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**16 March 2021**

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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](#).

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## ***Chief Executive's Comments***

Volunteer Now is launching some research next week which has benchmarked the level of volunteering during the pandemic and compared the findings with similar surveys in Scotland and Southern Ireland. The work has been undertaken on our behalf by Queens University and SMR Market Research; we would like to thank everyone involved in putting the report together.

The survey shows that in Northern Ireland there was a strong engagement in volunteering during the pandemic and there is a desire to continue to volunteer. It also highlights the level of informal volunteering and the need to become more effective at regularly measuring this. There is also some detail in the report about the impact of the pandemic on formal volunteering with organisations. Join us for the launch of the report on the **25 March at 2pm**. You will have an opportunity to hear the detail of the report, discuss your

impressions of the findings and to reflect on the learning for volunteer involving organisations.

To book a place please contact [sandra.faulkner@volunteernow.co.uk](mailto:sandra.faulkner@volunteernow.co.uk).

## **Denise Hayward**

Chief Executive

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### **Online Training**

Coming soon - we are currently working on our new training schedule for April 2021-March 2022. Keep an eye on our website and social media channels for more information. Take a look at our current Training Calendar [here](#).

### **The New Environment: Assessing Risk When Developing Volunteer Roles**

- [23 March](#), 10am-12pm, £15 +VAT

### **Keeping Adults Safe: Policy Development**

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

### **The New Environment: Volunteers & the Law**

- [25 March](#), 10am-12pm, £20 +VAT

### **VOLT Session: Volunteering During the Pandemic & Beyond - New NI Research**

- [25 March](#), 2-3.30pm, FREE

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### **Volunteer Now's Draft Response to Programme for Government**

Volunteer Now's latest draft response to the Programme for Government (PfG) consultation has been published [here](#). We wanted to share this in the hope that it provides you with support when completing your own response. We also welcome any feedback, as this can help strengthen our response!

Please send any feedback or suggestions to [andrew.hanna@volunteernow.co.uk](mailto:andrew.hanna@volunteernow.co.uk) by **midday on 18 March 2021**.

Please remember, the final deadline for [PfG consultation responses](#) is **22 March 2021**.

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### **Dementia Friendly Neighbourhoods**

#### **Belfast Celebration Event – Thursday 18 March at 10.45am-12.45pm**

You will learn about how people living with dementia and their carers have been impacted during Coronavirus. And you will also hear about some innovative programmes taking place in North, South, East and West Belfast Dementia Friendly Neighbourhoods.

There will also be breakout rooms where you have some time to hear from people living with dementia,

services that provide support and information on the development of a Dementia Friendly Belfast App.

We will finish with a relaxing mindfulness taster session.

**To register your attendance**, email [seniorsinfo@belfastcity.gov.uk](mailto:seniorsinfo@belfastcity.gov.uk) or phone 07967646146.

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### **All-Island Physical Literacy Survey**

The All-Island Physical Literacy Consensus Statement is a public policy co-ordinated by [Sport Ireland](#) and [Sport Northern Ireland](#), which includes a definition and explanation of physical literacy. The Statement aims to promote a knowledge and understanding of physical literacy across the island of Ireland. This public consultation survey aims to gain insight into the views on the Consensus Statement from all those working in related sectors and from the general population while also obtaining endorsement by a range of individuals and organisations representing multiple sectors. The survey will take between 10 and 12 minutes to complete.

We hope you can find the time to complete this survey yourself and to share to colleagues and friends within your network.

This survey is accessed via this link <https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/AIPL2021>.

The survey is open from 8-21 March 2021 inclusive.

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### **Census 2021 is Coming**

Households across Northern Ireland are being asked to take part in the 2021 Census. The census happens only once every 10 years and gives a picture of all the people and households in Northern Ireland. The last census was in 2011 and counted 1,810,900 people living here. It will be the first census run predominantly online, with the majority of households receiving a letter with a unique access code, allowing them to complete the questionnaire on their computers, phones or tablets. Paper questionnaires will also be available.

Read more [here](#).

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### **FREE Programme, Planning & Fundraising Workshops**

#### ***Programme & Project Planning Workshop - 22 March 2021 at 11am-1pm***

By the end of this session, participants will be able to understand:

- Calendar planning document
- Risk assessments
- Developing a vision for your programme or project
- How to put your team together
- Creating an event budget
- Choosing your venue and date

- Identifying and engaging partners and sponsors
- Developing your programme or project branding
- Developing and deploying your marketing campaign

### **Fundraising Workshop - 24 March 2021 at 10am-12pm**

This session will cover identifying funders and guidance on how to complete funding applications. By the end of this session, participants will be able to:

- Keep the application short
- Give the funder what they want
- Tell the funder who you are
- Describe the problem, and your solution
- Ask for project funding
- Be positive in your application
- Offer a human story
- Avoid jargon

Sign up for any of the sessions now by emailing [Sandra.faulkner@volunteernow.co.uk](mailto:Sandra.faulkner@volunteernow.co.uk).

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### **NEW Online Attracting & Selecting Volunteers Course!**

Our new online training course – Attracting and Selecting Volunteers - is now available!

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.

***“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.

Find out more [here](#).

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### **Publication of the Month**

#### **Reintroducing Volunteers- Some Good Practice Considerations!**

In the coming months, we will hopefully begin to see a gradual return of volunteers to their regular roles. This document includes useful guidance and some things to consider when reintroducing your volunteers to their roles. Accessible [here](#).

**\*\*Please note, as we amend this document in future to reflect updated regulations, the above link may stop working. If this is the case, you can search directly in our COVID-19 publications section here:**

**<http://bit.ly/3rrmawC>.**

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## Rethinking Loneliness and COVID-19

The [Institute of Public Health](#) hosted a webinar on Thursday 25 February 2021, focused on the impact of COVID-19 and rethinking loneliness and social isolation in Ireland and Northern Ireland.

Many leading experts and community organisations discussed emerging evidence, policy and challenges for public health. Volunteer Now's CEO Denise Hayward, spoke at length about volunteering and how it can help.

You can read more and view a recording of the webinar [here](#).

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## Views From Some VOLT Sessions

Last year, three of our VOLT (Volunteer Organisations Linking Together) sessions delved into a report for Government called "*Leveling up our Communities: proposals for a new social covenant*" (Danny Kruger MP Sept 20). The report was Danny Kruger MP's response to a request from the Prime Minister to consider ways of sustaining the community spirit demonstrated during lockdown, into the recovery phase and beyond. Kruger based his proposals on the premise that the experience of the recent crisis – the willingness of local people to step forward and collaborate, the flexibility shown by public services and the social commitment of businesses, never mind the development of digital solutions – shows what is possible. 67 volunteer involving organisations joined us across three sessions to explore three of the proposals which Volunteer Now had identified as having the potential to impact volunteers or volunteering.

A summary of the views and comments expressed can be found [here](#).

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## Fermanagh TBUC Social Action Programme

This video was developed and created by a group of young people from Fermanagh who were engaging in TBUC Social Action Programme, where they have been exploring the topics of identity, prejudice, stereotypes and what community relations is and its relevance today.

With talks provided by South Eastern Fermanagh Foundation and NI Education Service around the history of the troubles, they chose, as part of their social action to display how Fermanagh has changed for the better and how they challenge stereotypes in their everyday lives. Hope you enjoy their film [here](#).

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## Independent Community Observers

The Northern Ireland Policing Board has launched a campaign to recruit new Independent Community Observers (ICOs). ICOs are volunteers who play an important part in helping to monitor key aspects of the PSNI recruitment process for Police Constables. They ensure that the same procedures are applied to all candidates and that facilities and arrangements are adequate.

The application process closes on **Wednesday 31 March 2021** and more information can also be found on the Board's website through the following link: <https://www.nipolicingboard.org.uk/independent-custody-visiting-scheme>.

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## 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](http://www.volunteernow.co.uk/members).

## Submit your Article

If you have volunteering related news, events, publications etc. to share, email [training@volunteernow.co.uk](mailto: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](mailto:training@volunteernow.co.uk).

## Privacy Policy

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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](mailto:info@volunteernow.co.uk) W: [www.volunteernow.co.uk](http://www.volunteernow.co.uk) Charity Registration No. NIC101309. Company Limited by Guarantee No. NI602399. Registered in Northern Ireland.

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