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APRIL 2025

# Conference - Save the Date!

*Denise Hayward, CEO, Volunteer Now*



Volunteers' Week is fast approaching, and Volunteer Now is delighted to welcome [Chris Wade](#) to speak at our conference on the **6 June**. Chris will look at how we support our volunteers in this digital and changing world. We have much more flexible and one-off volunteering as well as the challenges of micro and virtual volunteering. This session will provide practical solutions to the challenges we face. We will also kick off our planning for the UN Year of Volunteering for Sustainable Development 2026 as part of the morning. We will finish with lunch and an opportunity for networking.

So please save the date and plan to join us at **Belfast Castle on 6 June at 9am**, it will be an opportunity to recharge your batteries at the end of a busy week! Find out more and book your place [here](#).



## Online Training

- Keeping Children Safe: Training for Staff & Volunteers (2 evenings)
- Keeping Children Safe: Designated Officer Training
- The 3 R's: Recruit, Retain, Reward Volunteers
- Induction, Support & Supervision of Volunteers
- Leading Volunteers: Dealing with Conflicts, Challenges & Problems



## Global Intergenerational Week 2025

Global Intergenerational Week is a campaign connecting everyone who is passionate about everything intergenerational. 2025 is now the fifth year of this amazing campaign and we are hoping this year will be bigger and better than ever! The Launch event for GIW25 took place on 4 February and you can check out the partners promo video here - <https://bit.ly/4jrHywk>

LGNI are planning for GIW25 which will run from 24 – 30 April 2025 and aims to inspire individuals, groups, organisations, local/national government and NGO's to fully embrace intergenerational practice, connecting people of all ages especially the younger and older generations. The campaign will celebrate good practice, ideas, moments and opportunities local to us where different age groups come together, and intergenerational friendships can be formed!

Check out the 2024 Global Intergenerational Week Impact Week Report by clicking here - <https://bit.ly/3G67z5W> and click below to keep an eye on for updates, to sign up as a supporter, access resources and campaign news!

[Find Out More](#)



## NEW Short Courses for 2025/26

Volunteer Now have released the first batch of our new short courses for 2025/26! Please click on the course title below to find out more about each course. Don't forget - you can book & pay for any course right away online.

And if you don't see what you are looking for, just drop us an email - we also design bespoke courses.

- [The 3 R's: Recruit, Retain, Reward Volunteers](#)
- [Induction, Support & Supervision of Volunteers](#)
- [Leading Volunteers: Dealing with Conflicts, Challenges & Problems](#)
- [Succession Planning for Volunteering](#)
- [Volunteers & the Law](#)
- [Risk Assessing Volunteers' Roles & Projects](#)



## Call for Papers

The Voluntary Sector and Volunteering Research Conference 2025 theme is **Creating Change Together: Civil society working beyond sector and organisational boundaries.**

Business School, City St George's, University of London, UK.

We welcome submissions for individual papers, panel sessions and workshops. We are particularly keen to receive proposals for the Conference Theme, but also welcome papers that address any issues relevant to volunteering and the voluntary sector within the themes laid out. Deadline is **12 May 2025**.

For more information, please see the VSSN website - [www.vssn.org.uk](http://www.vssn.org.uk)

New researchers can submit abstracts here - <https://www.vssn.org.uk/vsvr-2025-new-researchers-stream/>

Abstracts for the main conference can be submitted here - <https://www.vssn.org.uk/vssn-conference-abstract-submissions-2025/>



## Volunteering Never Gets Old!

### *Our new campaign highlights the benefits of volunteering later in life*

Tackling isolation, improving physical and mental health, learning new skills and encouraging social connection are just some of the benefits that volunteering can bring in later life, as highlighted by our new campaign.

Through 'Volunteering Never Gets Old', led by [Age Friendly Belfast](#) and [Volunteer Now](#), and funded by the [Public Health Agency](#) (PHA), people aged 60 and above are being encouraged to try volunteering to experience the positive impact it can have on individuals, organisations and the wider community.

Throughout Belfast and beyond there are many organisations, community projects and support services that rely on the help of volunteers to exist and thrive. Several older volunteers from Belfast have been sharing their experiences as part of the campaign - click the button below to read their experiences. You will also find some opportunities that might be of interest to people over 60.



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## Bank of Ideas - Open Now

### *Do you have a creative idea for Belfast?*

The Bank of Ideas is a **creative fund** where people can be in with the chance to get up to **£2,000** to bring their creative idea for the area to life.

Open to neighbours, friends, schools, clubs, young people, one individual with an idea. All creative ideas are welcome - from recycling and baking to skateboarding and gardening!

We're hosting Idea Generating and Support workshops so we can have a chat, help people come up with an idea, develop it and know all the info needed to fill out the Idea form.

The Bank of Ideas is run through a Participatory Budgeting scheme, which means that residents decide how public funds are used in their area.



This happens at a **Voting Day** in City Hall where each person/group has a stall to showcase their creative idea.

Workshops are currently running and the deadline to send in your idea is **Wednesday 14 May 2025**.

**Click the button below** for more information, including the Idea form and guidance. And here is the link to Eventbrite to sign up for the workshops - <https://bit.ly/3Gb5kON>

**Find Out More**

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## Putting the 'tee' in volunteer!

### ***Applications now open to join the volunteer support team at The 153<sup>rd</sup> Open!***

Anyone who loves golf or simply wants to soak in the atmosphere of an unforgettable global event can now apply to join the volunteer team supporting The 153<sup>rd</sup> Open at Royal Portrush Golf Club this July.

Following a hugely successful return to Northern Ireland in 2019, The Open will be back on the County Antrim coast this summer, bringing with it tens of thousands of spectators and a worldwide TV audience.

To facilitate the vast number of visitors to the area throughout the Championship, Volunteer Now is working in collaboration with Tourism Northern Ireland to recruit 150 volunteers to be positioned around the town, meeting and greeting guests, helping with directions, sharing event information and ultimately providing a warm welcome to one and all.

These roles will be based off-course throughout Portrush at areas including transport hubs, spectator zones and Park & Ride facilities. Training will be provided to successful applicants as well as expenses towards food and refreshments. The roles are open to people over the age of 18.

Speaking about the opportunity, Marc Scott, Chair of Volunteer Now said: "The 153<sup>rd</sup> Open will once again put Northern Ireland on a global platform to showcase our world class golf and world-renowned hospitality. Our volunteers did an incredible job at The Open in 2019, providing a true Northern Ireland welcome to everyone they encountered.

"We are proud to once again be working in partnership with Tourism Northern Ireland and the organisers of this incredible Championship, The R&A, to recruit this year's support team of volunteers. We have no doubt they will act as excellent ambassadors for both The Open and Northern Ireland, whilst experiencing all the buzz and excitement that it will bring to Portrush this summer."

Economy Minister Dr Caoimhe Archibald said: "I'm delighted that Volunteer Now will be recruiting people to help out with The Open this summer. This is a great opportunity for volunteers to gain experience at a prestigious golf championship. In particular, I welcome the news that this programme will engage with younger people and those who are facing barriers to employment. It will give them a taste of the hospitality and tourism industry and the wonderful career prospects it offers."

“Volunteer Now, a key strategic partner for my department, has vast experience in supporting high profile sporting events in Northern Ireland, and volunteers will play an integral part in the success of The 153<sup>rd</sup> Open.

Volunteer Now will be to the fore in recruiting and organising motivated, enthusiastic volunteers to provide a warm welcome and an unrivalled visitor experience for people attending The Open.”

Speaking on behalf of Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council, Jonathan McCarron added: “We are delighted to support the launch of the volunteer programme for The 153<sup>rd</sup> Open, which we will proudly host in our Borough. We are grateful for the dedication of our partner organisation, Volunteer Now, who will professionally coordinate this essential resource which is central to the smooth running of The Open.”

Click the button below to register your interest or call Volunteer Now on 028 9023 2020.

### Register Your Interest



#### Staff & Volunteer Wellbeing Survey

At North Down Community Network, we recognise the immense challenges facing the community and voluntary sector, especially in these high pressure times. To better support the incredible staff and volunteers involved, we're launching a wellbeing survey aimed at understanding your experiences.

Your insights are crucial in helping us understand the impact on health and wellbeing and identify effective strategies and practical things that can help. Please take a few moments to share your thoughts – your voice matters!

**For volunteers:** <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/9KPFRTL>

**For staff:** <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/76TLN5J>





I'm excited to take on the Events Officer post in Volunteer Now, after 5 years as the Volunteer Support Officer for Newry, Mourne & Down. The role involves coordinating the volunteer programmes for major events across Northern Ireland.

The next couple of years are particularly exciting as we are managing the volunteer programme for The Balmoral Show in May, The 153rd Open in July and Fleadh Cheoil na hEireann in Belfast over the next two years. We have over 1,900 volunteers registered on our Events Team who bring such a warm welcome to the events they sign up to.

It's a joy to have been given the opportunity to support these amazing volunteers and prestigious events across NI.

[Contact Clara](#)

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## Member Spotlight

### *The Rainbow Project*

The Rainbow Project has been working for a better Northern Ireland for LGBTQIA+ people and their families by service provision which mitigates the impact of discrimination and training, campaigning and policy work, which seeks to eliminate the root causes of that discrimination and deliver full social and legal equality for LGBTQIA+ people.

The Rainbow Project is devoted to improving the health and wellbeing of LGBTQIA+ people and their families in Northern Ireland, as well as those questioning their orientation or gender, through partnership, advocacy and the development and delivery of appropriate support services.



[The Rainbow Project](#)

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**network**  
Support / Strengthen / Build

Directory of  
Befriending  
Services

**VOLUNTEER NOW**  
connect · build · change

## Directory of Befriending Services

Volunteer Now coordinate the Befriending Network and have updated and published the Directory of Befriending Services (2025) to highlight the befriending schemes in operation across Northern Ireland.

As organisations, you may be supporting people who are isolated and who could benefit from this type of information, so we hope this can be a useful resource to those who need it.

## Directory of Befriending Services



### New Members

Welcome to our newest organisational members: [The Giving Shed Helping Others](#), [NNCG](#), [Motor Neurone Disease Association](#), [Lincoln Courts Youth & Community Association](#), [Cats Protection](#), [Irish Athletic Boxing Association - Ulster Branch](#), [Lisburn YMCA](#), [Gael Tots](#), [St Joseph's Flute Band](#), [Ledley Hall Boys & Girls Club Trust Ltd](#), [Lincoln Area DialaRide Ltd](#), [Crossgar Friday Folk](#), [Stroke Warriors](#). This brings our organisational members total to 1193!

[Become A Member](#)



### Flexible, accessible training

Did you know you can learn all you need to know about volunteer management in just 8 hours with our on demand courses? You can complete these anytime, anywhere & on any device! Click below to find out more.

[Find Out More](#)





### Volunteers in Focus: Episode 4 - Paul, Belfast Sailability

Meet Paul, who has dedicated 10 years to Belfast Sailability as the group visit coordinator and assistant instructor 🚤

For him, there's no better feeling than heading home after a day on the water—especially after helping a wheelchair user experience the freedom of sailing!

Paul is passionate about giving back and empowering individuals of all abilities to experience the joy of being out on the water. You don't need to know how to sail to get involved—just be ready to dive in and enjoy the experience! 🌊

Volunteers in Focus celebrates those who turn personal experiences into opportunities to uplift others. Stay tuned for more inspiring stories and discover how you can make a difference! 🌸 ❤️

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