



17 February 2021

Interested in hearing more about volunteering in Northern Ireland?

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Would you like to volunteer?

Check out our website to see thousands of volunteering opportunities. New opportunities added daily!

Looking for volunteers?

Register your organisations volunteering opportunities FREE of charge. Check out our guide - <https://bit.ly/2ZG7cXH>

Events

Discover events from across the sector, from one-off events to longer term.

Anything you want to add?

Think about what you might want to hear more about in VConnect or anything you want to see on our Training Calendar and [let us know](#).

Chief Executive's Comments

Volunteer Now is pleased to have been working with Be Collective for a year. Be Collective is our online platform which connects organisations with volunteers. It allows volunteers to find an opportunity which suits them and to keep a social record of their volunteering experience, training, skills development etc. The platform enables organisations to communicate with their volunteers, manage application processes, organise rotas etc. However, most of all Be Collective is about building connections between people and helping to build communities both online and in person. Many organisations have joined the Be Collective system in Northern Ireland and a large number of individuals are using the platform.

We have all seen the power of working digitally over the past year as we cannot do the things we normally do face to face and it is clear that we will not be going back to exactly the same ways we did things in the past. Digital systems do not replace the relationships we build up with volunteers but they can help us to be more effective. I would like to share with you some of the feedback we have had about Be Collective and to encourage you to find out more [here](#).

Mencap:

"Supportive and straight forward volunteering! - Having come out of lockdown many of us were in the predicament of having lost volunteers or volunteers not being able to commit as previously, so to have a platform that is so straight forward to use was refreshing."

Together NI:

"Thanks for your help in setting us up. Thanks to volunteer now we now have recruited 4 more volunteers."

Rob Wise, Founder of Be Collective:

“When we partnered with Volunteer Now it was our first key partnership in Europe. During a very challenging year for us all, I am delighted to have seen the collective impact and creative solutions of so many communities and organisations. Volunteer Now has found creative ways to demonstrate resilience, to make a difference and to continue connecting volunteers and organisations. We, the Be Collective Team look forward to continuing working together to provide better impact and social connection in the years ahead”

Denise Hayward

Chief Executive

Investing in Volunteers Congratulations!

We are delighted to announce that the following organisations successfully renewed their Investing in Volunteers Awards on Thursday 28 January:

- [Foyle Search & Rescue](#)
- [Victim Support NI](#)

And we are also pleased to welcome [Saint Joseph's Shankill](#) as a first time achiever in ROI, working with our sister organisation [Volunteer Ireland](#).

Volunteers being supported well to make a difference – that's what matters! Find out more about Investing in Volunteers [here](#).

Online Training

New dates have been added to our online training until March 2021! Take a look at our full Training Calendar [here](#).

Keeping Adults Safe: Module 2 Refresher

- [23 February](#), 10am-1pm, FREE

VOLT Session: Programme for Government - Where Does Volunteering Sit?

- [4 March](#), 11am-12pm, FREE

The New Environment: Assess Risk When Developing Volunteer Roles

- [9 March](#), 10.30am-12pm, £10 +VAT

March VOLT Sessions Available

We have arranged a new series of VOLT Sessions for March, looking at various volunteering topics:

- **Programme for Government - Where Does Volunteering Sit?**
[Thursday 4 March, 11am-12pm](#)
- **Safeguarding & DBS Barring - What You Need To Know**
[Tuesday 9 March, 10am-12pm](#)
- **Volunteering During The Pandemic & Beyond - New NI Research**
[Thursday 25 March, 2.00pm-3.30pm](#)

To find out more about each session and book your place, please click on the relevant date. You will be sent a link and joining instructions the afternoon before each session.

NEW Online Attracting & Selecting Volunteers Course!

Volunteer Now and Volunteer Now Enterprises Ltd are excited to announce the release of our new online training course – Attracting and Selecting Volunteers.

We have been working tirelessly in the last few months to improve our product offering and service, and we believe that this course will help you enjoy your experience with online training even more.

So what is it all about? This unique training will support you and your organisation to follow, innovate and create good practice ideas when planning a recruitment campaign and selecting the right volunteers for your organisation, to meet your mission, vision, aims and objectives for your volunteer involvement, programme and projects.

With visuals, innovative features and practical exercises to enable in-depth learning, this course will offer personal development in a flexible way, whenever and on whatever device...

The course offers a comprehensive overview of good practice and is tremendous value for money at £45 plus VAT per person, with a certificate on completion. It is not time-consuming – an average 3 hours of learning. It is user-friendly and is suitable for those organisations, volunteer managers, coordinators or anyone who manages and involves volunteers on a regular basis.

Organisations have been looking for flexibility and affordability when it comes to Volunteer Management training, and we are positive that we have produced just that.

“I really enjoyed the online Attracting & Selecting Volunteers course! I was very impressed with the online facility. The audio and interactive actions made the course interesting and straightforward to follow. The course was thought-provoking, and I am very much looking forward to putting what I have learned into action.” Eimear Degan, Belfast City Marathon.

Our thanks go to the Department for Communities for financially supporting our organisation in the development of this forward thinking, innovative and user-friendly training course.

In our own small way Volunteer Now and Volunteer Now Enterprises Ltd want to play our part in connecting, building and changing volunteering now and into the future.

[Click here](#) to book your place.

New Phone First Service for HSCTs in NI

A new Phone First service is being rolled out over the Health & Social Care Trusts in Northern Ireland to cover some Emergency Departments and Minor Injury Units.

The Phone First service aims to ensure that patients can get direct access to the right care, avoiding busy waiting rooms and staying safe.

The service is designed for patients, including children, who are feeling unwell and considering traveling to an ED or Minor Injuries Unit with an injury or illness which requires urgent treatment but is not immediately life threatening.

When you call the 'Phone First' service your condition, or that of the person you are calling on behalf of, will be clinically assessed and arrangements made for you to access the most appropriate service to your needs. This may mean offering you an appointment at the Emergency Department or Minor Injuries Unit, organising further investigations or redirecting you to your local GP or GP Out of Hours.

[Click here](#) to read more.

Guidance for Volunteering During Lockdown

As you know, in Northern Ireland we have moved once again into a period of tighter restrictions in an attempt to reduce the transmission of COVID -19 within our community. Volunteer Now is therefore updating their guidance in terms of what this means for volunteering ([click here](#) to view). We are asking volunteer involving organisations to consider the regulations

guidance very carefully to see how they might apply to their own volunteer roles. In particular, the message from Government is very clear that we should all **stay at home** where possible. From 8 January 2021 you can only leave home with a 'reasonable excuse' such as for medical or food needs, exercise and work that cannot be done from home. Notably the guidelines state that you can leave home to provide voluntary or charitable services, if you cannot reasonably do so from home.

As organisations, you will have to decide if your volunteering roles need to be carried out during this period and how they can be completed while adhering to all the specific regulations. Organisations will need to use a risk assessment process to support their decision-making and to manage the risk. Organisations will also need to talk to volunteers about continuing to volunteer if they feel comfortable to do so, providing them with all the relevant information from the guidelines about social distancing, numbers that can meet outdoors, households and bubbles, safety measures. Those considered as clinically extremely vulnerable should not be volunteering outside the home. The new regulations guidance can be found [here](#).

Eden Project Communities - Virtual Community Camp

Eden Project Communities next virtual Community Camp will be held in March 2021. Community Camp is an immersive learning experience, offering a mix of practical activities, workshop sessions and networking opportunities for people from across the UK.

Community Camp starts on Monday 1 March 2021 and will finish on Monday the 29th March. Each week will be themed covering subjects including; marketing, event planning, funding, inclusion, resilience, showcasing ideas and inspiration and much more.

You'll be sent a resource pack before you start, there'll be space to connect with other Camp participants, and practical sessions to engage with from your own community or home. Find out more and book your FREE place [here](#).

(Applications for the March 2021 Virtual Community Camp will close on Sunday 21st February.)

FREE Capacity Building Training Courses

Volunteer Now are delivering a range of capacity building training courses to groups based in Belfast in the New Year. Workshops will be online and cover good governance, leadership, fundraising and programme planning – find out more [here](#). Sign up now by emailing Sandra.faulkner@volunteernow.co.uk.

Mobilising Voluntary Action - Research Project

Volunteer Now are delighted to be working with NCVO, SCVO and WCVA on a UK-wide research study which will explore voluntary action during COVID-19. The study is funded by the UK Research Institute with the purpose of informing and guiding us for the future of volunteering.

As we progress, we will keep you up to date, but feel free to listen to this [podcast](#) for more information on the project!

25th Anniversary of Our Duty To Care

On the 25th Anniversary of Our Duty To Care, Alec Walker, Keeping Safe trainer talks about safeguarding and the responsibilities of organisations and their staff and volunteers providing a service. View the video [here](#). Ruth Mulholland, Safeguarding Manager tells us more about Our Duty To Care [here](#).

Membership

Membership of Volunteer Now is open to all organisations and individuals with an interest in volunteering. There is no fee. By becoming a member you add your voice to support volunteering. Sign up for FREE membership at www.volunteernow.co.uk/members.

Submit your Article

If you have volunteering related news, events, publications etc. to share, email training@volunteernow.co.uk.

VTraining

Volunteer Now also publish a free enewsletter called VTraining that includes all Volunteer Now training courses and workshops. To subscribe, please email training@volunteernow.co.uk.

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Supported by the Northern Ireland Executive through the Department for Communities.

Volunteer Now delivers services across Northern Ireland. We have offices in Belfast, Antrim, Enniskillen and Newry.

Main Office: The Skainos Centre, 239 Newtownards Road, Belfast, BT4 1AF. T: 028 9023 2020 E: info@volunteernow.co.uk

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Volunteer Now
The Skainos Centre
239 Newtownards Road
Belfast, England BT4 1AF
UK

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