a one-off basis.

Local advertising and local press

Many supermarkets have community notice-boards, as do neighbouring worship centres, community centres, schools and leisure centres, libraries, newsagents, corner shops or garages. Make sure you change the advert and revise it regularly. Ensure that it is a clean poster (change regularly if dog-eared or covered in graffiti) with up to date information. These are very useful if you want local volunteers. They may be a rich source for one-off events like fun runs or fetes. Remember to have interesting posters and remove them when they are outdated. Put a sign in your windows saying:

Volunteers Needed !

The local free newspapers are usually helpful and approachable, particularly if your volunteer needs could link to something which is photogenic, and of local interest. Producing press releases and building links with the media has spin offs for your work. Some projects pay to advertise in the local press or even the Guardian. Keep the message simple. Get someone who is not too involved to check your promotional literature to see that it is clear and free of jargon. Terms such as PCC, Synod, etc. may be clear to you but clear as mud to others.

- Re-establish supervision and supervise more closely; could a period of more intensive and detailed support, setting short-term focussed tasks, help the volunteer develop a better capability to perform the task? This may be appropriate especially with younger or less experienced volunteers.
- Can you transfer the volunteer to a different task? Even if the difficulties are relational, a different task may provide a new opportunity.
- Provide training; would an intensive training session help the volunteer to get to grips with their role more effectively?
- Propose a sabbatical; there may be factors in the volunteer's personal life that need to be resolved; or the volunteer may simply need a rest.
- Propose referring them to another organisation; the local volunteer centre may be able to help identify possibilities.
- Encourage recognition that volunteers can and should retire; ensure that there is a way of leaving the role that appreciates and affirms what volunteers have done, and even encourages them to go at a particular moment.

If none of these is appropriate, and/or the nature of the difficulty is such that dismissal is the only option, the procedure should have 3 stages:

Stage one: The volunteer should have been made aware that a formal process for dismissing volunteers is in place and will be used if necessary. This should happen with all volunteers as part of their induction; it is too late to do it when a problem occurs!

Stage two takes place when the supervisor of a particular volunteer identifies issues or problems in how the volunteer works which cannot be dealt with in any other way than dismissal. If the problems arise from actions involving other people, the supervisor should investigate what has happened. The issues or problems should be discussed with the volunteer concerned, and clear goals should be set for improving performance within a particular timescale. At this stage the alternatives listed above should also be considered. A written note of the meeting should be made which specified the reasons for the procedure, the changes required, and the timescale.

Stage three happens if a further meeting finds there is no improvement in how the volunteer works at the end of the time period specified; and/or any alternatives have not resolved the situation. At this point, the decision regarding dismissal should be taken. The volunteer should be informed in person and in writing that the church or project is no longer able to use his/her services, and the reasons for the decision should be given.

Summary dismissal

The procedure should also set out the actions which might cause summary or instant dismissal to take place.

When things go wrong

As with paid employment, it can happen that relationships break down or problems occur with a particular volunteer. Any project or church working with volunteers needs to have equivalent procedures to disciplinary and grievance processes within employment, ready for the rare occasion when these might be needed. The relationship with volunteers is voluntary, and these are similarly voluntary procedures, but they will help guide action when it is needed, and represent good practice in volunteer management.

Volunteer Grievance Procedure

Volunteers should be able to make a formal complaint about anything that causes them concern in the course of their work. The procedure should normally ask them first to raise the matter with their supervisor or co-ordinator. If it cannot be resolved satisfactorily by that person, the volunteer should be informed about the formal procedure available to them. All grievances should be written, and given to an appropriate named person, who should investigate. It is important that the volunteer and the details of the grievance are treated confidentially during this process. If the matter cannot be resolved by this stage, a third and final level of appeal should be available, which may be the local incumbent, PCC chairperson or other appropriate named person.

The written procedure should state:

- What a volunteer should do if they have a grievance or complaint
- The requirement to raise it verbally first of all, with their supervisor, and the time period within which the supervisor will investigate and respond.
- The named person to whom a second stage appeal may be made and the timescale within which they must respond.
- The requirement for the complaint to be made in writing, and also the response.
- The person to whom a third and final stage appeal may be made.

Disciplinary procedure

Although it is rare, it does sometimes happen that a volunteer turns out to be very unsuitable for the task they have taken on; or the way in which they perform simply does not meet the standards required. One of the most difficult tasks for any volunteer supervisor is dealing with this. But it is important to be able to do this, for the sake of the wider community or project. A clear written procedure makes the task much easier.

Before the decision to enter a formal disciplinary type of process, thought should be given to alternatives, if a volunteer is not working or not appropriate in a particular role. Here are some of the alternative ways of dealing with this:

Further ideas

Here are some further ideas for ways of finding volunteers. Some of them may seem obvious, but sometimes the obvious ones are overlooked:

- Other churches in your deanery, and other local churches of other denominations
- Your local Volunteer Centre
- Time and Talents survey in church
- Church-related publications (regional or national, notably for unusual projects or projects needing volunteers with specific skills)
- Local Secondary Schools, Sixth Form Colleges or Further Education Colleges where you may be able to forge links with the chaplain or with relevant staff
- Community centres and youth clubs/centres
- Local residents' associations
- Building links with local businesses and linking with bodies like Business in the Community (BitC) who may know of companies committed to employee volunteering
- Clinics and doctors' surgeries
- Job Centres, Job Clubs, rehabilitation centres, etc.
- Lions, Rotary Clubs, Soroptimists, Rotaract, etc.
- Uniformed youth organisations, notably for short term and one-off activities
- Libraries, council offices, police stations, etc
- Local radio (contact the Diocesan Communications team for named contacts and advice on how to use local radio)
- Specialist organisations, self help groups and professional agencies in your area relevant to your work
- Post offices, garages, supermarkets and corner shops
- Advice and information organisations like CAB
- Presentations to specialist/relevant audiences, notably if you need specialist volunteers
- Exhibitions and displays
- Leaflets, which can be for wide circulation or customised for different audiences
- Parish website
- Open days at your centre or project

Responding to Enquiries

Before you put any of the above ideas into operation, you will need to think about how you are going to respond to enquiries. It is important that potential volunteers can get in touch with you speedily and simply, or you will lose their enthusiasm. Ideally you should offer at least two different methods of contact, e.g. telephone and e-mail. Don't assume that everyone has access to the internet or a computer. Make it as simple for the respondents as possible, remembering that first impressions are vital to hold their interest. The wider the campaign, the more diverse the enquiries are likely to be, for example requests to receive the service, even complaints. Be prepared for these.

PLANNING PROJECTS WITH VOLUNTEERS

Introduction

Please do not be daunted by this section! We are trying to encourage you to plan your projects involving volunteers wisely, and not to put you off. Whether this is a new project or a review of an established one, if the work is worth doing, it is worth doing well, and it is better to think through as much as possible beforehand, rather than embarking on a great idea and later realising that things have come unstuck because you have not thought ahead.

You are invited to use your common sense in considering this section. For example, if you are looking for more volunteers for the flower festival, you probably do not need to do a risk assessment or to ask for CRB checks. However, if you are planning a holiday club which includes a circus skills workshop and hoping to bring in new volunteers who are not already known to you, then you need to do both of these things. You do not need to take up references for people you already know who are being asked to join the coffee rota, but you should if you are looking for new volunteers to help with a support group for children with disabilities.



Was it perhaps an over reaction
to have the churchyard work party CRB checked?

Related issues

Confidential information should be destroyed once it is no longer needed, and it is important to know the current legal position for the various documents which you may have: for example: application forms, references and CRB checks, both for those volunteers you have taken on and those you have not.

The Data Protection Act 1998 is the relevant legislation in this area. There is a Guide for Parishes (updated January 2001) available from The Data Protection Officer, Diocesan House, Quarry Street, Guildford GU1 3XG. Further information is available from the Data Protection Commissioner's office:

Helpline telephone number 08456 306060 www.ico.gov.uk

Equalities and Equal Opportunities

There is a great deal of talk these days about equalities and equal opportunities, and no-one would disagree with the principle – but what does it really mean? Whereas “equal opportunities” has tended to focus on certain groups (relating to race, gender, age, disability, sexual orientation etc.) “equalities” is a useful term for all work carried out by an organisation to promote equal opportunities and to challenge discrimination. This includes its attitude and practice towards staff, volunteers, clients and the general public.

A basic principle of equalities work must be creating alliances between people who do not necessarily share the same views or experiences, whilst respecting differences in people's cultures, abilities and priorities. Communities differ in what they experience, as well as sometimes in the way they experience things, because of their personal histories.

Equalities work is underpinned by the values of diversity and inclusion. Volunteers can help us demonstrate our commitment to these values by enabling recruitment from a wide range of participants. Ask yourself these questions of your project:

- Do we represent the community we aim to serve?
- Do we listen to those in the community we aim to serve?
- Do all partners, including volunteers and clients, have a say in how the service is set up and developed?

An “Equalities Toolkit” is available from RAISE, the regional network which aims to champion the Third Sector contribution to the region, providing an accessible yet comprehensive guide to all these issues. You can find it on the website:

www.raise-networks.org.uk

or copies are available to borrow from the Department for Social Responsibility.

Information about clients

The church, or the project within it, must be very clear what information about individual clients needs to be given to volunteers. Discuss this with clients and gain their consent to those details being passed on. Generally speaking, only that information which is absolutely necessary for the work should be given to the volunteer in the initial stages.

Discussion with volunteers will be necessary regarding the general categories of information they may hear about in the course of their work and which should be regarded as particularly sensitive. These might include details of clients’:

- Health
- Finances
- Criminal activity
- Family/relationship situations and problems

Some information may be picked up inadvertently and at other times clients may offer volunteers very personal information. Volunteers need guidance as to what to do if they gain any information that falls within any of the above listed categories.

Volunteers should not be put in a position where a client is asking them to keep information secret.

Some information must be disclosed, even without the client’s permission, for example: violence by or against the client, criminal activity, etc. Volunteers also need guidance on informing the church/project leader if they are concerned about a client’s mental or physical state, or if they believe that someone may be at risk of being harmed, or likely to cause harm to others.

Information about volunteers

Personal information gained during the recruitment procedure and afterwards should be given only to those who need to see it and only with the volunteer’s permission.

In some situations it may be appropriate to give information about a volunteer’s personal circumstances to a client; perhaps, for example, to explain their empathy with a particular problem. However, this should only be done by the volunteer him/herself, and after due consideration.

It is useful to discuss with volunteers what personal details they would feel happy to share with clients, particularly in the early stages of a one-to-one relationship. They may not feel confident to decline their personal details and need advice on drawing safe boundaries.

Project Proposal and Project Review

The first thing to do before starting on a new project involving volunteers is to set down what you are trying to achieve and how you intend to go about it, with all the factors that you need to consider. The role and arrangements for volunteers may just be one aspect of this.

This is also a useful exercise if you are reviewing an established project which is perhaps not running as well as you would like, or which needs rejuvenating, changing direction or getting back on track.

Risk Assessment

Parishes have become more used to the idea of risk assessment over recent years, as they have been encouraged to carry these out through the PCC, especially in relation to finances, buildings and the personal safety of staff and volunteers. Risk assessment does not have to be complicated or formal, and needs to relate to the project or work in question. Any work involving children or vulnerable adults must be risk assessed in advance, and volunteers and staff need to be aware of the control measures which have been decided upon, and to carry them out as appropriate.

No activity involving people will be free of risk, and it is not suggested that risk can be eliminated, but it can be greatly reduced if situations or “scenarios” have been thought through beforehand.

Depending on the nature of the project, you may be able to do a very informal risk assessment. This may take the form of a meeting or part of a meeting with those involved to think through what things could go wrong, what you would do if this happened, and how you could avoid it happening in the first place. It may be helpful to complete a risk assessment in table form, as on the following page:

**RISK ASSESSMENT
FOR A MENTAL HEALTH DROP-IN CLUB
WITH LUNCH PROVIDED**

Activity / Area	Risk	Likelihood (low, medium or high)	Impact (low, medium or serious)	Control measures
Kitchen	Fire on premises	low	serious	Only those involved with catering permitted in kitchen. Safety training for kitchen volunteers.
Providing cooked meals	Food hygiene risks	low	serious	All kitchen volunteers to have up-to-date Food Safety certificates.
General	Abuse of drugs or alcohol on premises	low	medium / serious	"House rules" agreed and clearly on display, explaining that it is not acceptable to bring drugs or alcohol onto the premises.
General	Aggressive behaviour / assault	low	serious	Policy agreed beforehand. "House rules" requesting respect for others agreed and clearly on display. Designated team members in attendance
General	Asking for money	low	low	Policy agreed beforehand. All volunteers to have training in how to deal with this situation.
One-to-one Listening	Over-dependency on individual volunteers	medium	medium	All Listeners to have completed training course (e.g. Acorn) and Mental Health Awareness training. Ongoing support and supervision.
One-to-one listening	Disclosure of suicidal intent	low	serious	As above, plus Designated team member(s) to have ASIST training
All volunteers	Psychological distress caused to volunteers through encounters with visitors	low	medium	All volunteers to have completed Mental Health Awareness training for this project, and to receive regular ongoing support

GOOD PRACTICE

Confidentiality

Confidentiality affects all aspects of good practice in working with volunteers. It does not just relate to information shared about a client. Problems can arise in a number of areas, for example:

- Personal information about volunteers themselves is sometimes seen as public information, and sometimes details about volunteers' personal lives are widely shared among all the staff or members of the church or organisation.
- Projects do not always tell volunteers vital information (e.g. volunteer receptionists need to know if a client who regularly visits your centre has been violent when they were not on duty).
- In the course of their work, volunteers may gain access to detailed and often very private information about the clients they are dealing with.
- Volunteers also gain access, sometimes inadvertently, to information about the church, its staff, other volunteers, finances and even organisational problems.
- Volunteers may not always be sure to whom they can divulge confidential information. Projects working in the areas of counselling, listening, advice or advocacy often have well developed guidelines on this matter.
- Church members and members of management committees do not always understand boundaries, and sometimes assume that they have a right to information by virtue of their position or role.

In general

It is essential that clients, potential clients, funders and others outside the church as well as those within it have confidence in our ability to manage information with care and sensitivity. Organisations need clear guidelines on the handling of information so that everyone knows what is expected of them. Volunteers need to be clear what information can be discussed outside the project and what cannot, and it is important that the church/organisation shows that it understands and respects boundaries.

Details about individual clients, and in some cases even the address of the organisation (for example a women's refuge) would always be considered as confidential, as would details of the church's, or project's, internal matters, such as finances, staff details, organisational problems, etc. Even small details that might appear insignificant, such as an overheard argument between two members of staff, are private matters internal to the organisation and should not be discussed outside.

Thanks and Reward

Giving public recognition to the work of a project can not only serve to raise the profile of its work but also provide the means to congratulate the workers on their achievements and encourage them in their faithful service.

To this end, any number and variety of awards of merit can be created, for example:

- Completion of one year's service to the project
- Best creative idea for the project during that year
- Raising new funds
- Devotion to duty (use your own criteria)
- Retirement award
- Catering awards

You may even feel inclined, particularly with youth groups, to use humorous awards which are, though light-hearted, sincerely meant and equally as effective, for example:

- Services Rendered Award (for example: for the person who made tea/coffee most during the year)
- Washer-up Of The Year
- Brain-Of-.....(add name of your town) to congratulate an individual who has come up with a brilliant idea
- Bravery Awards (where you want to acknowledge someone's courage in developing a new skill or completing a difficult task)

The awards can be presented during a church service or celebration/party gathering held especially for the purpose and can take the form of paper certificates, containing appropriate graphics, and a "prize" or present for the lucky winner. To this end a team award can be presented, ensuring that everyone involved feels fully appreciated and encouraged.

Role Outlines

It is useful to think through what you are expecting volunteers to do, and to draw up a broad statement of the purpose and tasks of the role. This can be done quite informally, and needs to allow for the development both of the volunteers' skills and the tasks they carry out.

The preparation of a simple *Role Outline* has the following benefits:

For the volunteer:

- It facilitates a clear understanding of the tasks they are set.
- It can enable potential volunteers to decide whether or not they feel able to undertake those tasks.

For the church or organisation:

- It provides a framework for assessing whether the volunteer is right for that role and for exploring what training, supervision and support may be needed.
- It reduces the risk of subjective decisions and misunderstandings about the task.
- A written *Outline* is considered to be good practice and part of an organisation's duty of care which any insurer will require.
- Volunteers, in general, are covered by your insurance if they keep to the *Outline*. It is easier to prove this if the *Outline* is written.

The *Role Outline* needs to contain the following information:

- The purpose(s) of the voluntary work
- The tasks to be undertaken
- The person to whom the volunteer is responsible (e.g. the incumbent, project manager)
- The person the volunteer should contact in an emergency e.g: if they are unable to meet the agreed commitment
- The place where the work is to be done
- Details of the time commitment expected
- Details of any other organisation or agency involved
- Information about any checks which will be needed, e.g: Criminal Records Bureau checks
- Information about any training or preparation they should attend
- Information about reviews and support meetings they will be expected to attend

Role Outline: Sample 1 Children's Work Co-ordinator

Objectives:

To plan, lead and co-ordinate the teaching in Sunday children's activities through regular meetings with other leaders, so that they are fully equipped in their teaching ministry to deepen the young people's understanding of Jesus.

Specific Duties:

- 1. To present the objectives of the Children's work for the next two years at the APCM, and to prepare a statement of the previous year's work.*
- 2. To supervise and assist the other children's leaders in their work with young people.*
- 3. To hold regular meetings with other leaders in order to co-ordinate the work amongst all age groups.*
- 4. To encourage other leaders individually, and to provide pastoral care for them.*
- 5. To recommend new leaders.*
- 6. To organise any training that might be necessary for either current or potential leaders.*
- 7. To co-ordinate visits to the parents of young people who attend.*
- 8. To liaise with the Child Protection Co-ordinator to ensure that all leaders are familiar with the CP policy and procedures, including training requirements.*

Essential Qualifications/Skills/Experience:

- 1. Two years' experience as a youth/ children's leader.*
- 2. Demonstration of skills in spiritual leadership/pastoral skills*
- 3. Able to commit to this post for 3 years*
- 4. A church member*
- 5. Preferably not holding any other major position of responsibility within the church*

*Appointed by: the Parochial Church Council
Responsible to: The Incumbent*

- regular meetings of all staff and volunteers of the project/area of work, to chat/let off steam/enjoy time out together – all valuable for team building
- regular meetings of volunteers only, without the leaders present
- social events such as a meal together – a way of rewarding everyone's hard work
- away days which are opportunities for everyone involved in the project to get to know each other better, as well as some work or discussion time

Specific questions you may want to raise at reviews are:

- Any problems people may be experiencing
- What they hope to gain by being involved in the project/work
- Their perception of the project's effectiveness in its service to the clients or users both generally and individually
- What is worrying them
- What they find satisfying about the work
- How long they wish to continue in the work
- Personal matters that are of concern to them (as appropriate)
- Training opportunities they may like to consider



It is important that your volunteers
feel valued and supported

SUPPORT, MANAGEMENT AND REVIEW

Introduction

Once recruited as volunteers, people need to feel supported and valued in the work they are doing, and encouraged to develop their skills. They also need to feel able to stop when they are ready and, if appropriate, to move on. Volunteers who are affirmed in the time and talents they are offering are much more likely to give long-term commitment to the organisation or project than those who feel taken for granted.

Tending to the needs of volunteers working with your organisation means keeping communication channels open, staying in touch with their work-related and, where appropriate, personal needs, and providing them with practical support for the work they take on.

Volunteers who are badly organised, taken for granted, unclear about what is required of them, never thanked, not given the equipment they need or offered their expenses, will soon vote with their feet!

Managing and supporting Volunteers

By offering regular opportunities to meet with volunteers working on a project, you will ensure:

- that volunteers feel valued, accepted, and satisfied with what they are doing
- that the church or project learns from their experience
- that volunteers feel that they can air concerns or issues which can be dealt with promptly
- that expectations of volunteers and of the church or project remain clear
- that there is a sense of belonging and ownership of the project

It is worth thinking about whether review meetings will be held individually or in the whole group, and it may be worth using both, depending on the project and the number of volunteers. You may wish to use a combination of the following:

- regular contact through visits or phone calls to volunteers
- regular programmed one-to-one meetings between the volunteer and the leader
- completion of **simple** “progress reports” by the volunteer at regular intervals (nothing too complicated – we don’t want to add another burden to the work load).
- an “open door” policy by the project leader, allowing volunteers to call on him/her when they have need (set boundaries by perhaps publicising a list of hours when you can be contacted)

Role Outline: Sample 2 Volunteer Oasis Drop-in Centre

Aim of the Post:

The volunteer will work within the aims and objectives of Oasis and will be expected to work within the Diocese of Guildford’s Equal Opportunities Policy. S/he will work within a code of confidentiality, having been successfully selected for, and completed, a course of training.

The volunteer will be accountable to the Project Co-ordinator for reporting on the work, and to fellow volunteers for its execution. The Co-ordinator will be accountable for recruitment training and supervision. The Oasis Management Committee will pay reasonable expenses.

Duties of the Volunteer

General:

- 1. To give an initial commitment to the project for 6 sessions following training, to be reviewed at that point. Anticipated hours of work - 10.30am to 4.30pm one Saturday in four, plus training time and contact time with the co-ordinator.*
- 2. To undertake a course of preparation prior to work, to include confidentiality, impartiality, reliability, listening skills, induction to the area, co-operating agencies, emergency action, and First Aid.*
- 3. To keep in contact with the Co-ordinator and to attend follow up/support sessions for volunteers.*

Saturday Duties:

- 1. To staff the Saturday drop-in centre on a rota basis.*
- 2. To ensure adequate supplies of tea, coffee etc are available for the following week.*
- 3. To set up the centre and to clear away afterwards.*
- 4. To keep admin records of people using the centre.*
- 5. To ensure smooth running of the centre by being present and available throughout the day.*

References

This is a sensitive subject. Some churches and community groups feel strongly that asking volunteers for references is inappropriate; others believe equally passionately that references give status and validity to voluntary work and protect vulnerable people.

You may decide only to request references for potential volunteers who are new or unknown to you. This in itself can cause problems, so it may be easier to have a blanket policy.

If you do decide to ask for references, you will need to think about:

- Who will, and who will not, be accepted as a referee. It is usual to exclude close family members and those under the age of 18. Anyone who knows the applicant well and for some time is usually suitable.
- The number of references required.
- Whether the references are given in confidence or whether they will be open to discussion with the prospective volunteer. The latter method can discourage the referee from making any discriminatory remarks and also deter them from raising matters of genuine concern.
- You must make your policy on confidentiality clear to both applicant and referee.
- When to take up references – before or after interview. If before is preferred then obtaining the references will have to be administered at an early stage.
- Whether the prospective volunteer can start their agreed tasks before the references have been received. Generally it is better to wait – not to do so casts doubt on the importance you place on the references; it may also lead to embarrassment if the reference results in the subsequent removal of the volunteer from those tasks.
- How you will take up references – by letter, email or phone.

When requesting references, remember to give the referee as much information as possible about the project and the volunteer's role outline.

Induction

An induction session is an essential first step for all newcomers. It is a means of ensuring from the outset that the volunteer is fully aware of all that s/he needs to know in order to carry out the duties effectively and with role satisfaction. It will help to familiarise volunteers with the project, be introduced to key people, and give them confidence about embarking on the work.

The aims of an induction session are:

- To provide volunteers with information needed to do the role
- To explain parish / project policies and practices
- To give volunteers confidence when starting their work
- To show that the agency values the volunteer's involvement
- To help clarify difficulties, and avoid potential problems at an early stage
- To help set "ground rules" which encourage all volunteers to work to the same principles – the ethos of the project

Suggested topics for Induction sessions:

- The project; its role, the client group, ways of working
- Staff structure and where decisions are made
- Roles of paid staff
- Roles of other volunteers
- Boundaries of the volunteer's own role
- Who the volunteer is accountable to/ who to contact in an emergency
- From whom support is available and in what form
- How and when to claim expenses and what can be claimed
- Health and Safety procedures – first aid, fire precautions and procedures
- Confidentiality – of information about clients, other volunteers and any sensitive information gained in the course of volunteer activity
- Equal opportunities – volunteer rights and responsibilities
- Dealing with potential problems, e.g. being asked by clients to perform additional tasks, being asked for confidential information, etc.
- Insurance
- Relevant church / agency policies and their implications for volunteers
- What to do if offered money/ presents by clients
- Resources and facilities available to volunteers
- Where equipment is stored; how to gain access to it
- Other, more specific issues can be dealt with at this stage, e.g. if the volunteers are required to keep records

An induction session is also the time to discuss with volunteers the detail of their Volunteer Agreement and Role Outline, and to check they are clear about these, and to note any training needs for the future.

“Train to Gain”

Train to Gain is the Learning and Skills Councils (LSC) Flagship programme for developing the skills of the nation’s workforce, primarily by focusing on employers and their existing staff. Since August 2008 it has been expanded to apply to voluntary organisations and their volunteers.

Train to Gain for Volunteers is designed to enable volunteers to attain first Skills for Life (SFL) Level 2 or Level 3 qualification, or a second one, where earlier qualifications are not relevant to your volunteering role.

NVQs are nationally recognised qualifications which demonstrate the skills and knowledge needed to do a job or in this case fulfil a volunteer role.

What happens when you sign up to Train to Gain?

- The organisation you volunteer for must sign up to become a Train to Gain organisation. (Community Service Volunteers (CSV) will arrange this with the place where you volunteer).
- A Train to Gain assessor will meet with you at the place where you volunteer and complete a training needs assessment. You and the assessor will work out together what NVQ is best for you.
- You will start your training, this will involve one-to-one coaching with your trainer. The trainer will set you tasks to do; some of the tasks you will need to complete whilst you are volunteering and discuss with your trainer during his or her next visit.
- You will start to collect your portfolio. This is a folder in which you keep examples of your own work. This will let you show how well you are doing and that demonstrate that you have reached the required standard to achieve your NVQ.
- Assessors will visit you whilst you are volunteering. Assessment is normally through observation (whilst you volunteer) and questioning. You will also show the assessor your portfolio to prove that you have the skills and knowledge to achieve your NVQ.
- You will receive your NVQ

How long will it take?

NVQs are flexible in that they allow you and your voluntary placement to decide when, where and at what pace your training should be. There is no set timescale.

**Requesting References
Sample Pro-forma**

**CONFIDENTIAL
Loners’ Lunch Club**

*Reference concerning:.....
who has applied to join our team of volunteers, working at
.....*

*Please answer the following questions according to your knowledge of the
applicant (continue on a separate page if necessary):*

*Is this person reliable, honest and able to be trusted with confidential
information?*
.....
.....

*Is this person able to co-operate with other volunteers within a team (and
able to undertake practical tasks as and when necessary)?*
.....
.....

*What skills does this person possess which will be useful in the running of
a Lunch Club for people living alone? (for example: listening skills, ability
to befriend?)*
.....
.....

*How does he/she relate to adults? (for example: is he/she friendly and
welcoming, interested in people, what is his/her attitude to marital
breakdown?)*
.....
.....

*Are there any other comments you wish to make regarding the applicant’s
suitability for this work?*
.....
.....

Signed:.....

Please print name clearly:

Date:.....

How long have you known this applicant?:

Capacity in which you know the applicant:
.....
.....

Legal requirements and Checks

Some of the work undertaken by volunteers in church projects will require particular checks to be carried out beforehand. For example, all work with children, young people or vulnerable adults requires that volunteers (as with employees and staff) have a check carried out by the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) beforehand, in order to discover whether the individual concerned has committed any criminal offence which may have a bearing on the work they are proposing to do.

Whilst much time, energy and administration is devoted to CRB checks, it is important to remember that CRB “clearance” does not automatically mean that the person concerned is ideally suited to, or prepared for, working with children and young people. What matters most is skilful matching of volunteers with the people and projects with which they wish to work, and suitable training or preparation for the tasks involved.

For all matters relating to the care and protection of children, young people and vulnerable adults, you should refer to the most recent guidelines available in the Diocese, currently *The Care and Protection of Children: Policy, Procedures and Good Practice to Safeguard and Promote the Welfare of Children and Young People. Diocese of Guildford 2008.*

Other legal requirements are mainly around insurance – for public liability, buildings, personal accident, professional indemnity, and motor insurance. These are covered in more detail in the Health and Safety section below. It is essential to consider all aspects of these areas before taking on volunteers.

- The easiest way is to find a local provider, which may be the local FE College, and arrange for any volunteers interested to register for relevant NVQs taught there. They can use their volunteering experience to complete the NVQ but their assessment would be done by the trained assessors at the College.
- There are also training organisations which provide assessors for local employers who wish to provide NVQs. Finding these, and exploring the costs, would require some local research. Local Social Services may be able to help identify local possibilities.
- It is possible for a number of churches or local organisations to work together and form a partnership for training purposes, and then become approved as an assessment centre. This requires more work and commitment, but may also lead to other opportunities.
- NVQs can also be completed by distance learning. Health and Social Care NVQs at levels 2 and 3 can be completed in this way. For more information, go to www.nvqweb.com which is a one-stop shop for everyone involved in NVQs in health and social care.

Funding NVQs

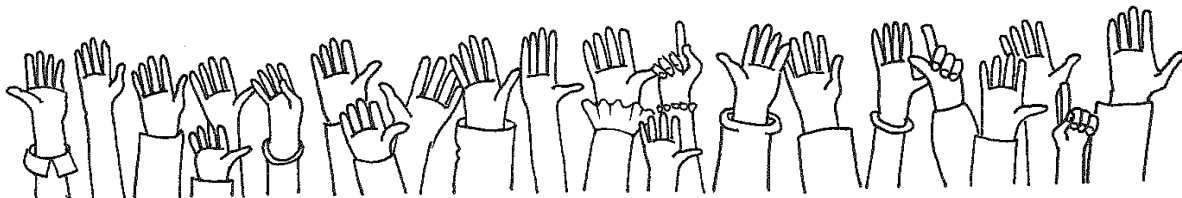
Normally it is the employer who pays for members of staff and volunteers to complete NVQs. This is Government policy, and although at times extra funds have been available to assist employers to do this, these are often short-term. There is a website which provides information about funding; www.support4learning.org.uk If candidates pay for NVQs themselves, they will be able to claim tax relief if they are paying tax. Unemployed volunteers can still claim income support if they are engaged in completing an NVQ, as long as they continue to be available for work and to be actively seeking it.

Other opportunities

There are other ways of offering access to learning and development for volunteers. For volunteer trustees and committee members, for example, there are e-learning courses available; go to www.trustelearning.org.uk for a recently developed course. There is also a Certificate in Interpersonal Skills for Volunteers available through Lampeter University, which can lead to a degree in voluntary sector studies. For information about this, go to www.volstudy.ac.uk

It is always worth finding out about shorter courses available locally, which may help improve volunteers’ skills and knowledge. As resources will usually be limited, the best source of affordable opportunities is probably the courses run by local or county level voluntary sector infrastructure organisations, usually called either councils for voluntary service (CVS) or something similar. In Surrey, Surrey Community Action run an extensive programme of day courses and slightly longer options, many of which could be useful for volunteers. Costs are modest. Visit their website www.surreyca.org.uk for an up to date programme.

There is also a learning programme specifically for people who manage volunteers, called ‘Excellence in Volunteer Management’. It can be accessed in many different ways, to suit local needs and capacity. For further information, go to www.volunteering.org.uk and search for EVM.



Training courses

Any volunteer involved in either local church or community activities can access training courses run by local authorities and other voluntary agencies. There are also details of a nationally recognised “Distance Learning” programmes. These maybe suitable for anyone who would like to acquire particular skills as well as for those who are looking for recognised qualifications. Government funding is available for some of these programmes.

National Vocational Qualification (NVQs)

NVQs provide opportunities for volunteers to develop their competence and skills and acquire, or work towards, qualifications. This is often of benefit to volunteers as well as enabling the organisation with which they work to demonstrate its commitment to training.

An NVQ is awarded in recognition of a standard of achievement in carrying out particular tasks and using particular skills. NVQs can be completed entirely in the workplace, or through a combination of time spent in a workplace and some sessions in a training centre. Volunteers may wish to complete the NVQ in the place they volunteer, if the facilities for doing so can be arranged.

Each NVQ is composed of a number of units, each of which covers a number of job related tasks. Somebody taking an NVQ will be expected to learn to complete the tasks and then gather the evidence to demonstrate this. Evidence is gathered in 3 ways;

- Through actually carrying out the task, observed by a nominated supervisor who may ask questions to check understanding.
- Through building up a portfolio of evidence, gathered over time, which includes the supervisor’s notes after observing the learner.
- Through collecting evidence of prior learning and experience.

The structure of NVQs is flexible; they do not have to be completed within a set period of time, but can be completed at the pace suitable for the learner. They can also be taken at 5 different levels; level 1 is entry level, and is suitable for people who have not previously gained any qualifications. Level 2 is roughly equivalent to GCSE Ordinary Level(O Level) and Level 3 is roughly equivalent to A Level.

NVQs and your Project

There are a number of national bodies, called Sector Skills Councils, which set standards for NVQs in their own field of activity. The body most relevant to many local projects is Skills for Care, which covers health and social care activities. (www.skillsforcareanddevelopment.org.uk) If your project wishes to offer volunteers access to NVQs, there are several ways of doing this:

Costs and Expenses

It is important to appreciate that, although volunteers give of their time and services free of charge, they are not a “free” resource. There are costs involved in any work involving volunteers. As a general rule all volunteers should be offered reimbursement of their expenses. Whether or not they claim these is up to individuals, but no-one should be put off claiming their expenses by the prevalence of an attitude which expects us to do things for the church “for free”.

You will need to think about:

Set-up costs:

- Additional furniture - desks, chairs etc.
- Additional equipment – phones, computers etc.
- More staff time or management committee input in the initial stages
- Printing and advertising costs

Running costs:

- Reimbursement of travel expenses, phone calls, postage, materials bought for the project
- Insurance, including extra motor insurance which may be needed for volunteer drivers (see below, “Motor Insurance” on page 43)
- Costs of training courses
- Costs of ongoing support and management

Drivers may usually receive reimbursement for voluntary driving without affecting their insurance status and licence class, though this may depend on the insurance company. They must always tell their insurance company in writing that they will be doing some driving in a voluntary capacity, as failure to do so may invalidate their policy.

You will need to have in place:

- a clear scheme, listing which expenses you are prepared to refund, the rates you will pay and whether or not advances are allowed
- a clear and straightforward claims procedure of which all volunteers are made aware and are able to understand
- provision for volunteers to decline to claim expenses or to decide to donate them, without causing embarrassment to anyone

Reimbursement of expenses may have consequences for volunteers who are paying income tax or who are receiving income-related benefits. However, both the Inland Revenue and the Benefits Agency advise that the reimbursement of actual expenses up to a reasonable level is perfectly legitimate and will not threaten benefit or give rise to tax liability.

If the payments made are in excess of the actual costs incurred by the volunteer, then the payments become “earnings” and the volunteer is deemed to have been paid. The same applies to “honoraria”, or indeed any payments in cash or in kind over and above the actual rate of expenses.

Volunteer Agreements

Volunteers are not employees and have none of the rights associated with employment. Volunteering is a legitimate activity in its own right and not a substitute for paid work, and so volunteers should be protected against any exploitation of their interests.

Paid employees will be familiar with contracts of employment: they are a legal requirement. Churches may find it helpful to provide their volunteers with a similar document - an agreement rather than a contract.

The Volunteer agreement should state:

- The days and times on which the volunteering will take place
- The name and position of the person who will supervise the volunteer
- The responsibilities of the volunteer as detailed in the Role Outline
- The volunteer's consent to comply with the church's health and safety, and equal opportunities policies
- The protection afforded to the volunteer by the church's insurance policies
- The training or preparation to be provided
- The level and type of support to be offered to the volunteer
- Details of any grievance and disciplinary procedures
- Details of expenses which may be paid

Both the church and the volunteer need to be clear about what has been agreed between them. It need not be lengthy and can refer to other documents which the church has produced and which the volunteer has received.

Whilst you may have covered most of the above matters during earlier discussions, and will later have conversations during the induction or preliminary training sessions, an agreement can help set the ground rules and will help all your volunteers to work to the same principles.

Preparation, Training and Courses

It is important that volunteers feel adequately prepared for the tasks they are to undertake, so that they can carry them out with confidence. Training is also a part of an organisation's "duty of care" towards its clients and volunteers.

You may wish to develop your own "in-house" training courses, tailored to the project, or it may be more appropriate to send your volunteers to another agency in the same field to join their training programme.

As well as providing new information and skills necessary for the work in hand, a good preparation or training course will:

- Create a productive team spirit amongst your volunteers
- Stimulate interest around each other's area of work
- Provide a wider perspective of the work; the wider church vision and plans for now and the future
- Highlight common pitfalls
- Advise your volunteers as to the facilities/resources currently available and ideas for alternatives
- Facilitate networking; mixing with others in the same field, giving opportunity for mutual encouragement and exchange of ideas
- Provide a source of pride in achievement, for example, being awarded a Certificate of Attendance which can be added to a volunteer CV



A strict training regime for volunteers