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JULY 2025

Event Volunteering

Denise Hayward, CEO, Volunteer Now



This week hundreds of volunteers are supporting the Open in Royal Portrush. Volunteers have also supported the North West 200, Balmoral Show and a huge range of events and festivals across Northern Ireland already this summer. If volunteers were not involved many of these events would simply not take place. Therefore, it is so important to recruit and support these volunteers really well.

Events delivery can involve long days, often outdoors and dealing with the public who may not always be having a good day! Regular breaks, good food, support and training are all an important part of the experience as is camaraderie and great social connection. Knowing that the recruitment journey has been good is important as every step of the way we are building a team.

Volunteer Now has an [Events Toolkit](#) which is really useful if you are thinking about planning an event involving volunteers. In the meantime – a huge thank you to all the volunteers who have made the summer special through taking part in an event!



Online Training

- Succession Planning for Volunteering
- Keeping Children Safe: Designated Officer Refresher Training
- Volunteers & the Law
- VOLT Session: Recruiting Students as Volunteers
- Risk Assessing Volunteers' Roles & Projects
- VOLT Session: Fundraising Regulator



Biggest Ever Volunteers' Week in NI

Volunteers' Week (2-8 June 2025) was one of the most successful to date in Northern Ireland, with almost 300 organisations hosting special events to recognise and thank the brilliant people that make a difference year round in their local community.

Fronted by Volunteer Now in Northern Ireland, Volunteers' Week is aimed at celebrating the impact the half a million volunteers here make by giving their time for others. For the first time, Volunteers' Week was sponsored by the Irish League of Credit Unions.

Jane Gribbin, Volunteer Now, said: "Volunteers' Week is about shining a light on the true value of volunteering, and we were very grateful to the Irish League of Credit Unions for their support to help achieve this in June.

"There is a real diverse mix of volunteers in Northern Ireland, each of whom contribute to society in a unique and important way. Whether they're coaching football at the weekend, clearing weeds from their local park, or befriending older people in their community, every single volunteer is helping change lives for the better, including their own.

"Volunteering isn't only a 'nice thing to do,' it is also an essential resource for many organisations and much-valued support for individuals in need. It also delivers proven physical and mental health benefits for the volunteer. We believe volunteers are the behind-the-scenes heroes who keep society going – and by spreading that message, we hope to see more people giving volunteering a go."



2nd – 8th June

2025

#VolunteersWeek

volunteers' week in Northern Ireland this year, an initiative that aligns perfectly with the credit union philosophy of 'people helping people.' As member-owned financial cooperatives, volunteerism is at the heart of everything we do. It strengthens communities, fosters connection and empowers people. It was fantastic to see volunteers across Northern Ireland receive their well-deserved recognition."

To discover volunteering opportunities that suit your circumstances, visit our [Opportunity Search](#). And if you need a hand finding your perfect volunteering opportunity, please get in touch!



Good Relations Week 2025

Oscar, BAFTA and IFTA Star, James Martin is calling on individuals, organisations, and communities across the region to embrace the theme of 'Connect' and take part in Good Relations Week 2025 – helping to shape a more peaceful, inclusive, and sustainable future for everyone.

Coordinated by the Community Relations Council, Good Relations Week 2025 will run from Monday 13 to Sunday 19 October, with a dynamic programme of more than 200 cross-community and multicultural events taking place across all 11 local council areas.

This year's theme, 'Connect', highlights how lasting progress and a better future for everyone depends on the strong and meaningful links between People, Planet and Prosperity – all connected by the shared goal of peace.

As the official ambassador for Good Relations Week 2025, Oscar winner James Martin, the first leading actor with Down's syndrome to star in an Oscar, BAFTA and IFTA winning film, said:

"I'm proud to support Good Relations Week 2025 and to champion this year's important theme of 'Connect. We all need connection, with each other, with our environment and with the communities we're part of. It's through those connections that we build understanding, friendship and a sense of belonging.

opportunity for everyone, no matter who they are or where they come from. I'd love to see as many people and organisations as possible getting involved this year. Let's connect, take part and make a real difference together."

The week-long celebration will shine a spotlight on the work of individuals and organisations using connection and collaboration to break down barriers, strengthen community relations and address key societal challenges, including sectarianism, racism, inequality, mental health, poverty and education.

The programme of events will include workshops, exhibitions, storytelling, theatre, musical performances, discussions and cultural showcases, providing a platform for shared learning, civic pride, and collective impact.

The Community Relations Council is now inviting community groups, voluntary organisations, local councils, statutory bodies, schools, and businesses to register events that reflect this year's theme and help build a more connected, inclusive, and cohesive society.

Click below to find out more about Good Relations Week 2025 and to register your event.

Good Relations Week 2025



Volunteer Accreditation through Volunteer Friendly

Do you believe that you have all your volunteer management practices in place? Have you an income of less than £200,000? The Volunteer Friendly Award is a brilliant way of gaining accreditation and showcasing your good practice!

Volunteer Friendly is a quality standard and development tool that is user-friendly, to support, develop, recognise and reward small to medium sized groups who are good at involving

important for groups to be able to show how good they are at involving and managing their volunteers.

Please contact your local Volunteering Support Officer to find out more – you can find their contact details by clicking the button below.

Find Out More



Grants for Good Fund

The Matthew Good Foundation has opened the next round of its Grants for Good Fund. The aim is to support small charities, not-for-profit groups and social entrepreneurs who are passionate about making a difference to people, their community or the environment.

The Fund will share £15,000 between five shortlisted projects every three months, which will be voted for by John Good Group employees. The project that receives the most votes will receive a grant of £5,000, second place £3,500, third place £2,500 with fourth and fifth place both receiving £2,000.

As well as established projects and charities, the Foundation wants to hear from people with innovative ideas that need some funding to get their projects up and running.

To be eligible, applicants must have earned less than £50,000 in the last 12 months.

Funding is awarded every three months and the next deadline for the next funding round is **15 September 2025**.

Find Out More

Hi, my name is Aislinn, I'm a new recruit with the Community Engagement Team as a Volunteering Support Officer. I work in Belfast, Lisburn and Castlereagh, and North Down and Ards, and my role involves contacting and visiting volunteer-involving charities and organisations in the area, attending events and fairs to promote volunteering and Volunteer Now, as well as being a point of contact and support for organisations seeking volunteers and individuals seeking to volunteer. I joined Volunteer Now about 6 weeks ago so I'm still finding my feet, but everyone in the team have been so supportive in showing me the ropes! I enjoy the travel involved with the role and meeting with the volunteers and organisations in the area - it's been amazing to see all of the incredible charitable work around the Belfast area that depends on people volunteering their time. With around 6 years of volunteering experience myself, it's been lovely to encourage and support people through the process.



Contact Aislinn



Member Spotlight

Glenside Farm

Glenside Farm is a working farm for the community in the beautiful drumlins of County Down, two miles outside Comber. The farm is a place for health and wellbeing for all through farming, nature and community. It offers access to an authentic working farm and provides meaningful opportunities for participants and volunteers to engage with farming, animals and nature.

Glenside Farm is a safe and welcoming space where everyone is treated with respect, compassion and without judgement. It is a supportive community where we nurture human relationships.

Glenside Farm

Problem Solving Procedures

An issue all volunteer managers dread is dealing with conflict and challenging situations. This short publication outlines methods and things to consider when you receive a complaint or need to address poor performance. Often having a plan written down will give you confidence to handle these situations effectively and consistently



Problem Solving Procedures



New Members

Welcome to our newest organisational members: [Castlewellan Agricultural Show Ltd](#), Erne District Chinese Families & Friends Association, [Newry Indian Arts Club](#), Warrenpoint Women's Group, [Holywood Yacht Club](#), [Barnardo's Newry](#), [Scouting Ireland](#), [Pulmonary Fibrosis NI](#), [Cairde na Cille CIC](#). This brings our organisational members total to 1212!

Become A Member

ON DEMAND COURSES

All you need to know about volunteer management in 8 hours of learning!



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 7 - Tom, Groundwork NI

Meet Tom, a dedicated volunteer with Groundwork NI at Scullery O'Tullagh 🌱

Tom got involved with Scullery O'Tullagh in 2014 to spend more time outdoors, and little did he know, his efforts would help transform the community allotment into the thriving space it is today—a wonderful project that continues to grow.

Tucked away in this little sanctuary is Tom's own patch, where he busies himself in his greenhouse. As the allotment flourishes, so does his sense of community. He now shares his knowledge with those who reach out to Scullery O'Tullagh for advice on sustainable growing.

For Tom, volunteering isn't just about gardening—it's about being outdoors, working with others on a shared passion, and nurturing his mental wellbeing.

Volunteers in Focus celebrates the power of community and how passion projects can blossom into something much bigger. Stay tuned to discover how you can make a difference 🌻

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