



Value

organisations

society

volunteers

Quality of life

Joining the dots.

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

Improved
Experience



Foreword

Brighton & Hove is renowned nationally for having a thriving community and voluntary sector and a large number of residents and community activists who generously give up their free time to help others. At the last count there were approximately 19,200 volunteer positions in the City, giving 57,600 per week of volunteer hours. The community and voluntary sector contributes a staggering £96 million to the local economy each year. Without volunteering and volunteers our statutory social care, healthcare, recreational and education systems would probably collapse.

The commitment of our residents to improving local community life is demonstrated by the results of the recent Place Survey which showed that we have the 4th highest ranking of all local authorities in the country in terms of residents wanting to be involved in decisions which affect their local area. We have tried to reflect this desire in our Local Area Agreement, with ambitious targets around ‘participation in regular volunteering’ and ‘creating an environment for a thriving third sector’.

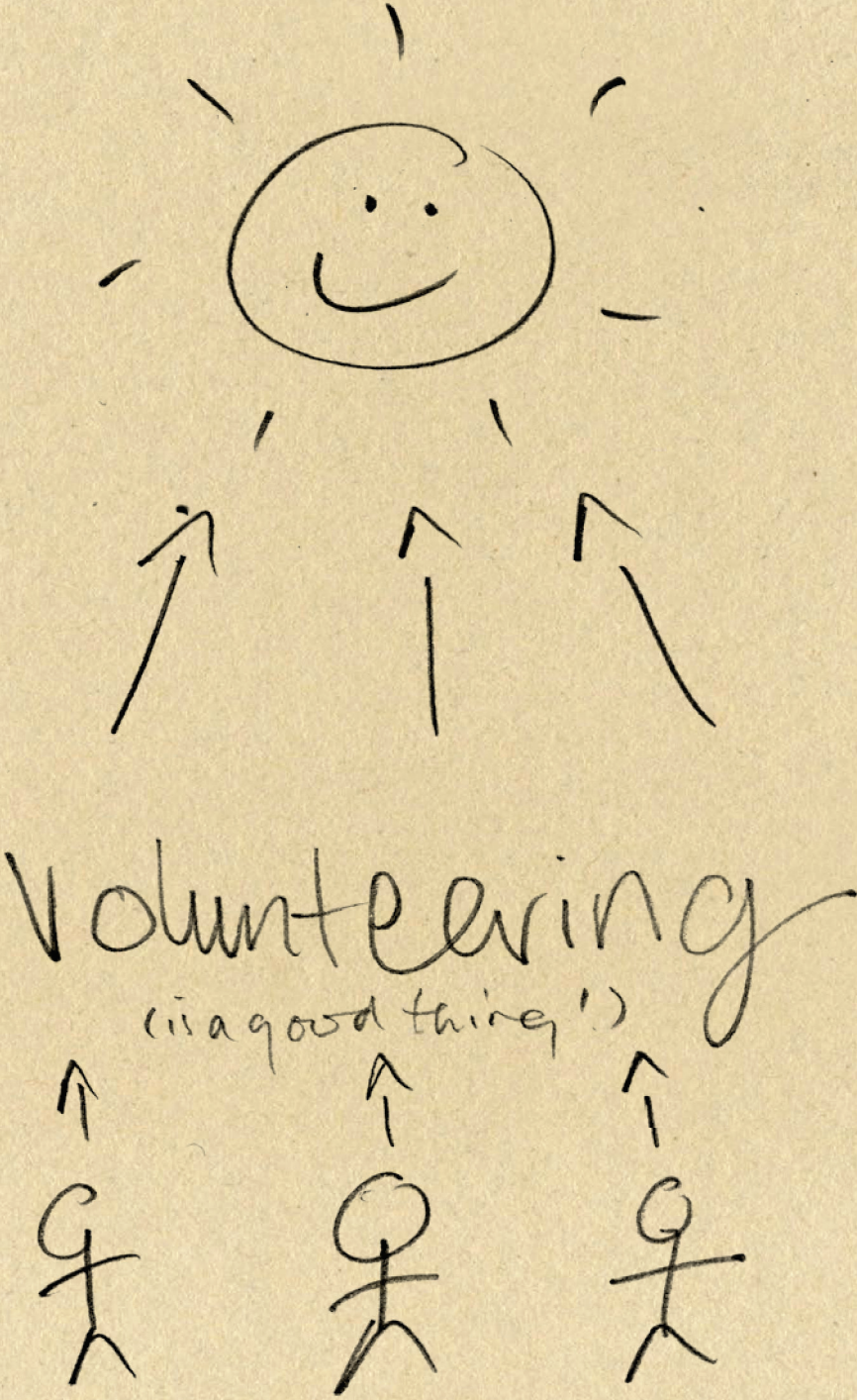
The impact of volunteering can already be seen right across the City, be it through different communities and age groups engaging with each other, vulnerable residents improving their health or developing skills for work and help and support with daily life for those in need.

However, we are not complacent. We believe that there is still more that can be done to encourage people to volunteer in Brighton & Hove. Opportunities could be made more accessible and information better co-ordinated. The whole volunteering experience could be improved - for all stakeholders - and the value that it delivers made more explicit. We also have further to go in looking at proper resourcing for volunteering and making more of potential links to gaining skills and experience for paid employment.

This Volunteering Strategy aims to address these challenges and to support work by all our partners to ensure that Brighton & Hove is a City where everyone has the chance to volunteer. But above all, I believe that the voluntary sector must be free to develop according to the ambitions and passions of the people who participate in it, and the needs of the people they help. A society which values and supports volunteering is a healthy and thriving society.

Councillor Dee Simson

Cabinet Member for Community Affairs, Inclusion and Internal Relations



about: volunteering

Throughout this document a series of ‘**about**’ pages feature supportive information and case studies to broaden understanding of volunteering in general and supplement the strategy:

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Executive summary

Volunteering is in our social DNA

The release of *Manifesto for Change*¹ in January 2008 firmly placed Volunteering on the national agenda and posed a vision where;

“... volunteering becomes part of the DNA of our society – it becomes integral to the way we think of ourselves and live our lives, and we are inspired to contribute in this way.”

For those of us involved in volunteering and who are supported and touched daily by the efforts and enthusiasm of volunteers we believe this to already be the case for a significant majority of the residents of Brighton & Hove. In a City where there is already a strong tradition of volunteering and community activism, this strategy seeks to build upon that tradition, and enable the environment for volunteering in all its forms to flourish.

The last year has seen an unprecedented interest in volunteering across the country both from individuals and central government. Whilst this may have been ignited by the release of “Manifesto for Change”, the economic downturn has created an environment where people are increasingly seeking a ‘different’ type of opportunity and a different way of shaping, influencing and contributing to the communities in which they live. The ability of volunteering to cross sectors, cultures and age groups provides such an opportunity and the recommendations made here seek to strengthen local volunteering in a way that not merely reacts to current circumstances but addresses the future – whatever that may hold.

The Brighton & Hove City Employment and Skills Plan acknowledges the way volunteering creates opportunities, particularly to gain skills and as a pathway to work, and this strategy has been commissioned by the City Employment and Skills Steering group using Local Area Business Growth Incentive funding. It has been further funded by Brighton & Hove City Council.

This starting point places emphasis on the current economic climate and therefore volunteering as a pathway to paid employment and this has contributed greatly to the increased interest in volunteering locally over the last year. However, throughout the whole process of drawing this strategy together it was widely acknowledged and at times passionately implored that volunteering is so much more than that – what people gain from their volunteering, the benefits to the organisations that they volunteer for and the benefits to the wider society.



Our Vision

“... that Brighton & Hove is a City where residents feel inspired to volunteer and participate in community activity, have the opportunity to do so and are celebrated and recognised in their efforts”

1. Manifesto for Change; Report of the Commission on the Future of Volunteering – January 2008

Executive summary

What we discovered in drawing this strategy together would support this idea. We found that volunteering builds social capital, the social glue that makes society work, and thereby improves community safety. We found that volunteering has a major impact on the volunteer themselves; improving both mental and physical well-being and thereby enhancing quality of life for the individual. We discovered how it can improve self confidence and skills, give a sense of social value to those who cannot work and is often a route back into employment for those who can. And we found that it has a particular benefit to the more vulnerable and socially excluded members of our community and can provide them with opportunities they otherwise would not have. Lastly, we found that volunteers bring skills, time, energy, passion and diversity to the organisations that host them; enhancing, enabling and developing service delivery.

Main Findings of Consultation

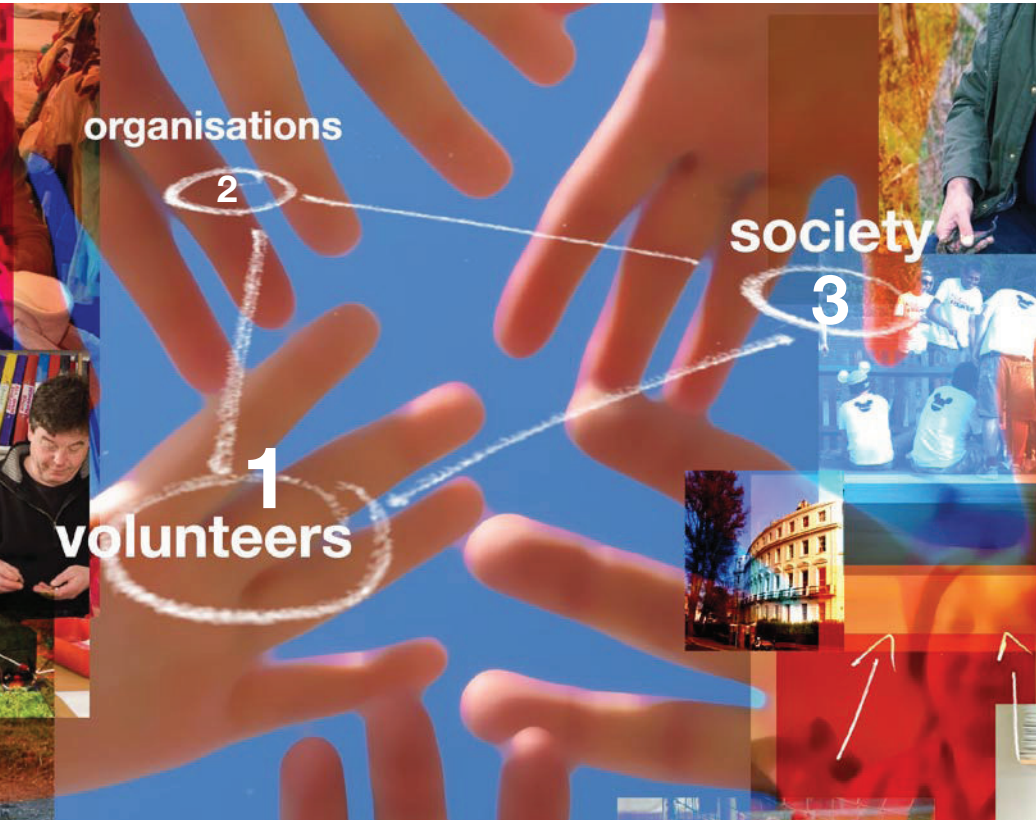
- Volunteering improves quality of life both for volunteers and for the City. It is an excellent tool for helping the City hit key strategic targets in the areas of social inclusion, mental and physical health, community safety and employability
- Volunteering not only adds real capacity to the City but also has real benefits for those that volunteer
- Good volunteer management and good matching, particularly for disadvantaged groups, are critical to retaining volunteers and to keeping people volunteering
- The number of volunteers in the City can be expanded through increasing the capacity of organisations to manage volunteers
- Disadvantaged people have support needs that require dedicated resourcing
- Increasing employer-supported volunteering schemes will not only increase volunteering opportunities but is likely to lead to employers taking greater account of volunteering experience when recruiting
- The recession is increasing the numbers wanting to volunteer but is also displacing more disadvantaged people from volunteering

2. Taking Account: an economic and social audit of the third sector in Brighton and Hove' September 2008
3. http://www.2020community.org/downloads/site2020/downloads/Community_Strategy.pdf

Triple impact: the volunteering benefit triangle

Brighton & Hove has a thriving Third Sector with approximately 19,200 volunteer positions, giving 57,600 per week of volunteer hours (an annual salary equivalent of £24 million)². Without volunteering and volunteers our social care, healthcare, recreational and education systems would be impoverished and the environment that we live in would not be as safe, green and clean as it is. Volunteering not only makes an essential contribution to the well being of Brighton and Hove, but the further development of volunteering will enable the City to reach many of its targets in the 2020 Sustainable Community Plan³.

This Triple Impact, on society, the individual and the organisations for whom they volunteer, is why volunteering is so important to the City. Public, private and third sector agencies need to work together to ensure that these crucial opportunities continue to be supported and developed.



Executive summary

Strategic priorities and broader understanding

This document sets out strategic priorities for volunteering in Brighton & Hove that, if addressed, will set us on the path to realising these opportunities. It also sets out to provide a broad understanding base of volunteering in the City in a way that is relevant and informative to a diverse spectrum of readers with a vested interest in realising the potential of volunteering - commissioners, volunteer managers, funders, decision-makers, volunteers, residents.

The priorities outlined in this strategy pave the way for a 5 year action plan that will enable the City to;

- Achieve the target set within our Local Area Agreement⁴ for; **National Indicator 6**⁵ - Participation in Regular Volunteering (Year 1 target: 26.6% as measured by the 2011 Place Survey)
- Assist with meeting the targets set within our Local Area Agreement for; **National Indicator 4** - percentage of people who feel they can influence decision in their locality, by increasing levels of community activity (Year 1 target: 30.6% as measured by the 2011 Place Survey)
National Indicator 7 – Environment for a thriving third sector, by increasing the capacity of the Third Sector through volunteering (Year 1: target 25% as measured by the 2011 Place Survey)
- Increase the number of volunteering opportunities by 2.7% a year (as measured by Taking Account)

Volunteering could be described as being all things to all people. However, whilst the activity may defy clear boundaries, we hope to have produced a clear starting point. A starting point from which we can move forward and build.

Alison Marino

Volunteer Centre Brighton & Hove
on behalf of the City Volunteering Strategy Steering Group

4. Local Area Agreements (LAAs) set out the priorities for a local area agreed between central government and a local area (Local Strategic Partnership) and other key partners at local level.
5. National Indicators are the means of measuring national priorities that have been agreed by central government.



The Big Picture



I give a little, I receive
a little, and I'm part of
the family.

The Big Picture: Defining Volunteering

For the purposes of the strategy, we used the following definition of volunteering as taken from “The (National) Compact Code of Good Practice on Volunteering”:

“We understand the term volunteering to include formal activity undertaken through public, private and voluntary organisations as well as informal community participation and campaigning. For the purpose of this Code, volunteering is defined as an activity that involves spending time, unpaid, doing something that aims to benefit the environment or individuals or groups other than (or in addition to) close relatives.”

There is a strong tradition of community activism within Brighton & Hove – individuals who are engaging in their community at grassroots level, investing their time, energy and skills to making their ‘community’ a better place in which to live and who contribute to the bank of social capital. Much of this ‘volunteering’ is supported by organisations such as the Trust for Developing Communities or Residents’ Associations.

However many people do not identify their activity as volunteering or themselves as volunteers. Amongst other things people may more readily identify themselves as a member, associate or simply that they are ‘helping out’. The use of the term “community activist” throughout this document does not mean that they are necessarily involved in a campaigning role, simply that they are active in their community.

Volunteering can be hard to define precisely. It may further include work experience placements where a participant is doing unpaid work as part of a training scheme or back-to-work programme. Although this may be mandatory for some people it is often done willingly with an intention to get into work and people may continue to volunteer beyond the length of the ‘required’ period. Apart from such placements large numbers of people volunteer for anything from a couple of hours to several days a week resulting in a move back into employment.

In addition, beyond the scope of this strategy we acknowledge that a large amount of truly informal volunteering (volunteering activity not linked to any organisation or group) takes place within Brighton & Hove and that this adds richly to the fabric of life within the City.



about: the volunteering journey

case study career pathways

Leigh was a BA in English Literature student at the University of Sussex. He was placed at The Friends Centre through Project V (the University of Sussex volunteering scheme, part- funded by Sussex Plus). As a classroom assistant he supported the work of the teacher and helped facilitate English as a foreign language sessions.

‘My school placements co-ordinated by Project V certainly, and without doubt, were instrumental and vital in me gaining the necessary experience to be accepted on the course. Additionally, my volunteering in the final year (assisting with weekly TEFL courses in Brighton) also co-ordinated by Project V, not only gave me additional teaching experience, but also enabled me to further my knowledge in the workings of the English language. This voluntary experience also has given me an additional referee (the class-teacher) who I am grateful for in terms of being rewarded with the Volunteering England Gold Award and, through my work with her, and experience with Project V, will hopefully help me secure my first teaching post.’

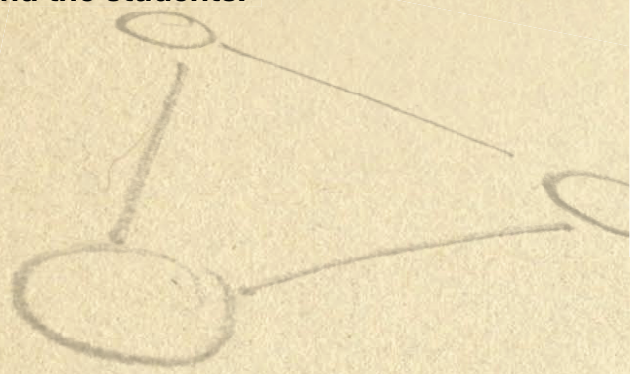
Leigh has now moved on to do his PGCE course at a different University.

case study gaining skills

Active Student, the volunteering service for students at the University of Brighton together with a Senior lecturer in Pharmacy runs a volunteering project exclusively for pharmacy students called ‘Active Pharmacy’.

The majority of older people take their medications incorrectly – Active Pharmacy is about informing older people about their medications, and at the same time giving pharmacy students practical experience of communicating with the client group they will be working with when they graduate. Student volunteers pair up with an older person who is a medication user, and discuss the medication, illness and the role of a community pharmacist. The student volunteer then researches answers to any queries the older person has, and feeds this back to the older person.

Mike Ellis-Martin, Senior Lecturer in Pharmacy says, **“Active Pharmacy gives students the chance to put into practice the information they are learning. It increases their confidence, it’s fun, and at the same time promotes learning between people in the community and the students.”**



The Big Picture:

Four Key Principles of Volunteering

Four key principles have been agreed as fundamental to volunteering, and as such have been accepted in England as the basis for the ‘Volunteering: Compact Code of Good Practice’. They are:

Choice

Volunteering must be a choice freely made by each individual. Freedom to volunteer implies freedom not to become involved. People should have a choice of the type of volunteering they want to do, when they can do it and the organisations with which they can volunteer.*

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.

Mutual benefit

Volunteers offer their contribution and skills unwaged but should benefit in other ways in return for their contribution. Giving time voluntarily must be recognised as establishing a reciprocal relationship in which the volunteer also benefits and feels that his or her contribution is personally fulfilling.

Recognition

There should be explicit recognition that valuing the contribution of volunteers is fundamental to a fair relationship between volunteers, volunteer involving organisations and government. This includes recognising the contribution to the organisation, the community, the social economy and wider social objectives.

These principles underpin the work of this strategy and it is the strategy’s aim to identify activities that support these principles in practice.

* We recognise that some work placements are “mandatory” but that participants will often access them willingly. Most Third Sector organisations are unlikely to host an unwilling participant.



“I’m meeting my community instead of casting my eyes down as I pass them in the street.”
A volunteer
Source: Online survey consultation

The Big Picture

National Policy and Context

Over the last three years the investment from central government in volunteering has grown and it has become an increasingly high-profile topic for ministerial interest. The Cabinet Office report *The Future Role of the Third Sector in Social and Economic Regeneration*, released in July 2007, set out plans to promote the partnership between the Government and the response⁶ of the Office of the Third Sector to *Manifesto for Change* supports many of the recommendations laid out by the commission. Not least it committed over £515 million to third sector programmes over the three year comprehensive spending review period – of which we are half way through.

Programmes invested in to date have included:

- **Making volunteering open to all;** Goldstar programme
- **Youth and Intergenerational volunteering;** V (younger people) volunteering projects
- **Modernising Volunteering;** Capacity Builders funding
- **Reward and Recognition;** Queen’s award for voluntary service
- **Training;** e.g. investment in the training of volunteer managers and the extension of Train to Gain to volunteers
- **Public Service Delivery;** £65 million into Futurebuilders Fund – providing loans and grants to organisations looking to deliver public services
- **Strengthening Communities;** approximately £150 million investment via Grass Root Grants, endowment pots and community-owned buildings
- **Olympic Investment;** London 2012 ‘Get Set, Go Further’ project
- **Access to All Fund;** a pilot scheme offering bursaries to enable those with disabilities to volunteer
- **Impact Assessment;** Office of the Third Sector to run a new project on Social Return on Investment (SROI) to be taken forward over 2008-2011
- **Volunteering in the recession;** ‘Real Help for Communities; Volunteers, Charities and Social Enterprises’; an Office of the Third Sector action plan to support these groups through the recession
- **Every Child Matters;** emphasises increasing children and young people’s participation in civic life, and in volunteering specifically

impact of the
recession
highlights huge
rise in demand
for volunteering

Source: Third Sector Online, 29 January 2010

6. Government response to the Commission on the Future of Volunteering – Office of the Third Sector March 2008

about: demand

Volunteer centres swamped by surge in enquiries, says report

By Kaye Wiggins, Third Sector Online, 29 January 2010

Volunteering England research on the impact of the recession highlights huge rise in demand

Volunteer centres are facing “crisis points” as demand for volunteering placements increases and funding is cut or remains at the same level, according to a report from Volunteering England www.volunteering.org.uk .

The report, Volunteering in the Recession www.volunteering.org.uk/WhatWeDo/Policy/whatwearesaying/Volunteering+in+the+recession.htm found nearly 90 per cent of volunteer centres experienced an increase in the number of enquiries about placements between March and August last year. It says some centres reported twice as many enquiries as they had done during the same period in 2008.

“We face crisis points in volunteering at the time when its value has become most apparent in assisting the national economy and contributing to social policy goals,” the report says.

“Problems are reported in finding enough placements to cope with all the enquiries and even in finding time to answer enquiries.”

Volunteer management resources are being reduced, which threatens to adversely affect the quality of volunteering experiences, it says.

It also warns that volunteer centres have expressed fears that thousands of potential volunteers will be alienated, resulting in a long-term negative impact.

Cuts in local funding for some volunteer centres are leading to cuts in staffing and forcing some centres to close, it says.

It adds that some volunteer-involving organisations are wary of taking on unemployed people who are keen to return to work because they are likely to stop volunteering when they find jobs.

The report calls for “sustainable funding” from local authorities and central Government, saying volunteering could help the Government to achieve its social policy goals.



The Big Picture:
Local volunteering activity

The 2008 Place Survey⁸ measured the number of people who participated in regular volunteering and reported that 24.3% of residents volunteer.

The recent report *Taking Account: an economic and social audit of the third sector in Brighton and Hove* (September 2008) provides further information on our local third sector and volunteering activity. Key data includes;

- There are approximately 1,600 third sector organisations in Brighton and Hove, who contribute a staggering £96 million to the Brighton and Hove economy each year
- The sector is a significant employer in the City, employing about 8,000 people
- Only 43% of its income comes from grants, of which the majority (62%) comes from outside the City
- There are 19,200 volunteer positions, giving 57,600 hours per week
- If volunteers were paid the same rate as workers in the third sector their annual salary bill would be worth £24 million
- Ages of volunteers: Vast majority of volunteers (69%) and management committee members (73%) are between 25 to 59 years old. Those under 25 represent 18% of volunteers and those over 60, 13%. This is in line with the population figures for each age group in the City
- Sex of volunteers: 66% of volunteers are women compared with 34% of men. National data states that there is no significant difference between the number of men and women who volunteer nationally so Brighton & Hove may differ to other parts of the country in this respect
- Minority Groups: Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender [LGBT] people account for 3% of volunteers, Black and Minority Ethnic [BME] people 3% and disabled people 4%. Each of these is an under representation of the Brighton & Hove population as an overall. Some groups stated that they do not gather this type of data for volunteers and thus these figures must be treated with caution
- Amongst management committee members 6% are LGBT, 7% BME and 10% people with disabilities. This is an indication of good representative governance in the third sector

19,200 volunteer positions
57,600 hours per week
worth £24 million
contribute £96 million to
the city's economy each
year

8. Place Survey; A national survey carried out at the end of 2008. Approx. 6,000 households across Brighton & Hove were surveyed, measuring people's levels of satisfaction with their quality of life and local services.

The above findings would suggest that BME, LGBT, disabled people and men are most under-represented in local volunteering. However, this strategy acknowledges that other groups are at risk of social exclusion and/or experience specific barriers when accessing volunteering.

A recent exploration of volunteering activity undertaken by younger people expands upon the above figures and demonstrates the significant contribution that 14-25 year olds make to the City. The following figures⁹ highlight the logged volunteering time given through local younger people volunteering programmes over the last 12-18 months.

Age Range	Programme	Volunteering Hours
16-25yrs	214 younger people have achieved a volunteering award	10,700
	372 younger people have participated in VInvolved	11,160
14-16yrs	Brighton & Hove Duke of Edinburgh Scheme	14,090
	Brighton & Hove Youth Awards	6,960
TOTAL		42,910 hours

These figures are likely to be an under-estimate. When the review examined the volunteering activity undertaken in Schools it revealed that many Schools have developed a range of ‘community service’ activities independently, often based around their Specialist status, specific initiatives or the passion and enthusiasm of students, teachers and parents.

Examples of these activities include:

- The majority of Primary, Secondary and Special Schools have School Councils/Forums, many have student governors and citywide there is an elected Youth Parliament.
- Over half of the secondary schools are working with local Allotment schemes to develop community allotments
- All schools participate in the annual Brighton Festival Children’s Parade helping Primary children to make costumes
- Schools fundraise for a variety of local, national and international charities with organised events and individual activities
- Brighton & Hove is one of five pilot areas across England participating in a £7m programme which aims to engage 14-16 year olds in community action and volunteering.



volunteering: massive potential to impact on crises and challenges facing our society

9. Work undertaken and figures supplied by Brighton & Hove Volunteers and Children and Younger People’s Team, BHCC (Sept 2009)

about: brokerage

The aim of volunteering brokerage is to find a good match between a volunteer and an organisation by understanding the needs of both, facilitating contact between the two and, often, supporting that relationship once contact is made.

The type of brokerage support required can, amongst other things, include:

- making an assessment of the volunteering opportunity on-site
- an assessment of volunteer skills and motivations and possible support needs
- arranging an interview on the behalf of a volunteer
- one-to-one bespoke support to the volunteer throughout the recruitment process and (where necessary) during the volunteering placement
- brokering and co-ordinating an entire event e.g. a team challenge

A match that meets the needs, goals and expectations of both the volunteer(s) and organisation is most likely to lead to a successful volunteering placement. Bespoke brokerage services are particularly important in matching volunteers with additional support needs where the assessment of need and the ability of the organisation to support that need is integral to a positive outcome.

A range of local organisations with specialist expertise provide volunteering brokerage within the City including generic, student, business and younger people brokerage, and brokerage of opportunities within the health and sports sectors. Details of these agencies can be found on pages 42 and 43.



When EDF Energy wanted their staff team to undertake a volunteering challenge they used the services of The Business Community Partnership to source, broker, organise and co-ordinate the challenge. Following a successful match with The Bridge Education and Community Centre, Karen Keech from EDF Energy reflected upon:

“The sense of achievement gained from having done something for the community and the better sense of camaraderie within the team throughout & since”

about: community activists and community groups

Many thousands of the people who volunteer each week across the city may not even consider what they do as volunteering. These are the people who run the thousands of local community groups and activities, many based in local neighbourhoods'. There is a huge range of different sorts of groups; tenants associations, sports groups, church groups, scouts and guides, festivals and fun days, lunch clubs, dance groups, local campaigns and so on.

These community activists may get involved because they respond directly to local groups advertising but often they are actually recruited by Community Development Workers, employed to support and develop local community life and groups. The Trust for Developing Communities works with other partners to employ Community Development Workers in the 13 neediest neighbourhoods in the city.

A Community Development Worker will:

- be aware of which groups in an area most need support, or new volunteers, and help new people to join existing groups
- help potential volunteers consider which activities they are most interested in
- support individuals who come forward to join with others to form new community groups, where the activity required doesn't already exist
- identify training courses for local volunteers so that they may run their groups most effectively
- support volunteers with advice around fundraising, management issues, employing staff etc
- be available to help groups and activists when they come up against unforeseen problems



In the last year neighbourhood community development workers worked with 1,988 community volunteers in 186 local community groups, with 721 of these being new volunteers who were recruited.

Details of the organisations employing community development workers in the city can be found on pages 42 and 43.

Peter Arnott-Job, Chair of The Hollingbury Tenants and Residents Association, said the following when reflecting upon the value of having a community development worker in their area:

“... has had a significant impact on Hollingbury, by enabling people to take control of what happens within their community. She has been instrumental in helping to set up community groups without being intrusive. Through hard work and perseverance she has helped build the foundations of what promises to be a thriving community. Those of us who live in Hollingbury and who have, because of her efforts, become involved have had our lives enriched as a result and, perhaps more importantly, discovered that we have the power to enrich the lives of others.”

Joining the dots

**continues to add
value to my life**

I've volunteered here
for four years now,
for me there is always
people here to talk to
and to lend a listening
ear. Volunteering here
continues to add value
to my life.



Joining the Dots: An opportunity to make the most of volunteering

This strategy is the first time a volunteering strategy for the City has been produced. We are proud to be amongst a handful of other Cities (including Edinburgh, Hull, Birmingham, Sheffield, Westminster) who have similarly spotted the opportunity that lies within volunteering and chosen to pioneer this journey.

Commissioning a citywide strategy

Joining the Dots: A triple impact volunteering strategy for Brighton & Hove 2010-2015 has been commissioned by the City Employment and Skills Steering Group and has received further financial support from Brighton & Hove City Council and the Stronger Communities Partnership.

This work has been led by a Volunteer Strategy Steering Group formed of representatives from key local volunteering agencies and with council representation. The work has been managed by the Volunteer Centre, a project of Brighton & Hove Impetus.

Volunteer Strategy Steering Group members:

Alison Marino	Volunteer Centre Brighton & Hove
Penny Baker	Volunteer Centre Brighton & Hove
Steve Lawless	B&H Impetus
Charlie Allsebrook	The Business Community Partnership
Paul Bramwell	Working Together Project
Michaela Rossman	Project V
Beth Thomas-Hancock	Active Student
Yvonne Marlow	Brighton Hospitals
Ian Chisnell	Faith Groups Representative
John Routledge	Brighton & Hove City Council
Rosaria Gracia	Trust for Developing Communities
Peter Mason	Sussex Community Internet Partnership
Amanda Cleaver	Southdowns Health Trust



**Joining the Dots:
Developing a citywide framework
for volunteering**

The purpose of the Volunteer Strategy is to ensure that the future environment of Brighton & Hove is one that encourages volunteering in all its forms to flourish both in the number of volunteering opportunities available and their quality.

It provides a framework that allows new volunteering partnerships to be forged and existing ones developed.

It will inform a 5 year plan of action that should enable those who support volunteering across the City to find better ways of ensuring our vision is realised.



Joining the Dots: Synergy with other citywide strategies

The Local Strategic Partnership, (known as The 2020 Community Partnership), brings together representatives from different sectors and develops a strategic vision for Brighton & Hove embodied in the Sustainable Community Strategy. It oversees a number of partnerships that work towards this strategic vision.

The Volunteering Strategy has sought to explore what volunteering has to offer in light of this and 3 other key local strategies:

1. Brighton & Hove’s ‘2020 Sustainable Community Strategy’

Brighton & Hove’s Sustainable Community Strategy sets out the vision and plans of the agencies, organisations and communities who work together through the 2020 Community Partnership to improve the quality of life in the City.

In the initial background work to the Volunteering Strategy a review was undertaken of the strategic objectives of the Local Strategic Partnership. **It was striking how much volunteering is already contributing, or has the potential to contribute, towards these objectives, particularly in the areas of promoting enterprise and learning, reducing crime and improving safety, improving health and well-being, strengthening communities and involving people.**

The scoping exercise for this strategy revealed numerous pieces of research that demonstrate the ability of volunteering to support these strategic objectives and address some of the most important issues facing the City.

The 2008 Brighton and Hove Local Area Agreement identifies “health inequalities particularly around mental health” as being the top socio-economic problem facing the City. Brighton & Hove has one of the highest rates of suicide in England. With respect to this, *Volunteering and Health*¹⁰, a review of 87 pieces of research on the impact of volunteering on health commissioned by Volunteering England in 2008, demonstrates that;

“Volunteering can increase volunteers’ longevity, improve their mental health, keep them fitter, and enable them to cope better with illness when it occurs. [And that]... it also has a positive impact on a range of factors affecting health service users including their self-esteem, disease management, adoption of healthy behaviours, compliance with medical treatment and relationships with health care professionals.”

This review also shows that volunteering reduces the incidence of depression, stress, hospitalisation, pain and psychological distress.

On the issue of crime and safety, a 2008 report¹¹ on the impact of social capital clearly notes the role of volunteering in building social capital and that where levels of social capital are high this is associated with lower crime rates. And it goes further to say that communities play an important role in crime prevention by providing informal social control, support and networks. As Dilulio (1996) puts it, “the presence of social capital provides community-oriented solutions to the crime problem and these solutions are more important than increasing expenditure on police or incarceration”.

Lastly, in enhancing the lives of people and their communities there is **strong evidence that volunteers are more satisfied with their life than non-volunteers**¹². Whilst ‘satisfied’ is unqualified here, it can be further explained by the weight of evidence¹³ that links volunteering as a pathway to inclusion and as a provider of a sense of purpose; be that through volunteering as an activity in itself or as a route to paid employment¹⁴.

2. City Employment and Skills Plan

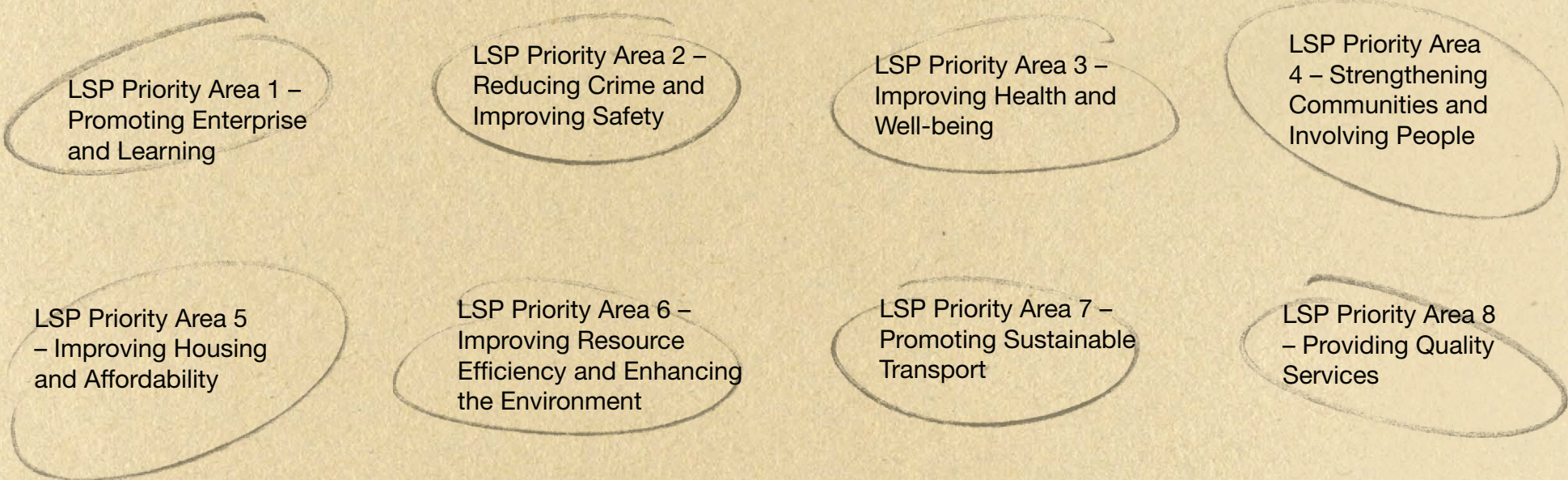
The City Employment and Skills Plan (CESP) 2007/08-2010/11 was launched in December 2007 and sets out targets to improve employment and skills in the City based under four strategic objectives:

- Support the Creation, Retention and Development of Local Business and Enterprise
 - Increase the Employment Rate in the City
 - Develop and Improve Skills for Work
 - Develop the Infrastructure and Intelligence to Support the Delivery of the Actions in the CESP
- The City Employment and Skills Plan acknowledges the role of volunteering in the following objectives and this strategy aims to support these objectives:
- 2b: Increase the number of people with labour market disadvantage accessing and remaining in sustainable employment
 - 2bviii Encourage volunteering as a route to gaining skills and gaining confidence
 - 3a: Improve the Skills and Employability of Young People
 - 3b: Improve the Skills of the City’s workforce
 - 3c: Improve the Skills of Disadvantaged Adult Residents in the City
 - 3c (vi) Strengthen community based learning initiatives through the voluntary and community sector to improve employability skills

10. Volunteering and Health. What impact does it really have?’ – Volunteering England September 2008 11. The Impact of Social Capital on Crime: Evidence from the Netherlands’ - Institute for the Study of Labor, July 2008 12. ‘Is Volunteering Rewarding in Itself?’ - IZA Discussion Paper No. 1045; Zurich IIEER Working Paper No. 180 13. ‘Volunteering for All? Exploring the link between volunteering and social exclusion’ - Institute for Volunteering Research 2003 14. Morgan Inquiry June 2008; ‘Young People’s Volunteering Involvement’. Chaired by Baroness Sally Morgan of Hutton

Joining the Dots:

How Volunteering contributes to Citywide strategic targets



The Brighton & Hove Strategic Partnership sets out the long-term citywide vision and outcomes. The Public Services Board brings public and voluntary sector bodies together behind a Local Area Agreement (LAA), which outlines the priorities for Brighton & Hove that have been agreed with all the city’s partner organisations, and with central Government. The LAA is made up of a set of National Indicators (NI) which outline these priorities. These include NI6: Participation in regular volunteering, NI4: % of people who feel they can influence decisions in their locality and NI7: Environment for a thriving third sector.

Examples of other National Indicators to which volunteering and/or community activity could have a significant impact on include:

NI117	16-18 year olds who are not in education, employment or training
NI152	The number of working age people claiming out of work benefits
NI017	Perceptions of anti-social behaviour
NI116	The percentage of children under 16 living in households in receipt of out of work benefits
NI119	Self-reported measure of peoples overall health and wellbeing
NI130	% Social care clients receiving Self Directed Support
NI150	Adults receiving secondary mental health services whilst in paid Employment
L 14	Reduction in suicide per 100,000 population
NI001	% of people who believe people from different backgrounds get on well together in their local area
NI003	Civic participation in the local area
NI008	Adult participation in sport and active recreation
NI011	Engagement in the Arts
NI175	Access to services and facilities by public transport, walking and Cycling

“The Brighton & Hove Strategic Partnership work towards achieving positive outcomes for the City that are sustainable and will help to build a community where everyone is included and has the opportunity to reach their potential. We recognise the importance of volunteering to the well-being of the city and its residents”.

Roger French
Chair of Brighton & Hove
Strategic Partnership

3. Community Engagement Strategy

Community activism is an important part of volunteering within the City. The City Volunteering Strategy aims to complement the Community Engagement Framework (2020 Community Brighton & Hove Oct 2008) that principally aims to improve engagement in civic decision-making with three over-arching aims:

- Improve engagement activity that enhances the lives of people and their communities
- Improve engagement activity that ensures opportunity for all
- Improve engagement activity that drives up the quality of services and makes better use of resources

4. Local Area Agreement

The City Council is one of 95 out of 135 local authorities to have chosen both NI6 - Participation in regular volunteering and NI7 - Environment for a Thriving Third Sector as part of their set of 35 local area indicators.

Brighton & Hove City Council

The City Council has recently been chosen as one of 18 community empowerment champions in England, identified as “pioneering a range of people power measures” and “helping to spearhead a reinvigoration of local democracy”.

This strategy supports the Council’s objectives in relation to volunteering embodied in the following:

- Brighton & Hove Compact
- ‘Our Corporate Plan 2008-2011’ – Brighton & Hove City Council; sets out clear ambitions in relation to growing the local economy, supporting people into work and creating opportunities and reducing barriers to achievement
- Brighton & Hove City Council’s 2008/9 Worklessness Activities; which says, ‘BHCC as an exemplar employer needs to focus upon... Increasing the number of volunteering opportunities across the organisation’
- Council Performance Improvement Report.



society

“We recognise the contribution that volunteers make to our services and the importance of putting a real value on the contribution it makes to the health services within our City. Furthermore, we support volunteering as an activity that can have a profound impact on the health and happiness of the volunteers taking part - our City residents.”

Darren Grayson
Chief Executive, Brighton and Hove City PCT

6 Strategic Priorities

33

I've really enjoyed working in the playroom... and all the training they put on, now I'm qualified to level 2 and ready to go for paid work.



now I'm qualified
ready for paid work



Strategic Priority 1

Increase numbers of volunteers in the City

- Break down barriers to volunteering for those wishing to volunteer and organisations that involve volunteers.
- Increase the capacity of organisations to involve (more) volunteers.
- Increase the capacity of organisations to offer volunteering opportunities to more disadvantaged people.
- Increase the capacity of organisations to offer a more diverse range of volunteering opportunities that utilises a wider range of volunteers with a wider range of skills.
- Support organisations not currently using volunteers to do so.
- Co-ordinate and raise awareness of the pathways into volunteering.

Findings:

There is not a shortage of people wishing to volunteer but a lack of capacity within organisations to involve (more) volunteers and/or implement employer-supported volunteering schemes

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

Community Activist (on-line consultation)

Volunteers and Community Activists are put off volunteering by a lack of flexibility in the times that are made available to them to volunteer and poor organisational response to their enquiries

On-line consultation respondents reported a lack of clarity around the roles of local brokerage services, and a lack of co-ordination, communication and partnership between agencies involved in volunteering across the City. This included gaps in information sharing and access to information.

There is a volunteer shortage in certain role areas namely; sports related roles, administration, mentoring and befriending

Organisations stated that the strongest benefit of volunteering involvement related to service delivery; volunteer involvement was the only way in which core services/projects/outputs were possible.

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

Volunteer-involving organisation (on-line consultation)

Findings sourced from a comprehensive consultation process, conducted as part of this strategy’s research and development – see methodology and full findings in the Appendices, available at http://www.bh-impetus.org/volunteer_centre/index.php

about: numbers

In the year 2008-2009 the Volunteer Centre Brighton & Hove received approximately 1800 new registrations from people wanting to volunteer; an increase of one third on the previous year.

Organisations express a willingness to involve (more) volunteers but lack the capacity to do so.

Involvement has benefits for the volunteer, the organisation and the service user.

case study

Service delivery using volunteers and what they have to gain

Brighton Women’s Centre (BWC) offers a range of services to women including a counseling service, drop-in, holistic therapy service and ‘Toybox’ preschool. Across 2008/2009 over 1500 women and children have accessed the services offered by the Centre. Approximately 55 volunteers support and deliver the services run by Brighton Women’s Centre in a variety of roles. The importance of the service and the role that volunteers play in delivering it is acknowledged by one service user who says;

“The centre is a lifeline. It helps me avoid isolation. Nothing is too much trouble for the volunteers. They are friendly, helpful and go out of their way. Always smiling.”

A spokesperson for BWC illustrates the value in involving volunteers, not only for the centre but in providing opportunities for volunteers wishing to access training and gain skills;

“Brighton Women’s Centre would be unable to operate as a vibrant, thriving and safe service without the continued dedication and commitment of our dynamic and diverse volunteer team. Uniquely, as an organization, we are fortunate to have volunteers donating time and resources across all three services from drop in support to fully qualified therapists working clinically with women to volunteers on childcare training in our Ofsted registered preschool. They enable us to offer a diverse range of activities and build capacity across the whole organization”.

The Brighton Women’s Centre volunteering programme costs approximately £40,00 per annum to deliver.

Strategic Priority 2

Expand access to volunteering for groups at risk of exclusion

- Embed values of equality and diversity into everyday practice in the marketing, recruitment and management of volunteers.
- Develop brokerage services that are tailored to support disadvantaged groups into volunteering.
- Increase the skills and time available to those who work with and support volunteers with additional support needs.
- Provide flexible volunteering opportunities and practical equipment that accommodate volunteer needs.
- Provide incentives to organisations to include (more) volunteers at risk of social exclusion.
- Promote volunteering as an activity that increases the inclusion of disadvantaged people.

Findings:

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

Volunteer-involving organisation (on-line consultation)

People are more likely to approach organisations to volunteer where equalities and diversity are embedded as values in practice not just policy.

Providing ‘safe’ environments which allow for disclosure and alleviate fear and vulnerability is important to volunteers at risk of exclusion.

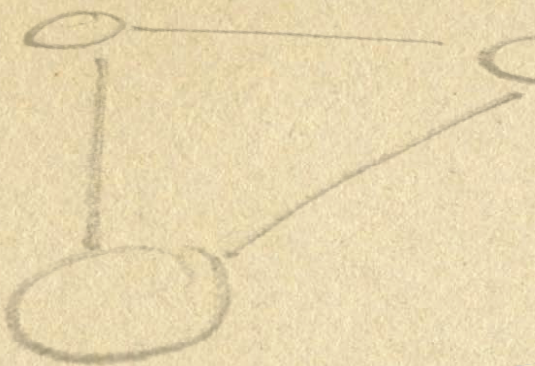
Where the volunteering is good, volunteers felt it can promote the integration of marginalized people.

Disabled people and/or those with health problems find access to placements a major barrier and there is often a lack of practical equipment that would enable them to perform roles and a lack of flexibility in accommodating the unpredictability of health problems.

The above sourced from equalities focus groups

People wanted publicity to reach out to specific stakeholder groups, in particular those at risk of social exclusion.

Findings sourced from a comprehensive consultation process, conducted as part of this strategy’s research and development – see methodology and full findings in the Appendices, available at http://www.bh-impetus.org/volunteer_centre/index.php



about: health

The 2008 Brighton and Hove Local Area Agreement identifies “health inequalities particularly around mental health” as being the top socio economic problem facing the City. It has one of the highest suicide rates in England and (based on the Index of Deprivation 2007) ranks as the 79th most deprived authority in England (out of 354) .

The city is home to large communities vulnerable to mental ill-health and/or exclusion including a large Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender community, Black and Minority Ethnic residents and disabled residents , .

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

Volunteering has a positive impact on mental health. People may benefit from volunteering whilst re-investing skills and experience in a particular service area.

case study

Impact of volunteering on Mental Health

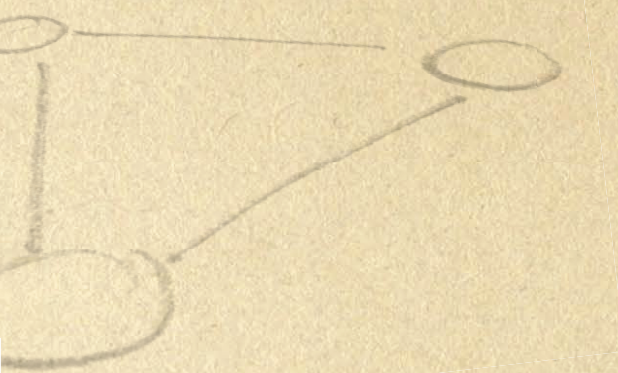
LiVE is a project of Mind Brighton & Hove, which seeks to promote good mental health across the City. LiVE runs a service user consultancy group which trains and supports its members to become service user consultants. The following describes the journey of one volunteer who joined this group as written up by the co-ordinator.

“When she started with LiVE she felt she was a real mess – very low confidence & self esteem, in meetings she was too shy to even ask where the toilet was, let alone talk. But soon she’ll be delivering training presentations, which 2 years ago she would have been far too nervous to even consider. She’s also seeing other service users supporting each other, feeling part of a group & getting stronger & more confident.

Sometimes the work is very challenging & brings up lots of difficult emotions, but it’s been really rewarding too, and good for her CV. Changes in mental health services can be very slow, but she feels sticking to our guns can make change happen bit by bit. She now has much more strength & courage & has learned how to stand up to people. LiVE is the most rewarding project she’s ever been part of - she knows she’s making a real difference & it’s a really positive part of her personal journey.

Also feels she’s having lots of opportunities that would never have come her way if she wasn’t part of LiVE, eg a high level training opportunity through the NHS & is being treated very well – talked to with real respect, getting £1000 worth of training & put up in a luxury hotel. Also was accepted on to an NHS personal development course due to LiVE, after her GP refused to refer her & really excited about positive impact that’s had on her wellbeing. Feels it has definitely changed her life. Having access to other awareness training courses was great too & as well as learning a lot she had a real laugh with other service users.”

37



Strategic Priority 3

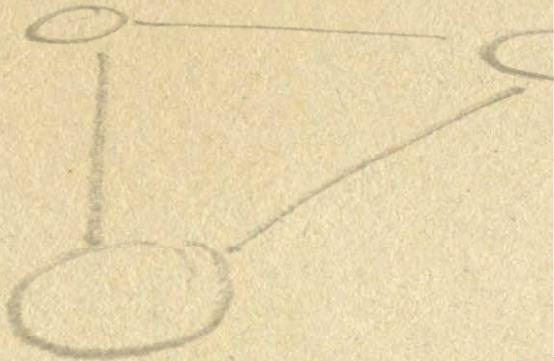
Increase recognition and value volunteers and volunteering

- Promote an understanding of volunteering as a critical part of a healthy and fulfilled society.
- Celebrate the contribution of volunteers in our City.
- Value our volunteers.
- Increase understanding of the benefits of volunteering.

Findings:

- Volunteers and Community Activists found a range of ‘thank you’ approaches important.
- Volunteers were most likely to leave a role if they don’t feel valued.
- Full inclusion in an organisation, such as increased responsibility and involvement in decision-making, was most important to Volunteers and Community Activists in feeling valued.
- There is a gap in the promotion of employer-supported volunteering programmes to employers and the benefits of such programmes to employees
- Volunteers, Community Activists and volunteer-involving organisations felt there was a need for greater promotion of volunteering in general
- The majority of Volunteers and Community Activists said their reason for volunteering was to gain personal satisfaction and a sense of social meaning not provided elsewhere.

Findings sourced from a comprehensive consultation process, conducted as part of this strategy's research and development – see methodology and full findings in the Appendices, available at http://www.bh-impetus.org/volunteer_centre/index.php



about: recognition

Volunteering and community activity is not an optional extra to public services but is an essential part of the social fabric.

Societies with higher levels of volunteering are happier and more fulfilled.

Volunteering and Community Activity should supplement and enhance the delivery of public services and not displace paid staff.

case study

The Bevendean Local Action Team

‘Run by the local community for the local community’

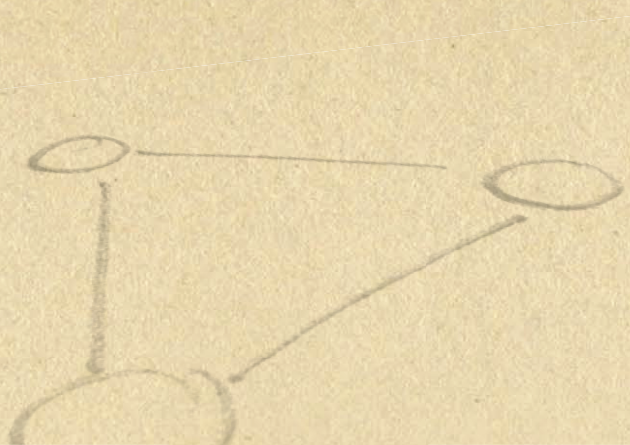
As Chair of Bevendean Local Action Team I oversee, run, co-ordinate and fundraise the day to day, long-term planning of the Bevendean Local Action Team (LAT). The vision of Bevendean LAT is to reduce anti-social behaviour and the fear of crime in order to enhance local community safety and well being within the association’s geographical area.

Amongst our aims is to be an ‘ever evolving... representative body for all members of the local community in Lower Bevendean (including The Avenue). ...That forges working partnerships and working agreements with all relevant service providers in order to reduce anti-social behaviour and the fear of crime’.

The Bevendean LAT has evolved from its initial concept some 6 years ago into a respected successful model of a true community lead Local Action Team.

All members of the committee are residents of the local area who are elected for a 12 month term. Meetings are held every 6 weeks and are open to every resident in the geographical area. Average attendance figures for each meeting are 20-40 members. Guests to these meetings may include service providers, local Councillors, Police, ASB officers, B&H housing officers, drug and alcohol out reach workers, community workers, University liaison officers and environmental officers. They attend in order for members and guests to interact, share information and work together as partners to reduce anti-social behaviour and the fear of crime in order to enhance local community safety.

The Bevendean LAT is an entirely voluntary community group that is run by the local community for the local community.



Strategic Priority 4

Improve experiences for volunteers and the organisations they volunteer for

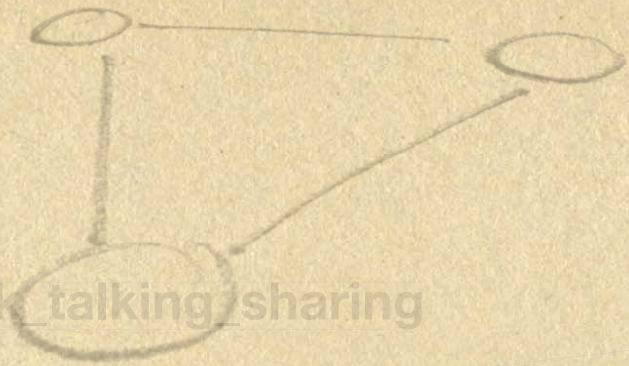
- ☞ Recognise the role of volunteer manager.
- Support people who manage volunteers to develop good practice through a variety of mechanisms.
- Encourage quality volunteering placements.
- Ensure volunteers are well-supported in their roles.
- Promote training available and develop to meet the needs of those who manage volunteers and volunteers.

feeling good_support_expectations_feedback_talking_sharing

Findings:

- The role of volunteer managers is not always well recognised. 1/3 of those consulted who had responsibility for volunteers did not have volunteer management as part of their job description
- 30% of volunteer managers were managing in excess of 50 volunteers
- Organisations found a ‘range’ of support services to be helpful, if not, very helpful including web-based services, volunteer management training, Volunteer Co-ordinators and one-to-one Good Practice support.
- Organisations, volunteers and service users would support a minimum standard of practice for all organisations that involve volunteers
- Volunteers most want to know that what they do genuinely helps the people or cause that they volunteer for
- Monitoring and evaluation, impact assessment, managing volunteers with additional support needs and the legal aspects of volunteer management were identified by organisations as areas in which they require further training

Findings sourced from a comprehensive consultation process, conducted as part of this strategy's research and development – see methodology and full findings in the Appendices, available at http://www.bh-impetus.org/volunteer_centre/index.php



about: experience

The success of a good volunteering experience is often measured in retention rates.

It is perhaps more helpful to focus on the expectations of the volunteer matching those of the organisation. If goals are agreed and achieved on both sides then a good retention rate could as well be 1 hour as 1 year.

Planning and full organisational buy-in helps build a culture that is receptive to the involvement of volunteers, includes them and is more likely to support and value them.

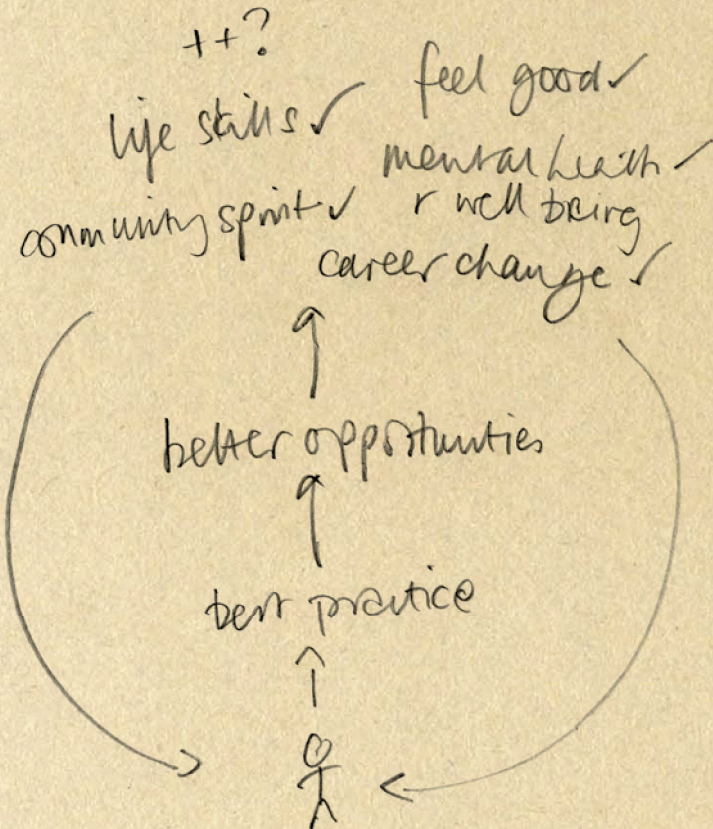
case study: Capacity Building Project

The Capacity Building Project is a partnership project which aims to build the capacity of voluntary organisations in the City. The Volunteer Centre Brighton & Hove is a delivery partner in this work providing one-to-one good practice support to organisations via its Outreach Development Worker. In an evaluation of the project, one organisation reports on the impact of the good practice support they received;

“We didn’t know where to start. We needed help with policies and procedures because our funding depended on having them and we wanted to make a good start. I didn’t know how to recruit volunteers and certainly not how to manage and support them. The Volunteer Development Worker helped me with all these and what was best was there was no pressure and no restrictive timelines.

We were given templates that were a real practical help and save time and having regular contact meant my confidence increased and I knew that what we had in place was good quality and legally safe.

Over time we have recruited over twenty volunteers and we would not have been able to do this safely without this service. I really value it.”



Strategic Priority 5

Enable development

Build and influence an environment that enables volunteering to have the maximum economic and social impact

- Raise employer awareness of volunteering as a means of gaining skills and experience and hence a legitimate pathway into employment.
- Enable employers and their employees to experience the benefits of volunteering through the development of their own employer-supported volunteering programmes.
- Address the challenges and harness the opportunities posed by the recession.

Findings:

- “Because of my history of volunteering, I was able to get the job that I’m in, through experience although I had never done this previously”.** Volunteer (online consultation)
- Volunteers and Community Activists reported a lack of recognition of their volunteering by employers in their recruitment processes.
- “Provides flexibility and less pressure than paid work. Builds confidence and self-worth and enables us to build skills and explore possible areas of work”.** Disabilities focus group
- The experiences of disabled volunteers found that private sector employers often do not see volunteering as ‘legitimate’ experience
- “It offers our employees the opportunity to get different experiences. It also allows employees to use some of the activities as team building exercises and networking opportunities through the company. It offers a different option for staff development, both soft skills and enhancing business skills and it embeds the ethos of the company as a friendly society to ‘do the right thing’ and get involved in our local community – raising moral with staff”.** Employer (online consultation)
- Lack of capacity impacting on employers implementing employer-supported volunteering programmes
- Employers were most likely to utilise web-based resources and there was good support for social networking sites as a support/sharing tool (this could move to the Good experiences page?)
- Over half of the organisations did not have a person clearly responsible for employer-supported volunteering within their job description
- Employers said that an increased variety of opportunities would improve their staff’s experience of employer-supported volunteering programmes, particularly including opportunities that met their business objectives
- Organisations are (and are expecting to) involve more volunteers in service delivery during the economic downturn
- Paid staff can have fears around being ‘replaced’ by volunteers and these fears can impact negatively upon both volunteers and paid staff
- As a result of the recession, an influx of volunteers with less employment barriers may further displace those with additional support needs from volunteering opportunities

opportunity_experience_networks_employment

about: employment

The City of Brighton & Hove faces a number of issues around worklessness including a high, static number of people claiming Incapacity benefits, a high churn of people on and off Job Seekers Allowance and an above-average number of young people not in education, employment and training^{1 2}.

The current economic climate brings about additional pressures, with a rising growth in unemployment in the 18-24 age group and an increase in people facing unemployment for the first time.

Volunteering can be a successful route into paid employment, and additionally so when the economic climate is poor. People,³ can acquire a range of vocational skills through their volunteering, which for some facilitates the route to paid employment and for others provides an alternative to employment. It can provide an opportunity to develop the transferable skills that employers find valuable; leadership, team working, self-confidence, initiative and organisational skills.

Also see VE/TUC document in appendices on strengthening relations between paid staff and volunteers.

case study:

Max at the Volunteer Centre

Max volunteered at the Volunteer Centre Brighton & Hove. This is her journey...**"I had been unemployed for about 6 months due to the downturn in employment within a finance/banking environment. I was missing the working environment and the daily interaction with people. I was aware my skills were being wasted and that I did not have the opportunity to gain new skills. I didn't really have any direction or purpose to my day and was aware of time passing. I started to look on the internet at various organisations and found the Impetus website. Didn't really find the intranet useful, however Impetus were offering a drop in service, which I thought would be useful as I wanted to be able to speak to someone, who may be able to point me in the right direction. I spoke to a member of staff at the Volunteer Centre and she suggested I look through the files to get an idea of what type of role was available. I was amazed at the number of opportunities available and also the variety of roles. The staff member at the Volunteer Centre said they were looking for more volunteers to assist with the drop in service. I applied for the role and was taken on after having an interview.**

Each week I would do a variety of hours in the office. No two days were the same. I had a very varied role, which included greeting and advising the public, up-dating the website, getting feedback from previous volunteers etc. I really enjoyed being part of the wider Impetus team and felt that I helped both people and local organisations. I loved being part of a work force again and being able to utilise my skills. I felt that volunteering gave me purpose to my day, together with gaining my confidence back. It also enabled me to justify my existence during my period of unemployment and gave me something to add to my CV. I believed I was giving something back to the community, instead of always taking, which gave me a great feeling. I gained full time employment and therefore had to give up volunteering. I am keen to suggest to my employer, the possibility of giving something back to the community by having them allow me to have day release from my role. I have suggested to a number of friends that they become volunteers. Volunteering is very worthwhile and offers so many opportunities, for people to utilise their skills, gain experience, and add something extra and different to the CV."

1. Local Area Agreement 2008-11, Brighton & Hove 2. For a list of Welfare to Work providers in the City please see Appendices; http://www.bh-impetus.org/volunteer_centre/index.php 3. Morgan Inquiry June 2008; 'Young People's Volunteering Involvement'. Chaired by Baroness Sally Morgan of Huyton 4. 'Volunteering for All? Exploring the link between volunteering and social exclusion' - Institute for Volunteering Research 2003

Strategic Priority 6

Ensure resources

- measure the cost and impact of volunteering

- Measure the full impact of volunteering.
- Increase understanding of the value and impact of volunteering on City-wide issues.
- Support organisations to demonstrate impact of their volunteering programmes.
- Measure the additional cost of supporting socially excluded volunteers and additional value gained by socially excluded people from their having participated in volunteering.

Findings:

- 61% of volunteer-involving organisations did not know how much their volunteers cost them
- Less than half of employer consultation respondents had a specific budget heading for employee-volunteering
- Half of organisations are systematically carrying out monitoring and evaluation of their volunteering programmes
- Half of organisations who involve volunteers did not have any impact measurement in place
- Employers found it difficult to measure the impact of employee involvement in volunteering

Findings sourced from a comprehensive consultation process, conducted as part of this strategy's research and development – see methodology and full findings in the Appendices, available at http://www.bh-impetus.org/volunteer_centre/index.php

about: resources

In an environment increasingly focused on outcomes, there is a need for the volunteering sector to demonstrate the impact of volunteering as not simply an optional extra but an activity that runs through everything.

Evidencing the social return on investment of volunteering will be vital if the sector is to harness opportunities brought about by changes in the funding landscape, allowing new partnerships and innovative service delivery mechanisms to develop.

case study: Neighbourhood Care Scheme

The Neighbourhood Care Scheme (NCS) is a project of Brighton & Hove Impetus the registered charity Brighton & Hove Community Initiatives. It is a good neighbourhood scheme that supports older people, people with physical disabilities and carers by recruiting local volunteers to support them in a variety of ways. NCS provides support for those groups who often do not qualify for care and support.

The health benefits to both scheme members and volunteers became evident in a 2008 survey undertaken by the NCS. 61% of scheme members said they felt better generally, with 42% feeling less depressed and 30% feeling at less risk of falling. Equally there was a positive impact on health within volunteers surveyed; 62% reported feeling generally better, 11% felt less depressed and 39% felt an increase in their self-esteem.

The work of the Neighbourhood Care Scheme contributes directly towards the City's strategic objectives around healthy ageing as well as those outlined in the PCT Strategic Commissioning Plan. These include, amongst others;

- Promote healthy ageing and support independence
- Provide more responsive and accessible care
- Support more people at home
- Increase the number of people supported in their own home
- Reduce the number moving to long-term residential care
- Further develop community service to prevent unnecessary admissions.
- Health and wellbeing for those with mental health problems.
- Enabling independence and supporting wellbeing
- Lack of support for carers

In the last year, the NCS has been recruiting a new volunteer every 4 days and since April 2004, NCS volunteers have made over 12,000 visits to scheme members, providing more than 23,000 hours of direct volunteer support. The gross cost of providing this support per volunteer-hour is £12.78, based on the quarter April-June 2009.

Implementing the Strategy

Strategic Priorities: How might we achieve them

The following pages provide examples of how the city may look when the strategy is implemented. The strategy needs to be read in conjunction with the action plan, which will include SMART targets. The action plan is a living document that will be regularly updated and is based on agreements between the various stakeholders of actions that will be resourced and achieve sought-after outcomes described here.

Volunteering has given me great satisfaction and pleasure. It is a joy to teach such a diverse yet harmonious range of students

well-being
great satisfaction
and pleasure



Strategic Priority 1

Increase numbers

Increase the number of volunteers in the City

How would we do this?

- Increase the capacity of organisations to manage volunteers.
- Increase the capacity of organisations to manage volunteers with higher support needs.
- Improve co-ordination of city brokerage and volunteering services.
- Market and promote awareness and understanding of city brokerage services, volunteering support and pathways in to volunteering.
- Provide support to organisations in the start-up and development of volunteering programmes.
- Address practical barriers to volunteering.

Potential partners

Volunteer Centre, The Business Community Partnership, Brokerage agencies, local third sector organisations

What success may look like:

- Achievement of NI6 target; 26.6% as measured by 2011 Place Survey
- Quarterly meetings of Volunteering Strategy Steering group
- Improved awareness of brokerage services
- Increased partnership work between brokerage agencies
- Increase in Third Sector organisations delivering services using volunteers

Strategic Priority 2

Expand access

Expand access to volunteering for groups at risk of social exclusion

How would we do this?

- Develop bespoke brokerage services that best address volunteer needs and aptitudes.
- Provide positive incentives and resources to organisations to involve more volunteers from groups at risk of exclusion
- Develop good practice and training in the recruitment and support of volunteers with additional support needs.

Potential partners

Volunteer Centre, Commissioners, Working Together Project
Local agencies supporting groups at risk of exclusion

What success may look like:

- Increase in volunteering participation by under-represented groups as measured by Taking Account
- An increase in the number of organisations making reasonable adjustments for disabled volunteers
- Better levels of support for volunteers with mental health issues
- Improved volunteering environments for volunteers with additional needs

Strategic Priority 3

Increase recognition

Recognise and value volunteers and volunteering

How would we do this?

- Organise and promote new and existing value and recognition events for volunteering.
- Market and promote volunteering to specific stakeholder groups.
- Promote the benefits of volunteering through a programme of work with local employers.

Potential partners

Volunteering Strategy Steering Group, local third sector, statutory and private sector organisations

What success may look like:

- One city-wide volunteer recognition event per year
- Volunteers given civic awards for their achievements

Strategic Priority 4

Improve experiences

Improve the volunteering experience for both the volunteer and organisation/individual they volunteer for

How would we do this?

- Improve quality of volunteer management through provision of a range of good practice support services to volunteer managers.
- Support and co-ordinate peer support initiatives and develop networking amongst volunteer managers.
- Increase the range of volunteer opportunities.
- Promote Investing in Volunteers.
- Develop a common quality mark for volunteering programmes within the City.
- Deliver and develop training to volunteers and volunteer managers.
- Promote community based resources.

Potential partners

Working Together Project, Volunteer Centre, Capacity Building Project, Trust for Developing Communities, Sussex Community Internet Project

What success may look like:

- Organisations receiving one-to-one good practice support
- Development of Volunteering Charter
- Establishment of Co-ordinator’s forum
- Development of social-networking site
- Increase in the number of volunteering opportunities available

Strategic Priority 5

Improve development

Enable an environment in which volunteering can have the maximum economic and social impact

How would we do this?

- Promote the benefits of volunteering to employers.
- Raise awareness of the benefits of implementation and staff participation in employer-supported volunteering across all sectors.
- Increase the number of work-focused volunteering opportunities.
- Increase the ways volunteers and volunteer managers may build skills, learning and employability.
- Deliver good practice advice to the Business Sector in the management of volunteers.
- Develop a work placement database.
- Influence and campaign on the behalf of the sector.

Potential partners

The Business Community Partnership, Volunteer Centre, Statutory partners, Employers, Pathways to work contract providers

What success may look like:

- Established baseline of Employer-supported Volunteering schemes
- Increase in the number of Employer-supported Volunteering schemes
- Development of Brighton & Hove City Council Employer-supported volunteering scheme
- Increased work-focused volunteering opportunities across the sectors

Strategic Priority 6

Ensure resources

Ensure that volunteering across the City is adequately resourced

How would we do this?

- Build awareness and understanding of value and impact of volunteering amongst commissioners.
- Increase understanding of the value and impact of volunteering on City-wide issues.
- Effectively demonstrate impact.

Potential partners

Volunteering Strategy Steering group, Commissioners, Working Together Project, Taking Account working group, CUPP

What success may look like:

- Increased capacity of local VCS organisations to involve more volunteers
- Increase in work commissioned out to the volunteering sector
- Established and agreed baseline for measuring and establishing volunteering value and impact
- Increased funding in the sector
- Triple impact of volunteering adopted as part of commissioning and procurement criteria

Implementing the Strategy

What's next?

Situation at start 2010

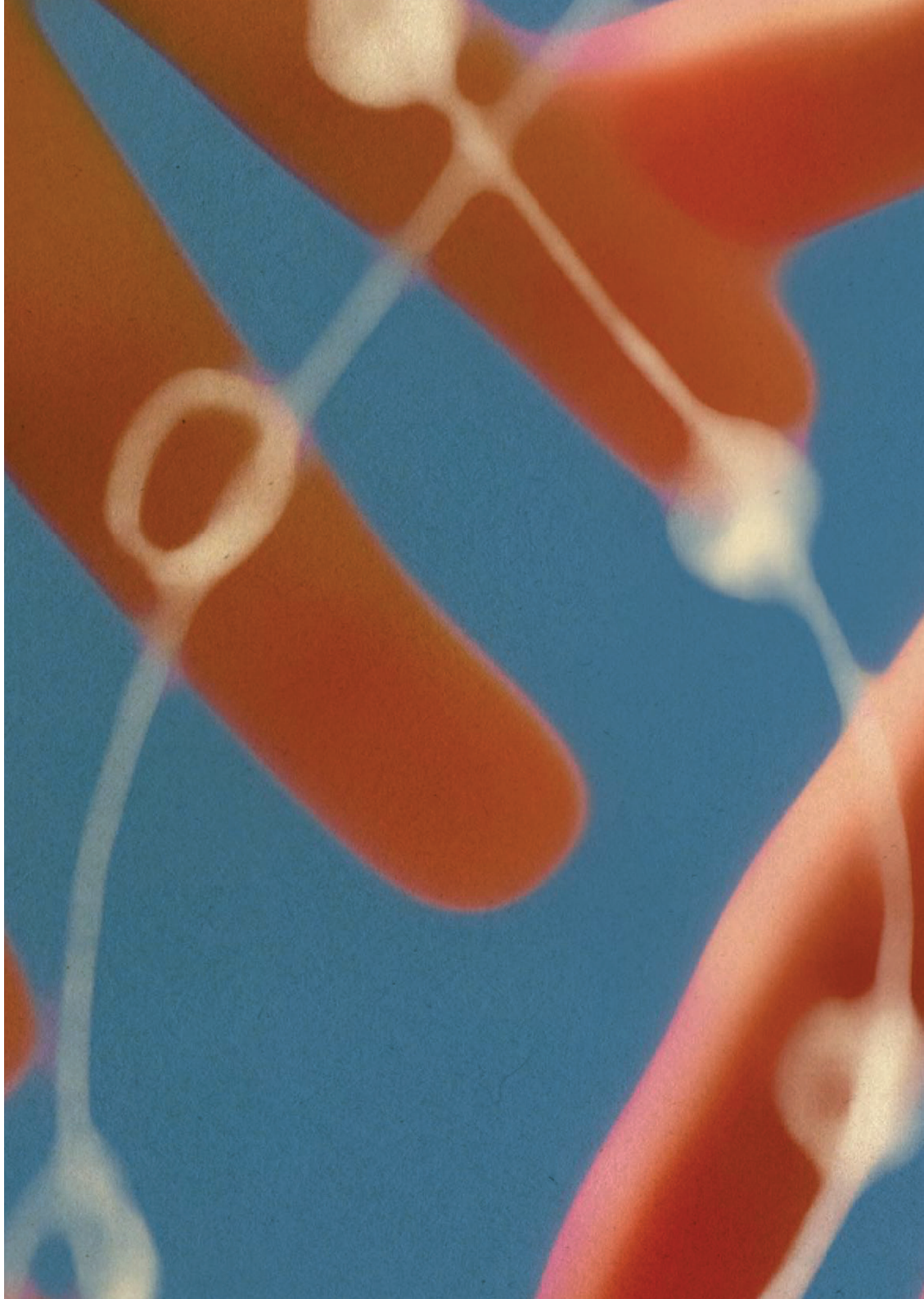
- Volunteering Strategy Steering Group to continue and expand membership
- Strategy adopted by Local Strategic Partnership (March 2010)
- Strategy approved by Brighton & Hove City Council (May 2010)
- Consultation work on 5 year action plan undertaken (Feb-Apr 2010)
- Equalities impact assessment (within action plan)
- Action plan finalised (May 2010)
- Steering group to review progress on activity (across 5 year plan)

Action Plan

The next critical step is to finalise the 5-year action plan emerging from the Strategy. The Strategy points us towards what we need to do. The action plan confirms how, by whom, and the resources that will be needed. Consultation on the action plan is critical in ensuring that potential partners to this work are identified, have the opportunity to influence in what way activities are delivered and by whom and are therefore fully engaged in working towards the strategic priorities.

Equality Impact Assessment

Equality Impact Assessment is an essential part of the strategy development process. An Equality Impact Assessment is used to look at the strategy and identify what effect (or likely effect) it will have on different groups within our communities. This assessment will help inform the action plan and ensure that the activities within it properly serve, support and are accessible to a diverse local community.



Implementing the Strategy

Get involved.
Help join the dots

Drawing together this strategy has been inspiring; the volume of interest, the breadth of interest and the passion behind the interest – from whatever perspective it may have come.

We hope that this Strategy will inspire those who started with little knowledge of volunteering to find out more, encourage those who thought volunteering was ‘one’ thing to see it as more, and demonstrate the impact of volunteering to those who invest in City services.

Further information

This and other documents will be hosted on the Volunteer Centre Brighton & Hove website

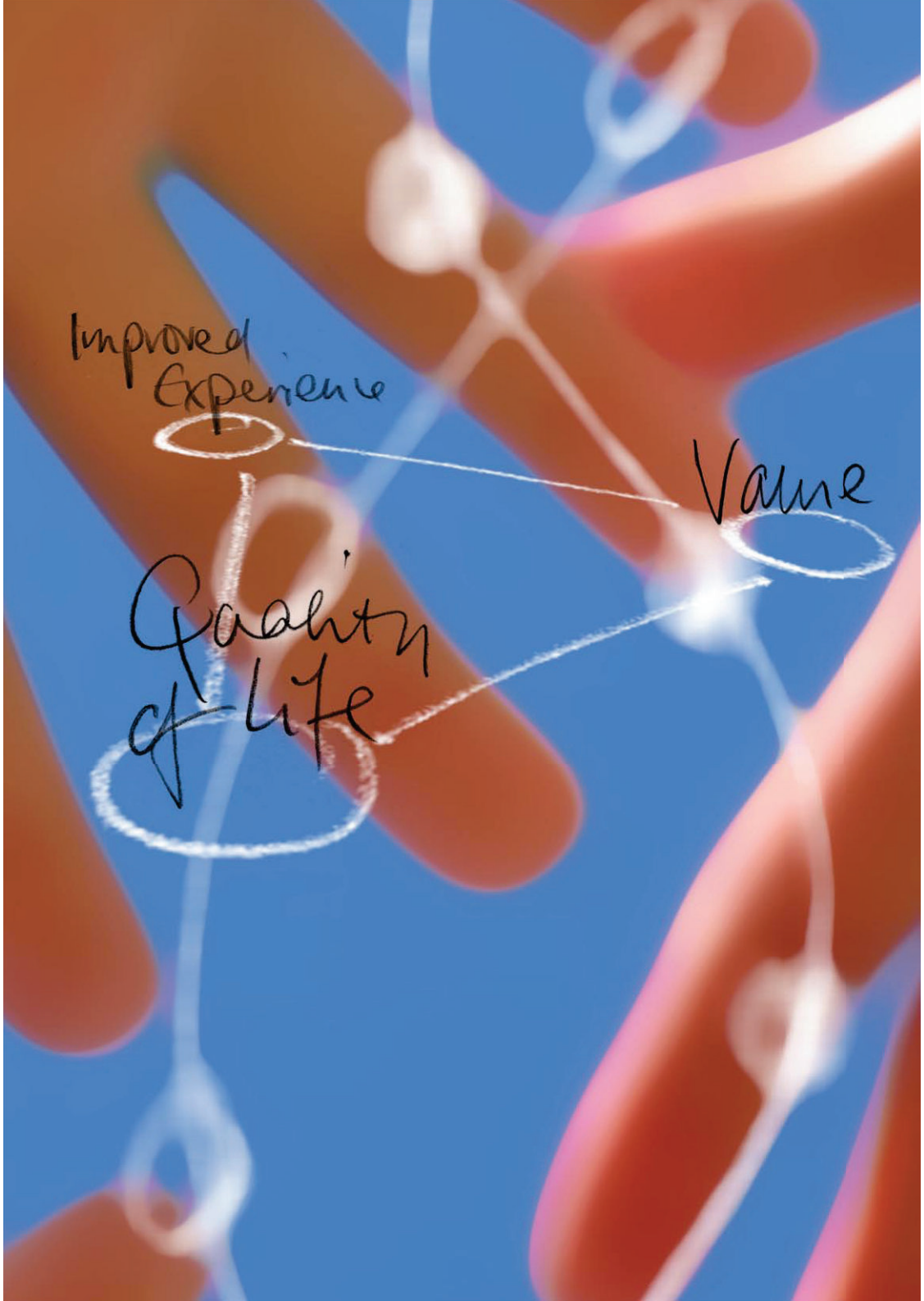
www.bh-impetus.org/volunteer_centre

Or contact:

Alison Marino
Volunteer Centre Brighton & Hove
1st Floor, Intergen House
65-67 Western Road
Hove
East Sussex BN3 2JQ

01273 229 006

alison.marino@volunteercentre.bh-impetus.org



routes to volunteering in brighton and hove organisations you can contact

Volunteer Centre Brighton & Hove (Impetus)

01273 737 888

info@volunteercentre.bh-impetus.org



The Centre delivers brokerage to City residents across a wider range of volunteering activities, promotes good practice in volunteer management, and undertakes activities that build the environment for volunteering across the City.

www.bh-impetus.org/volunteer_centre

Brighton & Hove Volunteers

01273 234 779

info@bhvolunteers.org.uk



BHV supports and encourages young people between the ages of 16-25 to volunteer and provides them with national certificates for their involvement. We also provide free training courses to volunteer involving organisations.

www.bhvolunteers.org.uk

Active Student

01273 644 145

volunteering@brighton.ac.uk



Active Student is the volunteering service for students at the University of Brighton. We promote rewarding, safe and supported volunteering opportunities to students that are in the local community, voluntary, public and not-for-profit sectors.

www.brighton.ac.uk/volunteering

Project V

01273 873 387

projectv@sussex.ac.uk



Project V is the volunteering scheme at the University of Sussex (part funded by Sussex Plus). We offer safe, supported and rewarding volunteering opportunities for Uni Sussex students and staff in the Brighton, Hove and Lewes area.

www.ussu.info/projectv

Voluntary Services, South Downs Health NHS Trust

01273 242 191

amandacleaver@southdowns.nhs.uk



South Downs Health Trust provides community care across Sussex. Volunteers are placed within these settings also rehabilitation wards at Princes Royal Hospital and Newhaven. It also includes Chailey Heritage Clinical Services which is a unit for children with complex disabilities.

www.southdowns.nhs.uk/volunteering

Brighton & Sussex University Hospitals NHS Trust

01273 664 533

yvonne.marlow@bsuh.nhs.uk



BSUH Voluntary Services Department provides a range of opportunities to support staff, patients and visitors. These include helping on wards, in clinics, in offices and on busy reception desks. References, health clearance & CRB Disclosures are required.

www.bsuh.nhs.uk

Community Service Volunteers

01273 720 894

brightonclub@csv.org.uk



CSV is one of the UK's leading volunteering and training charities. It brokers and develops volunteering opportunities for 16-27yrs old across a wide range of settings.

www.csv.org.uk

The Business Community Partnership

01273 770 075

bcpadmin@bhbcip.org.uk



The BCP is a social enterprise that brings together private, public and third sectors brokering cross sector relationships. Volunteering opportunities include team building events, mentoring and job coaching and pro bono support.

www.bhbcip.org.uk

Sussex County Sports Partnership

01273 643 869



The Sussex Sports Partnership is made up of a network of local agencies committed to working together to increase participation in sport and physical activity. This includes the brokerage of volunteers in to a wide range of activities within sports settings.

www.sussexsport.org

Community Base

01273 234 000

reception@communitybase.org



Brighton and Hove volunteer search is a free service run by Community Base listing hundreds of volunteering opportunities with charities and community groups in Brighton and Hove. Anyone interested in volunteering can search through these opportunities online or at Community Base's reception at 113 Queens Road, Brighton, Monday-Friday 8.30am-4.30pm.

www.communitybase.org

Trust for Developing Communities

01273 643 869

info@trustdevcom.org.uk



The Trust promotes good practice in community development and trains people to become community development workers across a variety of neighbourhoods in Brighton & Hove. Volunteers are recruited to hundreds of different community groups and supported to start new groups of their own.

www.trustdevcom.org.uk

The Hangleton & Knoll Project

01273 881 446

info@hkproject.org.uk



The Hangleton & Knoll Project is a community development Charity serving the geographical ward of Hangleton and Knoll. Our project itself is a product of community development, and we are managed by a board of volunteer trustees, most of whom are local residents. Through community development work, activities, detached and project based youth work, and the provision of IT training, we seek to improve the quality of life for our area's residents.

www.hkproject.org.uk

Serendipity Enterprising Solutions CIC

07879 452 929

info@ses-partnership.co.uk



SES provides community development support to three neighbourhoods in Brighton and Hove and can provide opportunities in a variety of settings and activities for local residents to become involved in their neighbourhood.

www.ses-partnership.co.uk

Acknowledgements

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- Penny Baker**
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- Steve Lawless**
B&H Impetus – CEO & member of the Local Strategic Partnership
- Charlie Allsebrook**
The Business Community Partnership – Business Relationship Manager
- Paul Bramwell**
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- Michaela Rossmann**
Project V – Volunteer Development Co-ordinator
- Beth Thomas-Hancock**
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- Yvonne Marlow**
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- Ian Chisnell**
Faith Groups Representative
- John Routledge**
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- Rosaria Gracia**
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- Peter Mason**
Sussex Community Internet Partnership – Project Manager
- Amanda Cleaver**
Southdowns Health Trust - Voluntary Services Manager

Affiliated members of the Strategy Steering Group

- Barbara Regnier**
Dare to Change - Consultant and Impetus Trustee linked to Volunteer Centre Brighton & Hove
- Arthur Law**
Spectrum – Co-ordinator
- Adebisi Alaba**
BMECP - Participation Worker
- Sarah Bourne**
B&H Volunteers – Youth Volunteer Development Manager
- Shelley Meyern**
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7creative.co.uk
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lucyjobrown.co.uk
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