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AUGUST 2025

Refresh Your Volunteer Programme

Denise Hayward, CEO, Volunteer Now

As we come to the end of the summer, I know many organisations will be getting their volunteering programmes in place for the coming year. That might mean recruiting new volunteers or thinking about how you retain your existing ones. Perhaps you feel that you need to breathe new life into the volunteering programme you are running. The trends are clear that flexibility is key, and it can seem hard to manage that in some contexts. The world is changing so quickly and that is true of volunteering as well. There are a range of courses coming up in our [Autumn training schedule](#) to support you, such as, Attracting and Selecting Volunteers, Succession Planning, Dealing with Difficult Conversations, Volunteers and the Law to name a few! We can also tailor our courses to your staff team so please feel free to contact Alice O'Boyle if you want to chat through your options. Alice.OBoyle@volunteernow.co.uk.

ONLINE TRAINING

Click the button below to find out more!

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Online Training

- Risk Assessing Volunteers' Roles & Projects
- VOLT Session: Fundraising Regulator
- Keeping Children Safe: Designated Officer Training
- Leading Volunteers: Dealing with Conflicts, Challenges & Problems
- Attracting & Selecting Volunteers



Behind the Scenes Heroes Applauded Through Biggest Ever Volunteers' Week 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."

Martin Busch of the Irish League of Credit Unions added: "We were delighted to support 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."

8 VOLUNTEERS' WEEK STATISTICS!



01. Network

Volunteer Now distributed over **5300** pieces of merchandise to organisations for their volunteers enabling them to say a special thank you with a little gift. The notepads were kindly sponsored by Irish Leagues of Credit Unions.

Prior to Volunteers Week Volunteer Now hosted **8** local networking sessions for members and **144** organisations came together to talk about the importance of recognition, the resources available and to gain tips and ideas on how they could value and recognise their volunteers.



02. Merchandise



03. Launch

During Volunteers Week the team supported **29** organisations as they recognised **1600** volunteers during their own events. Over **200** young people also received recognition through Volunteer Now Impact Awards with special events held in Ballymena Academy and St Dominics Grammar School, Belfast.

Minister Gordon Lyons MLA officially started Volunteers Week on 2 June 2025.



04. Recognition



05. Social media campaign

- Across the week Volunteer Now gained an engagement rate of
- **2038** on LinkedIn with **1577** impressions;
 - **29** pieces of content were posted on Facebook which gained **23,128** views and **898** likes/comments;
 - **27** pieces of content were posted

118 organisations took part in The Big NI THANK YOU! The 1st of its kind in NI the reels showcased a range of organisations each day of the Week as they said a public 'thank you' to their volunteers and the amazing impact that they have. This local social media campaign complemented the UK campaign which provided a range of resources on the new Volunteers' Week website.



06. Social Media



07. Printed / online media

Volunteer Now gained and supported a reach of **£1.3million** with an Advertising Equivalent value of 84,000Euro. This includes coverage generated by third party organisations that reference Volunteers' Week.

We gained **6** pieces of printed/online media content including a segment on the Conor Philips Show and a profile of our CEO in the Belfast Telegraph; **6** brilliant case studies were gained and shared widely.

We collaborated with Youth Initiatives and Youth Link as well as the ILCU for stories and content to further showcase a breadth of volunteering engagement.

08. PR Value



Involving Refugees and Asylum Seekers as Volunteers

Are you an organisation that has suitable roles for refugees and asylum seekers? At Volunteer Now we have noticed an increase in enquiries for these roles from individuals and advocacy bodies, especially in the Belfast and Newtownabbey areas. It is known that many newcomers have special skills to share and are actively seeking to Integrate, meet new people and improve their English and give back. However, there can be barriers such as a need for cash expenses, Access NI, and level of English required for roles.

Please contact us with any suitable opportunities, and if already a member of Be Collective, let the Community Engagement Team know - info@volunteernow.co.uk Not on Be Collective yet? You can reach out to the team for support.



Capacity Building in Good Relations Survey



Capacity Building Survey - Opportunity to Input

The Executive Office Good Relations Delivery Branch is currently carrying out a scoping exercise to determine what capacity building work is being undertaken within the Good Relation sector, and to identify if there any potential gaps.

We have created a survey to assist us with this, and we would be very grateful if you could take the time to complete the survey. It is an opportunity to share your thoughts on capacity building within Good Relations. As you may be aware the T:BUC Review is currently ongoing, and the results of this survey will help inform any refreshed approach to Good Relations. Your input would be valued, and very much appreciated. Click below to start the survey, it should only take a few minutes to complete.

[Capacity Building Survey](#)



Could you be our next Trustee?

We are keen to elect some new Trustees from our member organisations

We are looking for people who are strong supporters of volunteering, who are interested in good governance and who want to help to shape the services and support which Volunteer Now provides to volunteers and organisations.

Trustee's meetings are usually in the late afternoon once every 6 weeks for approx. 2 hours and if possible all Trustees get involved in at least one subcommittee.

If you think this role is of interest to you, please get in touch with our CEO Denise for a chat and more details at denise.hayward@volunteernow.co.uk or call on 07850 851814.




VOLUNTEERS WANTED

Have past and present crises affected your local community and tourism industry? We'd love to hear your thoughts! Fill out this quick survey to help shape the future of tourism in Northern Ireland.

Help Shape a Sustainable Future for Northern Ireland's Tourism Industry!

Be part of important research exploring how Northern Ireland — a destination that has faced numerous crises — can better prepare for future challenges. This study seeks input from both **local communities** and **tourism industry professionals** to understand the barriers to adapting to change and promote **long-term social, environmental, and economic well-being**.

If you have resided in Northern Ireland for more than one year we would love to hear your thoughts!

SCAN QR CODE FOR SURVEY:



If you have any questions
Please get in touch with Jane Leonard at
 (PhD Researcher at Ulster University)
leonard-j8@ulster.ac.uk

[Complete Survey](#)

Member Spotlight

East Belfast Community Development Agency

East Belfast Community Development Agency (EBCDA) is the 'umbrella organisation' supporting community development in East Belfast. Our membership is made up of community groups



**East Belfast
Community
Development
Agency**

range of interests and needs within communities and encompasses a variety of groups, including local community organisations, residents' groups, faith-based organisations, sports clubs, older people's groups, men's groups and women's groups.

East Belfast Community Development Agency



Publication of the Month:

Fundraising Volunteers - Code of Practice

Volunteers play an important part in fundraising and supporting charitable giving by hosting community events and street collections, or by raising funds online to support the causes they care about. There are different fundraising relationships that exist (with different dynamics), and this document provides more information.

The new Code of Fundraising Practice is coming into effect on 1 November 2025, and we are hosting an information session on Wednesday 17 September (10am-11.30am). You can sign up and find out more here: [VOLT Session - Fundraising Regulator](#).

Fundraising Volunteers - Code of Practice



New Members

Welcome to our newest organisational members:

[Beds Rural Communities Charity](#), [Carrickmore Thursday Afternoon Club](#), [Salter's Grange Accordion Band](#), [Live Here Love Here](#), [The Movement Club](#), [Belvoir Community Hub](#), [The Warehouse Newtownards](#), [Carrickfergus & Larne Child Contact Centre](#). This brings our organisational members total to 1220!

[Become A Member](#)

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.

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Volunteers in Focus: Episode 8 - Paulina, Belfast Tool Library

Meet Paulina, a passionate DIY-er and volunteer at Belfast Tool Library 🛠️

She found the library when searching for new tools and gifted herself a membership for her birthday. What started as a personal project soon turned into a deeper connection as Paulina transitioned from member to volunteer, supporting workshops and supervising open sessions.

She enjoys the social aspect of the library—people coming together to learn, share skills, and transform the space. As they work to transform the space into a vibrant hub, she has been key to fitting out the workshop with a new kitchen.

has also taught her valuable lessons about creating inclusive spaces. The most rewarding part? People now come to her for advice, showing how much they trust her skills.

Volunteers in Focus celebrates how giving back can inspire personal growth. Stay tuned for more stories and find out how you can make a difference! 🌞🔧

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