

Lancaster District

Volunteering Strategy

JUNE 2009

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1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Volunteering brings tremendous benefit both to the volunteer and the local community. Lancaster District has much to be proud of with volunteers from across communities giving their time and skills through engaging in a wide range of activities.

This Strategy is about supporting and strengthening the local volunteering environment. It has been produced by Lancaster CVS to help the District's Local Strategic Partnership achieve targets around increased participation in regular volunteering.

The process of developing the Strategy included considering existing work with volunteers across voluntary, community, faith and public bodies and the support offered to them by volunteering infrastructure bodies such as Help Direct Volunteer Bureau and Lancaster CVS.

The Strategy emphasises a strong collaborative approach amongst volunteering infrastructure bodies and volunteer involving organisations (VIOs). This is the foundation for strengthening local volunteering through improved co-ordination and the further development of support and resources. The Strategy identifies recommendations to contribute toward more people enjoying the benefits of quality volunteering opportunities in Lancaster District, including:

- a co-ordinated publicity campaign to attract new volunteers
- good practice training and support for VIOs to improve the volunteering environment
- steps to extend the reach of volunteering so that more members of the community can benefit
- strengthening networking between VIOs
- improving local take up of volunteering data collection processes
- developing further the recognition of volunteers' contribution
- ensuring that volunteering is fully linked to local strategy
- a programme and timetable for implementation

2. INTRODUCTION

A. Background

Lancaster Volunteering Strategy has been developed to support the vital contribution of volunteers and volunteer involving organisations (VIOs) to the life and well being of Lancaster District. The District benefits in many ways, including socially and economically, through citizens from all walks of life freely giving their time, energy and skills for no payment to a host of activities in local communities.

This Strategy has been produced by Lancaster CVS through funding from Lancaster Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) and will support the District's delivery of targets within Lancashire's Local Area Agreement (LAA) to increase "Participation in Regular Volunteering" (National Indicator (NI) 6). The Strategy will also contribute to Lancaster LSP's Valuing People Thematic Group's priority, "to increase resources available to the voluntary, community and faith sector".

Lancaster CVS commissioned Consultant Alan Chapman to prepare the Strategy through a combination of desk based research, the holding of a Volunteering Strategy Consultation meeting at Lancaster Town Hall and working with a Strategy Steering Group.

Strategy Group members were also involved in one to one interviews to enable Alan to:

- map existing volunteering activity in the District and support to VIOs provided by volunteer infrastructure bodies
- assess support available to VIOs and where there are gaps in opportunities to volunteer
- consider ways in which the co-ordination and provision of support to VIOs could be improved.

The information gathered through these processes was drawn from in the identification of Strategy recommendations. (**APPENDIX 1** provides more information on the consultancy brief and work carried out.)

B. Values

The Strategy shares the values of Lancashire's Compact Code for Volunteering, launched in April 2009, which confirmed the following 4 principles for a collaborative approach between Lancashire County Council and the Voluntary, Community and Faith (VCF) Sector to promote and support volunteering:

- Choice - volunteering must be a free choice for each person
- Diversity - volunteering should be open to everyone, whatever their nationality, religion, ethnic origin, age, sex, marital status, sexuality or disability
- Mutual benefit - volunteers are not paid for their skills and services but should benefit in other ways from their contribution
- Recognition - clear recognition of the value of volunteer contributions is essential

These principles underpin 3 key aims in the Code, to:

- Promote the value of volunteering
- Tackle barriers to volunteering
- Improve the quality of volunteering so that it benefits people, organisations and communities wherever it takes place

These values and aims provide an important starting point for the Strategy in terms of understanding that a healthy volunteering environment is about issues like quality, recognition, access and equity as well as numbers.

3. LANCASHIRE LOCAL AREA AGREEMENT (LAA) TARGETS FOR VOLUNTEERING IN LANCASTER

A. LAAs and Local Targets for Participation in Volunteering

LAAs are local authority led multi-agency programmes intended to bring measurable improvement across activities and services. Amongst the first steps taken when a LAA priority is identified is to establish the starting point or baseline from which a measurable improvement will be sought.

Lancashire County Council has used its Place Survey to calculate that 24% of adults participate in regular volunteering. This statistic has been disaggregated to District level and for Lancaster it has been calculated that 25.8% of adults participated in “regular volunteering” in 2008-09.

The production of a baseline figure for volunteering activity in Lancashire and its District is a first step in developing a framework for measuring volunteering. Lancashire is not alone in its LAA work having had to find a workable starting point for volunteering data collection. The Consultant, for example, spent time in Cheshire involved in initial work on volunteering data for the LAA where a similar approach has been taken.

These baseline statistics have been used to fix Lancaster’s measurable improvement around participation in regular volunteering at a 2% increase in 2009-10 (i.e. to 27.8%) and a 3% increase in 2010 (i.e. to 30.8%).

B. Collecting Data on Volunteering

Volunteering Lancashire, a sub-group of the Lancashire Consortium (a collaborative grouping of voluntary sector infrastructure bodies - e.g. CVS, Lancashire Youth Association) has developed a data collection system for formal volunteering i.e. volunteering that is linked to an organisation. It has been set up for both VIOs i.e. who work directly with volunteers and infrastructure bodies like Volunteer Centres i.e. organisations that signpost or broker volunteers and provide broader support to voluntary organisations. This mechanism, now live, has been designed to fit LAA themes and a range of information is being collected at both County and District level.

Whilst caution is needed around the exactness of this statistical framework, progress in measuring volunteering is important not least to ensure that its contribution to local life is more fully recognised.

To date, Lancaster is one of the County’s Districts whose use of this system is relatively low for both infrastructure and VIOs. Actions to encourage increased take up will be considered later in this document.

4. VOLUNTEERING IN LANCASTER DISTRICT – A SNAPSHOT

A. Vibrant District for Volunteering

The District has a wide range of organisations in the voluntary, community and faith (VCF) and public sectors offering volunteering opportunities across rural and urban areas. For example, Lancaster CVS's report, The Sector Counts, surveyed its' member organisations who reported an estimated 13,423 formal volunteers contributing over 700,000 volunteer hours in 2008. Lancaster CVS's Directory of Voluntary Organisations has a current listing of 219 Voluntary Organisations and One Voice's Changing Lives website⁽¹⁾ lists more than a 100 organisations. offering a wide choice of volunteering opportunities from small community groups to large service providers across a breadth of different actives from groups engaged in social care, to arts and animal welfare. (**APPENDIX 2** lists these organisations).

Furniture Matters, for example, offers more than 30 different types of volunteering opportunities whilst its "vinvolved" project work with young people involves around 150 volunteers per year.

Help Direct Volunteer Bureau's brokerage service currently has nearly 500 volunteers registered whilst it is also engaged in innovatory work in establishing Timebank volunteer credit schemes at different rural and urban locations in the District

Lancaster's breadth of VIOs also includes Lancaster University and the University of Cumbria Student's Union (UCSU), whose work with students extends into the hundreds, working with local community groups, and with a reach that extends to activities beyond the District.

Lancaster University, for example, has more than 300 students engaged in volunteering including work with young people in school as part of its "vinvolved" project.

Statutory bodies such as Lancashire Social Services also play an important role in working with local volunteers through in house projects such as befriending schemes.

Faith organisations also play a significant role in local life with volunteers offering support in their communities. Virtual Lancashire's website includes more than 30 groups representing diverse faith communities.

This overview only hints at the tremendous contribution of volunteers and VIOs in the District from the work of entirely volunteer led community groups to support for frontline services e.g. work with homeless people to the many who take up the role of unpaid management committee members/ trustees. Lancaster CVS's Directory of Voluntary Organisations has more than 300 entries and even allowing for those organisations listed with more than one project, it points to the voluntary contribution of 1000s of individuals engaged as committee members/trustees or in the activities of their group.

(1) The Changing Lives Website, currently hosted by One Voice was initially developed by Lancaster & Morecambe College with funding from the LDLSP.

B. Volunteering Opportunities

The Consultant's visit to Volunteering England's Do It website yielded a list of 80 organisations that were currently offering volunteering opportunities in Lancaster. It was interesting to note the different routes through which they had been posted onto the site, which included;

- Volunteer Centre (VC) South Lakeland (based in Kendal)
- Lancashire "involved" (based at Lancashire Education Business Park in Blackburn)
- Individual postings from local groups and local branches of national charities.

In Districts elsewhere, the predominant channel for posting opportunities on Do It is often through a Volunteer England – affiliated local Volunteer Centre, whose range of functions will include developing and promoting opportunities, including a local directory as well as supporting VIOs in their work.

Lancaster's Do It entries are evidence of the absence of a single organisation in the District which performs these roles, a topic which is returned to shortly. This, alongside Lancaster's still developing statistical framework for volunteering activity, including limited local involvement in Volunteering Lancashire's data collection, has inhibited a more detailed analysis of the demography of volunteering in the district.

5. VOLUNTEERING INFRASTRUCTURE - AN OVERVIEW

A. What is Volunteering Infrastructure?

"Building on success in the North West: Strategy for volunteering infrastructure 2008-11" describes volunteering infrastructure as follows:

"Volunteering infrastructure comprises the organisations and services that exist to encourage people to volunteer for other agencies (whether they are in the community, voluntary, public or private sectors), to support these agencies in the development of high quality volunteering programmes and opportunities, and to act as a voice for volunteering. Volunteering infrastructure providers offer one or more of an agreed framework of core functions:

*Brokerage
Marketing volunteering
Good practice development
Developing volunteering opportunities
Policy response and campaigning
Strategic development of volunteering"*

B. Provision of Volunteering Infrastructure Core Functions in Lancaster

The level of infrastructure provision in Lancaster is a key focus of this Strategy because of the contribution it makes to supporting volunteering, including the number of people who regularly volunteer and the quality of opportunities and support on offer. Infrastructure services include, for example, helping VIOs with publicity, recruitment, training and the recognition of volunteer achievement eg certificates.

In terms of the development of infrastructure in the District, Lancaster CVS established a Volunteer Information Centre in 2000 to deliver core support functions. This service was closed

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in 2006 owing to a lack of funding with the database being passed on to Youthnet, a national charity.

50 Forward's initial work with older people and volunteering evolved into a Volunteer Bureau between 2007-09 which now provides volunteer brokerage, promotion and development work (including Timebanks) to a broader age range.

Brokerage: Help Direct Volunteer Bureau is the major provider of volunteer brokerage in the District. Organisations such as Furniture Matters, One Voice and Lancaster University are amongst organisations including some elements of brokerage in their work with volunteers.

Lancashire "involved" and VC South Lakeland post VIOs' opportunities onto the Do It website which enables individuals to be signposted, if not, brokered on to the relevant organisation.

Marketing Volunteering: Help Direct Volunteer Bureau's work includes some volunteering promotional and outreach work whilst there are many organisations in the District which have been successful in promoting and marketing volunteering opportunities in their organisations. CVS also runs an Annual Volunteer Achievement Awards Evening.

Volunteering Lancashire has also produced publicity materials and a DVD promoting the benefits of volunteering.

Good Practice Development: Lancaster CVS provides training in VCF good practice work, whilst CVS also co-ordinates a VCF network providing opportunities for peer support and information sharing. CVS's newsletter also acts as a central channel for communication and information on good practice.

Some VIOs access their national bodies' resources (e.g. CABx), have accessed materials from bodies like NCVO or have developed their own good practice resources e.g. Furniture Matters.

Help Direct Volunteer Bureau provided a course on volunteer management in 2007/8 whilst Volunteering Lancashire has also provided volunteer management training at County level.

Developing Volunteering Opportunities: Help Direct Volunteer Bureau's role includes developing opportunities, particularly in its Timebank work.

A range of individual organisations are very successful in developing and promoting opportunities in their own organisations.

Policy Response and Campaigning: Lancaster CVS's VCF network and newsletter also provide a mechanism for advancing policy and campaigning.

Individual organisations have their own channels, and in some instances networks, for policy response and campaigning.

Strategic Development of Volunteering: A number of VCF groups are engaged in Lancaster's strategic bodies including Furniture Matters, One Voice and CVS.

The development of this Strategy is firmly tied to this environment and to enhancing volunteering's place on the strategic agenda.

This section has illustrated that there are elements of the 6 core infrastructure functions in the District. Set against provision elsewhere in the County and beyond, Lancaster has limited resources in areas like training, networking, marketing and publicity. The 6 core functions and

their co-ordination do not reside in one organisation, which does not in itself undermine the value of individual areas of support.

In some cases, VIOs in the District have been able to recruit and support their own volunteers and develop effective in house infrastructure. The level of infrastructure support available may, however, have an impact upon the extent to which organisations, particularly those with limited resources, are able to engage with volunteers.

The next section will examine key points which have emerged from feedback as set out in Section A.

6. POINTS FROM FEEDBACK

A. Strategy Workshop at Lancaster Town 16 April 2009

This open meeting at Lancaster Town Hall, organised by Lancaster CVS included a presentation from Tony Hyland, Chair of Volunteering Lancashire, who outlined how its volunteering statistic collection mechanism worked.

This was followed by 2 sessions where participants fed back comments and issues.

The first session involved participants outlining the importance of volunteers to the work of their organisation. Initial comments included:

- there was a need to raise the profile and promote volunteering in the District e.g. through community events*
- concern was raised about dwindling volunteer numbers with centralised support for signposting and the recruitment of volunteers identified as a gap in provision*
- limited resources and capacity were a real pressure in working with and supporting volunteers*
- attracting volunteers from different communities e.g. the Polish community was a challenge
- having access to information on how volunteering affects benefits
- difficulties arranging CRB checks for young people lacking support documentation e.g. passports.

** denotes where a point was made by more than one participant*

The second session comprised 4 working groups considering changes needed in the volunteering environment for the District to have been identified as a centre of excellence by 2013. Feedback included:

- Addressing practical matters including processes for CRB checks and information on benefits and volunteering
- Improving communication and co-ordination between organisations involved in volunteering and partners and sectors whose work impacts on volunteering and its development
- Making support available to volunteering organisations through centralised resources including brokerage, training, information, peer networks, publicity and good practice

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- Ongoing funding and capacity pressures faced by some organisations in the delivery of volunteer development and support
- The importance of recognising the value and contribution of volunteers
- The need for co-ordinated and sustained publicity and promotion throughout the year to attract volunteers including local events.

APPENDIX 3 provides a fuller summary of working group feedback and a list of participants at the session.

B. Interviews

The Consultant also met or spoke by telephone to representatives from individual VIOs and partners drawn primarily from the Strategy Steering Group membership. The following broad issues emerged (see APPENDIX 4 for a list of contacts):

Reasons for Volunteering

People volunteer for many different reasons. They may choose to do so to develop skills or gain experience for enhanced employment opportunities, to give something back to society or to socialise. Any steps taken to promote and support volunteering needed to be aware of these different motivations.

Volunteering for enhanced employability i.e. amongst students and those of working age emerged as an important feature as did a practical concern about unclear advice on how benefits affected and potentially inhibited volunteering – an issue raised at the Strategy Workshop on 16 April.

Work with Young Volunteers

The District has a number of examples of innovatory work by a range of organisations that reach out to young people as volunteers including school pupils and those living in less affluent areas, through the provision of meaningful opportunities including accredited programmes.

Different views were expressed about whether the term “volunteering” was a barrier to work with young people, at least one organisation preferred to use the term “favour” as an introduction. However, there was consensus that meaningful and interesting opportunities were vital if young people were to be successfully engaged.

Publicity

The District has many VIOs that are successful in attracting volunteers, either through their own publicity or via brokerage from Help Direct Volunteer Bureau.

Nevertheless, a strong message from feedback was that more publicity and awareness rising about volunteering was needed as well as opportunities to promote individual organisations’ opportunities. There was also a sense that opportunities to co-ordinate publicity and maximise existing efforts from different organisations were not always taken.

For example, the awareness and profile of different sets of information around opportunities to volunteer could be improved e.g. Changing Lives Online Directory of Volunteering Organisations, Do It’s on-line list of local opportunities and Help Direct Volunteer Bureau’s brokerage.

Some organisations, particularly those with their own infrastructure, saw the need for enhanced publicity and signposting rather than brokerage whilst others greatly valued the support offered by a brokerage service as vital support in helping them to recruit volunteers.

Volunteering England's guidance paper "Barriers to Bridges" highlight the importance of good information to counter perceptions and anxieties which might act as a barrier to potential volunteers. Improved co-ordination around publicity will help existing resources and information to potential volunteers to become more visible and enable investment in further publicity to be used to best effect.

The process of improving the co-ordination of publicity would also act as a catalyst for strengthening links between the different types of support on offer and information about opportunities e.g. Help Direct Volunteer Bureau, Do It and Changing Lives websites.

A further area highlighted in interviews (and at the Workshop) focussed upon the potential benefits of holding community based events that promoted and celebrated volunteering.

Information Sharing

A strong theme emerged about the need for organisations to be more effective at sharing information on their respective roles with volunteers or partners whose work impacted on volunteers.

A more pro-active approach to information sharing and stronger communication channels might also enable practical solutions to issues that arise around volunteering. One of those that has been raised referred to already, is the lack of clarity on the impact of volunteering for those in receipt of benefits. Job Centre Plus, whose constructive role in discussions on the Strategy will hopefully enable clearer information to be communicated both to their advisors and to organisations in contact with potential volunteers.

Organisations placing links on each other's websites e.g. Help Direct Volunteer Bureau, Do It and Changing Lives was suggested as a simple, practical step that would assist improved access to information on volunteering and support a more focussed approach to publicity.

Recognising Volunteering

There were already positive examples of volunteer recognition, including "involved" certificates, accredited opportunities and awards events e.g. CVS. However, further opportunities to strengthen the ways in which volunteer contributions were recognised would help to raise the profile and interest in volunteering.

Networking

There was a clear interest in networking for VIOs. Networks such as CVS's VCF Forum were viewed positively but additional opportunities would be useful. However, there was a strong sense that a network needed to ensure that it was more than a "talking shop" and was a positive mechanism where good practice, innovation, partnership working and funding opportunities could be focussed upon.

The network could also provide opportunities for individual VIOs to lead on good practice and share from their respective experience, successes and challenges.

Good Practice and Quality

Another strong message was the need for more training and good practice support on issues affecting VIOs. CVS training provision was already available to the VCF; additional training for VIOs was vital to ensure that they were equipped to provide quality volunteering opportunities with appropriate support available to volunteers. This would include resources such as good practice guides and Volunteer Management training.

There was also a need for a more structured approach to support to VIOs in implementing quality systems, another foundation for a healthy volunteering environment and being able to reach out to new volunteers.

Trustees

The trustee role is crucial to a healthy VCF and additional provision around the recruitment of voluntary trustees has been identified as an area requiring attention.

Strategic

Some respondents commented on feeling disconnected from the District's strategic environment and in some cases, undervalued by public bodies with whom stronger working links might prove mutually beneficial.

Equality and Access to Volunteering

Access to quality volunteering opportunities for people with learning disabilities and individuals with mental health problems were two areas highlighted as needing to be addressed. Broader issues were also raised about the impact of lack of accessible premises on opportunities for people with disabilities. A lack of awareness around good practice and the social model of disability were also referred to.

The Strategy Workshop included reference to the need for translators for supporting volunteers in Polish communities.

More broadly, there appeared to be gaps in engagement with volunteers from Black, Minority Ethnic (BME) communities, whilst the Changing Lives website does not include BME organisations with volunteering opportunities.

The National Compact's good practice guidelines refer to the need for volunteering organisations to adopt equality schemes to assist them in having a systematic approach to reaching minority groups and tackling unfair discrimination in their processes.

Volunteering and BME communities will be referred to further within the recommendations alongside broader equality areas.

Resources

Both interviews and the Workshop included reference to some VIOs facing pressure through funding and capacity pressures with a message that quality volunteering required resources to enable time, support and expertise to be invested. As confirmed in National Compact guidelines for relations between Government and the VCF, volunteer costs should be included in funding applications to public bodies and others.

Data Collection

Interviews confirmed that there was still some work to be done in raising awareness about Volunteering Lancashire's data collection system. Progress in this area was vital as part of sustained, informed programme to support increased participation.

Targeting Potential Volunteers

The message from VIOs contacted pointed less to a specific group/s for a specific volunteering recruitment campaign and more to the need to raise awareness and the profile of volunteering across the District.

One of the observations made through the Strategy Steering Group was that a key challenge was to reach people during working age where they were less likely to consider volunteering with other commitments and that targeting people at key milestones e.g. parents when children were taking up school should form part of a promotional campaign.

The earlier comments on equality and access need to be stressed and point to the importance of work that reaches out to different communities that it is backed up by good practice in VIOs.

7. RECOMMENDATIONS

Assumptions

Inspiring More People to Volunteer and Providing Quality Opportunities

Steps to increasing participation need to include a sustained approach to quality in the volunteering sector as well as raising the profile of volunteering. This will contribute to increased participation in the longer term through overcoming potential barriers such as poorly conceived opportunities, lack of benefit to the volunteer e.g. skills or a volunteering environment which is not accessible to all sections of the community.

Building on Existing Skills and Experience

There is already a range of skills and experience amongst local infrastructure providers and VIOs and it is a core assumption that these should be utilised where workable and appropriate. At the same time opportunities to innovate should be embraced fully.

Co-ordination

Improved co-ordination is a core theme of the Strategy. The actions around publicity, for example, are intended to establish a more coherent approach between organisations as well as inspire more people to take up volunteering.

Volunteering Needs to be Sufficiently Resourced

The District's volunteering infrastructure providers and VIOs are already, in many cases, working to capacity. Whilst some of the recommendations will be supported through improved co-ordination others e.g. developing training and good practice support, will require additional strategic investment from funders. The recommendations will make additional demands upon existing providers of support and most will require some form of additional resourcing from a range of sources.

Implementation

The Strategy is a starting point. The actions below assume a proactive collaborative approach as the foundation for better co-ordination enabling lead organisations for specific tasks to be identified along with the funding needed for implementation.

B. Recommended Actions

1. Strategic

- a) Lancaster LSP forms response to the Strategy and it's role in supporting implementation including resources.

TIMESCALE:

- LSP response to the Strategy including commitments by August 09.

2. Volunteering Publicity Campaign

- a). Production of single publicity leaflet outlining brokerage services in the District and useful information for potential volunteers (e.g. Changing Lives website, short statement on benefits and volunteering).
- b). Engagement in campaign planning and delivery of organisations working on equality issues and representing the District in its diversity e.g. BME.
- c). Deployment of a range of information channels for publicity including partners' internal communication mechanisms e.g. local authorities
- d). Community based promotion/events (urban and rural areas) and promotion of trustee role to form part of the campaign
- e). Partners identifying permanent sites for publicity around volunteering e.g. notice boards in public spaces
- f). Development of protocol for longer –term collaboration around publicity between relevant organisations.

TIMESCALE:

- Planning work to commence in September
- Single document outlining services and information for potential volunteers November
- Volunteering publicity campaign to take place in January 2010 planning starts in September 09.
- Learning from campaign to be shared across new VIOS Network Jan-March 2010 (see 4)
- Development of protocol, establishment of permanent sites for display of publicity materials March 2010.

3. Good Practice

- a). Development of a training programme for VIOs including volunteer management and general good practice.
- b). Training provided to a group of Quality Mentors in appropriate quality system/s to offer support to VIOs in developing their internal systems.

TIMESCALE:

- First course, volunteer management, provided in December; second course between Jan – Mar 2010
- Quality mentors group to be developed by March 2010 to begin offering support during 2010-11
- Programme of at least 4 courses, including 2 on volunteer management to be delivered 2010-11.

4. Equality

- a). Provision of equality good practice guidance materials to VIOs
- b). Holding of Equality action workshop for VIOs
- c). Outreach work taking place with minority communities to improve local links, support and knowledge around effective ways of improving access to/development of quality opportunities.

TIMESCALE:

- Circulation of equality good practice guidance and equality workshop to take place in November through new VIOs Network.
- Outreach work to commence in October in support of publicity campaign and links to continue thereafter.
- Learning for equality good practice workshop and outreach work to be fed back to VIOs Network Jan-March 2010 and to fed into Planning of VIOs Network and Training programme for 2010-11.

5. VIOs Network

- a). Development of VIO network programme - e.g. 3 sessions a year - as a mechanism for sharing good practice, policy formation, campaigning, strategic links, innovation and collaboration.
- b) VIO network to included training sessions to support and develop good practice peer mentor support
- b). Establishment of Network portal to enable improved communication and opportunities to share information.

TIMESCALE:

- 2 Network sessions to be held in 2009-10, first session in November, 3 in 2010-11.
- Network portal to be in place by March 2010.

6. Recognising Volunteer Contributions

- a) Providers of existing volunteer recognition schemes collaborating to explore development of further local provision e.g. awards evenings (including at community locations), certification and accreditation schemes.

TIMESCALE:

- Options for the further development of local volunteer recognition schemes to be identified by March 2010.

7. Volunteering Data Collection

- a). Promotion of Volunteering Lancashire's data collection programme across VIOs in the District
- b). Holding a session for VIOs and infrastructure bodies outlining how the system operates and identifying any potential difficulties that groups may face in using it.

TIMESCALE:

- To be actioned by December 2009.

8. Implementation and Review

- a). Lancaster CVS forming an Action Group comprising infrastructure providers and representatives from VIOs to refine/ prioritise - actions, identify lead organisations, timescale, resource needs and funding opportunities.
- b). Regular bulletins and feedback through CVS newsletters, VIOs Network and other channels.
- c). Reviewing progress in December 2009 including initial learning from publicity campaign preparation and lessons for longer term collaborative approach.

TIMESCALE:

- Action Group to be in place by July 2009
- Regular bulletins through CVS and partners' information channels throughout implementation programme
- Review of progress with actions and initial learning points in December 2009.

**Alan Chapman
June 2009**

8. APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1

LANCASTER VOLUNTEERING STRATEGY CONSULTANCY BRIEF

Lancaster CVS commissioned Alan Chapman to develop the Strategy through a combination of desk based research and discussion with local stakeholders.

The brief was to produce a Strategy which:

- supported the District in delivering LAA targets around volunteering
- identified options to ensure effective District-wide co-ordination of volunteer support and brokerage and identify gaps in provision
- highlighted volunteering organisational infrastructure support needs in the District and identified how they might be met.

B. Work Carried Out

The consultant:

- carried out research on relevant policies and comparative information including data collection issues for volunteering statistics in relation to NI6
- mapped current volunteer brokerage, infrastructure support for volunteering organisations in the District and wider issues, interviewing a range of local volunteering organisations and partners
- facilitated an open meeting for volunteering organisations at Lancaster Town Hall on 16 April (participants listed at APPENDIX 1) – invitations to which were circulated widely through CVS - to discuss issues and needs
- reported to a CVS convened Strategy Steering Group (2).
- Used the Strategy Group's membership as the core for interviews to gather views and perspectives
- Produced a Draft Strategy document which, after a consultation process would be taken back to the District's LSP.

APPENDIX 2

CHANGING LIVES WEBPAGE ORGANISATIONS OFFERING VOLUNTEERING OPPORTUNITIES (1.6.09)

Abbeyfield (2 entries)
ADHD Northwest
Age Concern (3 entries)
Al-Anon UK
Alzheimers Society
AMATEUR DRAMATIC & OPERATIC SOCIETY
Animal Care
ASSOCIATION FOR FAMILY SOCIAL WORK
Attune to Health
Boys Brigade
BRIDLEWAY SOCIETY
British Red Cross
BROWNIES, 8TH LANCASTER
BSR Grassroots Project (2 entries)
Cancercare
Carr Gomm
Caton PACT Youth Initiative
CATON TODDLERS
Children Integration Group (2 entries)
CHRISTIAN HELP IN PARTNERSHIP
Citizens Advice Bureau (2 entries)
CLASS ACT
Community Association for the West End
COMMUNITY LEARNING NETWORK
Community Music Trust
COMMUNITY PROJECT (NUCLEAR SAFETY)
Compassionate Friends
Conservation Volunteers
Lancaster Council for Voluntary Services
Diabetes UK
Elm House Day Centre
Family Support Team
Firbank Childrens Centre
Folly Gallery
Food for Thought Café
Footlights
Friendship Centre
Furniture Matters
Galloways
Global Link
Grand Theatre
Guide Dogs for the Blind
Harvesters Day Centre
Headway
Heart Concern
Help Direct Volunteer Bureau
Help the Aged
Home Start

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Homebound & Disabled Fellowship
Homeless Action
Housing 21
Independentage
INTER-AGENCY GROUP (MIG)
International Aid Trust
Inward House Projects
Lancashire Association of Clubs for Young People
Lancaster Advocacy
Lancaster Boys Club
LANCASTER UNIVERSITY VOLUNTEERING UNIT
Langley House Trust
LESS
LITFEST
Lonsdale Arthritis Social Group
Lonsdale District Carers
Lonsdale District Carers
LUNE FICTION
Marsh Age Link
Marsh Community Centre
McMillan Nursing Services
Meals on Wheels
Mencap
More Music
Morecambe Bay Credit Union
Motor Neurone Disease Association
Multiple Sclerosis Society
NATIONAL COALITION BUILDING INSTITUTE
Neighbourhood Watch Scheme
North Lancs Enterprise
One Voice
Over Sixties Club
Parkinsons Disease Society
Pensioners Luncheon Club
Pets as Therapy
Piccadilly Garden
Pony Club
Poulton Community Gardens
Primrose House Trust
Princes Trust
Rainbow Centre
Red Rose Youth
Ridge Community Centre
RLI (Royal Lancaster Infirmary).
Salvation Army
Salvation Army
Salvation Army
Salvation Army Housing Assoc
Samaritans
Scouts Association
Signposts (2 entries)
Skerton Community Centre
Spinabifida & Hydrocephalus Association
St Johns Ambulance

St Johns Hospice
Stroke Association
Stroke Club
Student Services, Lancaster & Morecambe College
The Olive Branch
Thumbprint
University of Cumbria Students' Union Volunteering (UCSU Volunteering)
Voluntary Police Cadets
West End Disabled Allotment Group
Wheelchair Basketball club
Womens Aid
YMCA

APPENDIX 3

WORKING GROUP FEEDBACK ON CHANGES IN THE DISTRICT THAT MAKE IT A CENTRE OF VOLUNTEERING EXCELLENCE BY 2013 (CONSULTATION EVENT, LANCASTER TOWN HALL 16/4/09)

Group 1

- Single point of contact for volunteers offering brokerage service
- Regular volunteer co-ordinator meetings for support, advice and sharing best practice
- Increase in amount and length of funding available to staff to support volunteers and ensure consistency and continuity
- Increase in the number of paid volunteer co-ordinators and funding
- Improved inter-agency working and partnership
- Stronger Government responsibility for volunteering and recognition of 3rd sector
- Utilising of Job Centre to encourage volunteering
- More promotional and community focused events and publicity about the benefits of volunteering

Group 2

- Volunteer Involving Organisations welcoming and inclusive
- Needs led training – at volunteer management level
- Core funding and sustainability
- Co-operative not competitive funding environment
- Increased capacity within projects
- Stronger values at Government level with improved information sharing and better partnerships and networking
- Recognition of the spectrum of volunteer needs
- Independence of 3rd Sector
- Regular volunteering events - once or twice a year including in the centre of communities

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- Public awareness raising of what is available, what is being done in the District and celebrating this
- Regular press column

Group 3

- Access to core training and induction for both Volunteer Involving Organisations and Volunteers
- Community Volunteer Certification – a co-ordinated and recognised reward process
- More formal recognition of volunteering role and benefits to the volunteer e.g. CV
- Publicity in schools, universities, community groups and centres
- Community events and awards evenings raising profile and status of volunteering
- Local press coverage and advertising promoting achievement, equality, diversity and volunteering for everyone

Group 4

- Centralised volunteer brokerage and support for volunteer co-ordinators
- Access to core training and induction for both Volunteer Involving Organisations and Volunteers
- Improved production and co-ordination of local information e.g. links on websites, volunteering information pack listing organisations that work with volunteers
- Supporting volunteers through initial process and staying engaged
- Significant rise in number of people volunteering in District
- Job Centres educated on volunteering
- More people advised on benefits and volunteering and client groups advised its ok to volunteer
- Greater acknowledgement of the work of volunteers and informal volunteering
- More supportive and speedier CRB Annual event including volunteers
- Publicity promoted throughout year

Additional comments fed back included:

- centralised support needed to be able to demonstrate it was effective, person-centred and accountable in its approach
- information in different languages was important to enable improved access to volunteering
- earlier dwindling volunteers comment wasn't necessarily about fewer volunteers but more gaps and more organisations requiring volunteers.

APPENDIX 3 (con)**Participants at Lancaster Volunteering Strategy Workshop on Thursday 16th April 2009 at Lancaster Town Hall**

Name	Organisation	Name	Organisation
Alan Chapman	Consultant	Kevin Shore	Partnerships Manager Jobcentre Plus Cumbria & Lancashire
Bethan Frances	Pre-School Inclusion Lancashire County Council	Lou Andrews	Manager, Skerton Community Centre
Cllr John Gilbert	Lancaster City Council, Chair, Valuing People Thematic Group	Lydia Hoyle	Volunteer Service Officer The Volunteer Services, Lancashire County Council
Colin Peacock	Lancaster Area Committee, Lancashire Association of Local Councils. Arnside and Silverdale AONB	Michelle McMeeking	Volunteer Co-ordinator, RSPCA Morecambe
David Holleley	Senior Co-ordinator Home Start	Moira Dyson	Volunteer, NCBI
Davinia Jackson	N-compass volunteer development officer	Nick Spiller	Volunteer Co-ordinator, RSPCA Morecambe
Dawn Mitchell	Volunteer Lead, Signposts	Nicole Hollis	BTD
Hannah Bland	Lancaster District CVS Development Worker	Nikki Chadwick	Volunteer Co-ordinator, Lancaster Police Station
Hilary Wellgate	Volunteer Co-ordinator Lancaster CAB	Pauline Elder	Manager, Chips (Christian Help in Partnership)
Islay Watson	Manager, Lancaster & District Homeless Action	Sheron Hall	Manager Equalities and Inclusion Team, Blackburn Diocese
Jane Attfield	Lancaster District CVS Development Worker	Terry Graham	Volunteer Lead, Signposts
Jon Rigby	Lancaster District CVS Chief Officer	Karina Sliwinski	Volunteer Service Officer, The Volunteer Services, Lancashire County Council

APPENDIX 4

MEMBERSHIP OF LANCASTER VOLUNTEER STRATEGY STEERING GROUP

Aisha Al-Ai/ Jo Williams, One Voice Lancaster
Stephen Buchanan, Furniture Matters
Emma Egglestone, University of Cumbria Students' Union
Sara Hinton, Lancaster University Volunteering Unit
Colin Peacock, LALC
Anna Redfearn, Pedal Power
Jon Rigby, Lancaster CVS (in the Chair)
Kevin Shore, Job Centre Plus
Karina Sliwinski/ Lydia Hoyle, Lancashire County Council Volunteer Service
Donna Studholme, Help Direct
Richard Tulej, Lancaster City Council