

# **Volunteer Development Strategy 2014/5**

## **1. Purpose of strategy**

This strategy sets out how Healthwatch Telford and Wrekin (HWTW) will recruit and support volunteers in their roles. It demonstrates our commitment to recognising the efforts of volunteers within the borough, whilst ensuring that all volunteers are treated equally and appropriate support mechanisms are in place.

## **2. Objectives**

- To create a pool of high-calibre volunteers who will support the work of HWTW.
- To promote participation by local people in the work carried out by HWTW and encourage wider participation from the community.
- To work with key stakeholders to support the development of volunteers.
- To increase the number of volunteers undertaking quality volunteering placements in HWTW, particularly those groups and/or individuals that are under-represented, socially excluded or have extra support needs, to address inequalities at all levels.
- To support HWTW in its retention and management of volunteers.
- To support HWTW in recognising and rewarding volunteers.

## **3. Key areas for consideration**

To ensure that this strategy meets the objectives of HWTW's Volunteer Strategy, the following key areas have been identified:

- Identifying volunteer opportunities
- Recruitment & advertising
- Selection & screening
- Creating a diverse range of volunteers
- Monitoring and support
- Capability development through training opportunities

#### **4. Identifying volunteer opportunities**

Understanding the role that volunteers play in the organisation is key to getting best value for HWTW, as well as for the individual. Volunteers will have the opportunity to be involved in HWTW's activities in a variety of ways from top-level management through to championing Healthwatch as a cause. Indicative activities are:

- HWTW Board
- Enter and View
- Representing HWTW at meetings
- Engagement events
- Project work
- Healthwatch Champions - for service or geographic area
- Office work

Each role will require a specific Role Description outlining the activities, responsibilities and commitment expected from volunteers. These will include duties, amount of time required, level of responsibility, skills and capabilities, and other tasks relating to the role.

#### **5. Recruitment & advertising**

To ensure that HWTW has a wide range of volunteers, the organisation must have in place a robust strategy for recruitment and advertising. Below are examples of how HWTW can utilise different tools to advertise volunteer posts available:

- HWTW website
- HWTW e-bulletins
- Local press
- Social media (eg Facebook & Twitter)
- Voluntary sector networks (eg, Telford CVS)
- Word-of-mouth
- Professional networks
- Community groups
- Local authority
- T&W CCG and PPGs

- Libraries
- Jobcentre Plus Work Coaches
- Community Engagements
- Engagements with Educational Groups (Schools, Colleges, University)
- Engagement with local employers

## **6. Selection & screening**

Finding the right volunteer for the appropriate role is vital. HWTW must ensure that when members of the public express interest in roles, they are assessed for suitability and where training may be needed, this is provided by the organisation - either in-house or by an appropriate training provider.

Training courses available may include:

- Enter & View
- Report writing
- Equality and diversity\*
- Safeguarding (vulnerable adults and children)
- Media training
- Engagement techniques
- Health & Safety
- First Aid
- Computer/Technology skills
- RSPH Course
- Survey Development

This list can be expanded upon as HWTW develops and volunteer needs change.

## **7. Developing a diverse group of volunteers**

HWTW will need to represent the views of a wide range of communities across the borough. It must therefore ensure that it creates a pool of volunteers that can both represent these groups, including minority groups, as well as be able to effectively communicate with members of these groups.

By doing so it will allow HWTW to collect a range of feedback and issues affecting both small and large groups, and also engage with specialised sectors of society. To this end, volunteers should be recruited to represent or champion HWTW and collect feedback and issues from these groups. Healthwatch Champions will also provide feedback to the groups around proposed and actual changes in services, especially those people who do not often engage with health or social care services.

Groups may include:

- Mental health
- Learning disabilities
- BME communities
- Traveller communities
- Carers
- Older people
- Younger people
- Homelessness
- Justice System

These volunteers will need to receive appropriate training and checks, especially those working with vulnerable people.

## **8. Monitoring and support**

Volunteers have many motivators for becoming involved with organisations. This can range from an active interest in the purpose and work of the organisation, deriving a sense of ‘belonging’ and empowerment, or feeling that they are contributing to the communities they live in. Because of the nature of volunteering, it is important to ensure that individuals receive the correct level of support whilst carrying out their duties. HWTW should provide appropriate monitoring of volunteers and a support structure including:

- Ensuring staff are available to assist with advice & enquiries
- Informal meetings to discuss progress or issues
- Annual reviews
- Establishing a method of monitoring the progress of volunteers
- Identifying appropriate training needs

- Quarterly Volunteer Workshops (to share experiences and skills with other volunteers)

## **9. Training and Capability Development**

Recruited volunteers will bring with them a range of experiences, skills and talents to their activity for HWTW. The aim of HWTW will be to recognise and value what each individual will bring to the organization, and provide opportunities to further develop knowledge and skills appropriate to their interests and to their volunteer roles, activities and opportunities as necessary.

All Volunteers will receive an appropriate induction with essential basic information and training on HWTW policies as well as key areas associated with HWTW engagement and work activities. In addition all volunteers will be offered role-specific training and development opportunities, including leadership, soft-skills as well as skills and knowledge in topics related to health and care services work of HWTW. Available training will be reviewed periodically and on an ad hoc basis, and amended where necessary.

The organisation will also investigate provision for volunteers to undertake the Royal Society of Public Health (RSPH) L2 award in Understanding Health Improvement, and make such opportunities available when appropriate, as well as any other similar external awards appropriate to specific role or work needs.

To achieve this HWTW will:

- Identify the training needed by HWTW Volunteers
- Obtain, communicate, and provide training (formal and informal) to address those needs
- Establish and maintain training records
- Assess training effectiveness

## **10. Roles & responsibilities**

An important part of HWTW's volunteer strategy is to ensure that the correct roles are identified within each sub-section of volunteer involvement. Below are indicative roles that the HWTW sees for each level, with generic specifications for each area.

## **Executive Level**

### **Roles**

Chair

Directors

### **Objectives**

Directors are required to act as specified in the governing document of HWTW. All directors take equal and shared responsibility for the organisation's work as a whole and act collectively in making decisions and ensuring that those decisions are implemented.

### **Desired skills**

- Commitment to the aims, objectives and values of HWTW
- Strategic vision & independent judgement
- Leadership capabilities
- Understanding and acceptance of the legal duties, responsibilities and liabilities of directorship
- Ability to bring specific needed skills, experience or perspective to the board
- Ability to work collaboratively with other Directors and HWTW staff

## **Specialist volunteers**

### **Roles**

- Patient groups & community forums liaison
- Enter & View representatives
- Consultation
- Issues/current trends/monitoring
- Project work (planning, management, task)

### **Objectives**

Specialist volunteers are required to conduct specific duties where they have an area of expertise or have undertaken specialist training. These roles are designed to extend across the range of work HWTW carries out. This covers collation of information, distributing

information to other networks, conducting research/projects on behalf of HWTW and responding appropriately to issues raised by the public. Each volunteer has a duty to report their progress, and the progress of their work/assignments, to the staff and the Board.

### **Desired skills**

- Knowledge of health/social care structure locally
- Commitment to improving services
- Communication skills (spoken & written English)
- Project management skills
- Leadership skills
- Willingness (commitment) to devote the necessary time and effort to projects
- Networking capabilities - with partner organisations and staff
- Ability to work effectively as a member of a team, where appropriate

### **Outreach volunteers**

#### **Roles**

- Attending meetings
- Outreach “surgeries” in community, eg monthly engagement events at Princess Royal Hospital and the Shropshire Women & Children’s Unit
- Events/promotional work

#### **Objectives**

Outreach volunteers will play an important part in raising the awareness of HWTW. The roles identified above are designed to give HWTW a presence in the community and to collect feedback and issues that the public raise about local services. Volunteers will be required to feed back to the staff team, information they gather.

### **Desired skills**

- Knowledge of health/social care structure locally
- Flexibility in attending events, including evenings and weekends where required
- Good listening and observational skills
- Confident in creating dialogue with members of the public
- Networking with partner organisations and staff

- Ability to work effectively as a member of a team, where appropriate

## **Champions**

### **Objectives**

Champions will distribute information about HWTW activities and collect information about issues and experiences in the local area to feedback to the staff team. Our Champions will be members of pre-existing forums and groups who advocate on behalf of the organisation. They may be part of one or multiple groups.

Champions will be required to liaise regularly with HWTW team to ensure they have the most up-to-date information from the Healthwatch organization.

HWTW aims to recruit and support a large number of Champions across the borough of Telford & Wrekin within all sectors of society. It is especially important that HWTW collects information from those representing 'seldom heard' groups and also communities that may not engage as often with patient and public involvement services.

### **Desired skills**

- Member of at least one local group or organisation or interest in joining a group
- Knowledge of health/social care structure locally
- Able to advocate on behalf of HWTW & explain its function
- Flexibility in attending events, including evenings and weekends where required
- Confident in delivering presentations and disseminating information clearly
- Networking with partner organisations and staff

## **11. HWTW Team involvement**

It is important that volunteers are supported in their roles and are confident to carry out their duties. Staff will be responsible for:

- Recruiting volunteers and providing induction, training, support and supervision, alongside volunteer co-ordinators, as and when appointed
- Providing information to volunteer co-ordinators, where appropriate to cascade to others



- Dealing with any problems with volunteer activities or performance
- Providing communication, marketing & promotional materials
- Conducting Annual Reviews of volunteers

## 12. Timeframe

With volunteers being a core part of the development and operation of HWTW, the organisation has put in place robust plans for recruiting volunteers. The development of volunteers remains a priority to enable the organisation to achieve both immediate and longer term goals.

### Phase 1

The primary aim is to establish HWTW as a brand and create an associated awareness of the organisation's function. Volunteers will be required to attend events and interact with members of the public.

Phase 1 includes as a priority, the development of a Champions network including reconnecting with the still-active members from Telford and Wrekin's LINK, and the recruitment of Outreach Volunteers. It will also include the recruitment of some Specialist roles as needs arise .

### Phase 2

Phase 2 involves the recruitment of Specialist Volunteers to carry out work such as Enter & View, and to support specific Project work. These roles will be established as HWTW acquires sufficient local knowledge of issues, and evolves the necessary systems to begin responding to those issues.

The table below shows the actions and timescales these will need to be achieved:

Activity	Due date
Defining/amending roles	January 2015
Writing role descriptions	January 2015
Create/Update Volunteers toolkit	February 2015
Plan induction training updates	February 2015

Recruitment process (Phase 1)	February /March 2015
Selection & screening (Phase 1)	March/April 2015
Recruitment process (Phase 2)	June 2015 (to coincide with national campaign, Volunteers Week 1-7 June)
Selection & screening (Phase 2)	June/July 2015
Inductions (Phase 1)	March/April 2015
Deployment into roles (Phase 1)	May 2015
Inductions (Phase 2)	July/Aug 2015
Deployment into roles (Phase 2)	Aug/Sept 2015

## Actions Checklist

Checklist	Action	Owner	Deadline
<b>Recruitment</b>			
Source ideas to conduct volunteer recruitment within the local community	Develop a set of actions around recruitment, spanning a specific timeframe, and identify useful ways to integrate within the community and promote volunteer roles.		
Have clearly defined opportunities for volunteer involvement	Assess capacity and identify where volunteer roles are required, both long term and short term. Tailor recruitment needs on the basis of the assessment.		
Identify creative ways to attract volunteers	Research ways in which other organisations of a similar nature attract volunteers. Focus specifically on promotional tools which attract the demographics required.		
Job descriptions	Ensure volunteer roles have a description outlining the activities and responsibilities of the volunteer in that role.		
Application form	Ensure each volunteer completes an application form, and supplies details of two referees.		
<b>Selection And Screening</b>			
Ensure an appropriate screening process is conducted	Develop a process to interview the new volunteer, and ensure the volunteer is appropriate for the role. Contact referees.		

<b>Induction</b>			
Induction information	Develop / update a toolkit listing the required information necessary for the volunteer to undertake their role(s) and responsibilities, and identify initial training needs.		
Collate contact details of volunteer	Develop a process to collate, record and update volunteer membership details. This can include a brief profile of the volunteer, including skills and capabilities.		
<b>Training and Development</b>			
List training opportunities for volunteers	Identify and list appropriate relevant training and development needs and opportunities for volunteers.		
Identify volunteer career progression opportunities for each volunteer	Profile each volunteer and identify ways in which they can be offered internal opportunities for rotation and/or progression in different positions.		
Conduct regular review of volunteer skills and abilities, and ad hoc as needed.	Conduct annual reviews of each volunteer to assess skills and, where necessary, provide up-skilling or further training. Conduct ad hoc volunteer reviews to address specific needs or issues, as they arise		
<b>Conduct periodic reviews of Training delivered and effectiveness</b>	Conduct post-class feedback reviews. Analyse training needs, training plans and work plans to assess if needs are being adequately met, and modify as necessary training topics, provision and delivery.		
<b>Retention</b>			
Communicate effectively with volunteers	Provide pathways to distribute information to volunteers. Develop useful tools such as website, newsletter and flyers, and make use of twitter and Facebook. Encourage feedback from Volunteers on issues and their experiences and act where appropriate to address concerns.		
Provide appropriate resources to ensure volunteers can undertake their roles effectively	Review Quarterly the organisation's resources, and develop a list of new items that are required or those that need updating or replacing. From this		

	develop initiatives such as fundraising or grant applications to source funding.		
Conduct exit interviews when a volunteer leaves	Develop a basic exit interview which can be done via email, phone or face to face with volunteers who resign. Monitor and track reasons for volunteer resignations and develop ways to address and prevent reoccurring issues.		
<b>Recognition</b>			
Understand the motivations around volunteer participation in the organisation	Interview volunteers to determine their motivations for volunteering, and use information from this in supporting marketing and promotional campaigns		
Have a relevant reward and recognition system in place	Investigate reward and recognition possibilities, assess current approaches, and research ways to implement an effective ongoing system		

## Communications Plan

Action	Resource/method	Date
<b>Recruitment</b>		
Poster development (Phase 1)	Develop volunteer recruitment specific poster promoting volunteer opportunities	Jan 2015
Advertising	Compile list of all relevant locations to display posters for both Phase 1 and 2 advertising	Jan 2015
Liaise with local CVS organisations	Re-establish relationships with CVS organisations. Promote Healthwatch volunteering opportunities	Ongoing
PPG group development	Liaise with TWCCG to promote Champions Network amongst PPG groups.	Jan/Feb 2105
Local media	Advertise volunteer opportunities in local newspapers	Jan/Feb 2015
Network development	Distribute poster to partner networks for distribution by e-mail	Feb 2015
Special interest groups	Utilise networks to establish relationships with groups with special interest e.g. LD, Mental Health, BME groups, traveller groups etc.	Feb 2015
Advertise to current mailing list	Distribute poster to e-mail contacts on HWTW database	Jan 2015

Promote through HWTW media	Advertise opportunities on website, social media and newsletter	Ongoing
<b>Training and Development</b>		
<b>Induction Pack</b>	Inform new volunteers about the standard required basic volunteer training to be completed e.g	
Training Schedule	Distribute schedule and communication to Volunteers to advertise available Training	