

Equal Opportunities

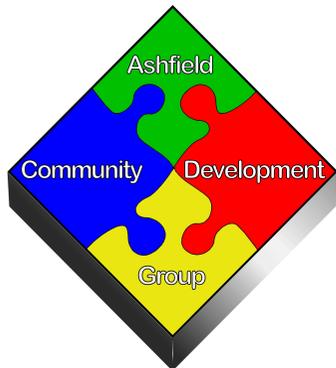
When your group takes on volunteers, please remember that everyone has a contribution to make in the community and that there should be an awareness of inclusion at all times (*see leaflet 12: Equality & Diversity*).

Ashfield Voluntary Action

If you would like assistance in recruiting volunteers then you should contact Ashfield Voluntary Action (AVA). You will need to register your organisation and they will enter your volunteering opportunities on to their database. AVA will then match the skills and interests of potential volunteers against the opportunities available. Contact 01623 555551 for further information.

This leaflet can also be downloaded from:

<http://www.ashfield.gov.uk/media/3190/0-index-rev-feb-2015.pdf>



This advice leaflet has been compiled by Ashfield Community Development Group (ACDG).

For details of ACDG members offering support, please refer to leaflet "i".

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Working with Volunteers



What is a volunteer?

A volunteer is someone who gives up their time freely to help others (non-family members) or the environment for no financial gain. Volunteers are crucial in most community groups as without them they would not be able to operate.

Why do people volunteer?

There are many reasons why people volunteer, such as to:

- Give something back to the community
- Help others
- Learn new skills
- Fill spare time
- Feel valued
- Gain work experience
- Make new friends

Volunteering Roles

Volunteers fulfil many roles in community groups. First decide what you need a volunteer to do and create a volunteer role description. Try to make the role sound interesting and exciting. List the tasks for that role, relevant skills and experience needed, what training is provided, days and times needed etc. Examples of typical volunteer roles in community groups include:



- Helping with the running of a group (*see leaflet 4: Roles And Responsibilities*)
- Using desktop publishing software to design posters and flyers
- Organising events and activities
- Helping with catering and refreshments
- Networking with other groups / organisations
- Providing transport for doctors or hospital appointments

Please remember that volunteers should not replace paid workers, they should complement what already exists.

Recruiting Volunteers

Ways you can consider recruiting new volunteers include:

- Holding a volunteer recruitment event. This often takes the form of a fun day, table top sale etc. Once people turn up, there is the opportunity to chat with them about volunteering
- Designing leaflets / posters
- Advertising in local papers / radio / local notice boards
- Word of mouth by existing members of the group
- Contacting Ashfield Voluntary Action

Involving Volunteers

There are a number of steps in involving volunteers:

- Informal chat explaining what is involved in the role. The potential volunteer should be given the opportunity to express their needs. Some flexibility may be required e.g. could training be offered to meet gaps, could the role description be amended to reflect personal circumstances etc.
- Next would be an application form. This would include contact details of the applicant, details of two referees and a description of relevant experience.
- Offer the potential volunteer, a supervised taster session so that they have more idea of what the role involves.
- Receive references and, if satisfactory, offer them a volunteer position.
- If your group works with vulnerable adults or children, we recommend that you have suitable policies and working practices (*see leaflet 8: Child Protection, leaflet 9: Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Checks, and leaflet 10: Vulnerable Adults*)
- The local volunteer centre can assist in recruiting volunteers for your organisation.



Insurance

All volunteers should be insured by your organisation. Ensure that volunteers are aware of what this covers and of any restrictions that might apply. (*see leaflet 11: Insurance*)

Retaining volunteers

Ensuring that the volunteer remains interested and challenged in their role is vital, but at the same time try to make sure that the volunteer is not overstretched.

Also try to make sure that they are always recognised for what they do - sometimes a simple "thank you" works wonders for volunteers' confidence and sustained interest.

