

## Introduction

North Glasgow Healthy Living Community (HLC) was tasked by the (North) Area Co-ordination Group to co-ordinate the development of future programmes of activity for volunteering. To this point a strategic volunteering partnership or infrastructure had not existed in North Glasgow.

The HLC brought partners from the statutory, voluntary and community sectors namely; *North Glasgow Healthy Living Community, Community Health and Care Partnership (CHCP), Culture & Sport Glasgow (C&SG), Glasgow North Regeneration Agency, Glasgow Community Planning Partnership Ltd (North), North Glasgow Community Food Initiative, Rosemount Lifelong Learning and Volunteer Centre Glasgow (VCG)* together to form the Volunteering Activity Group (VAG). It should be noted that *Jobcentreplus* joined the group latterly.

As part of a development session in August 2008 the VAG produced a plan of action; the focus being potential programmes for delivery in 2009/10 alongside the following:

- Mapping of existing provision (including available funding streams) within the North Glasgow strategic planning area;
- Assessment of local need and community engagement;
- Appraisal of models of good practice;
- Development of a service specification;
- Identification of the financial framework required to support the programme;
- Proposals for commissioning arrangements including preferred providers.

## Action Plan Development

### **Mapping**

One of the early pieces of work undertaken by the VAG was the commissioning of a local mapping exercise by FMR Research Ltd. This was to identify gaps to be addressed to strengthen volunteering in North Glasgow.

### **Community Engagement**

To engage with the community, help and advice was sought from established structures such as Community Reference Groups via LCPP and the CHCP Community Work Team. C&SG shared their methods for engaging with young people that are linked to the Glasgow Young Scot and Kidz Card.

#### **Volunteer Quote**

“(It is) early days for me, but I am very much enjoying the challenge, interaction and of course the opportunity to contribute in what seems to be a worthwhile project.”

**Jane Patterson**

### **Good Practice Models**

An opportunity to shape a workshop at VCG's AGM aided the data collection from volunteers and volunteering involving organisations; the latter improving knowledge on best practice models and what use was being made of volunteering supporting organisations at both citywide and national levels. Two Volunteer Co-ordinators operating in the North have provided case studies, profiling volunteers, their organisations operational processes. Direct quotes from the volunteers can be found throughout this report. FMR's research paper also touched on issues of good practice.

#### **Volunteer Quote**

"The project has a great volunteering service - if you have been unemployed like me you could be lucky enough that volunteering could lead to work. This is a great organisation and I am glad I got involved. If it had not been for the volunteer service I would not be where I am today. I have absolutely no regrets".

**Robert Graham**

### **Service Specification**

The need for a service specification was superseded by an evaluation on progress of the VAG's plan to Local Community Planning Partnership Boards. The Boards advised that VAG continue to look at the financial framework and further embed the links with each of the thematic groups as well as cross-cutting themes such as North Glasgow Youth Stakeholders Group. In addressing the non-existence of a volunteering structure the aim is to establish volunteering as a regular agenda item for all 5 thematic strategic groups (Healthy, Work, Safe, Learning and Vibrant) and that cross-cutting programmes such as North Glasgow Arts Regeneration Network are informed and where appropriate, actively engaged in progressing of the VAG's plan of action.

A proposal for commissioning was presented to the joint (Glasgow North East and Maryhill / Kelvin & Canal) Funding Executive Group meeting in February 2009. Subsequently the same was tabled, successfully, at each LCPP Board mid March 2009. The VAG is currently preparing a Fairer Scotland Fund Application for year 2009/10.

#### **Volunteer Quote**

"I enjoy doing voluntary work because I meet lots of new people, made a few good friends, boosted my confidence and I am getting work experience"

**Natalia Osiagwu**

### **Synergy with Citywide Action Plan**

In October 2008 Culture and Sport Glasgow secured Fairer Scotland Funding to further the development of the (citywide) Glasgow Strategic Volunteer Framework. The aim of the Action Plan is as follows:

- Mapping of current volunteering resources in the city;
- Area community engagement on volunteering; (**2<sup>nd</sup> Strand**)
- Development of a PR and Marketing Strategic Plan;
- Establishment of a baseline level of volunteering in the city and development of a draft implementation plan.

The work and findings of the VAG in North Glasgow has influenced the approach being undertaken citywide and has directly shaped the approach taken in relation to the 2<sup>nd</sup> Strand of this plan. The Project Manager of the HLC has joined the membership of the central GSVF Steering Group to help ensure no duplication of effort, influence development of the plan by adding a local perspective and to share the work of the VAG. It should be noted that both plans have differing timescales and content and the central framework is to be used as a guideline for all 5 CHCP areas in the city to allow tailoring for each area's particular challenges.

### **Priorities Identified by the Volunteering Activity Group**

The group has used the FMR research paper and Glasgow's Strategic Volunteering Framework as a starting point for developing and agreeing its' future priorities which are noted below:

1. Engage with key thematic planning groups and structures in the North in order to establish volunteering as a "cross cutting issue" that has an essential contribution to make to wider policy objectives and local and national priorities;

**The research also revealed gaps structurally, thematically and in knowledge.**  
**FMR Key Finding**

2. Work with partners including C&SG to both influence the citywide Strategic Volunteering Framework and to maximise the benefits of the framework for the North area;

3. Work to improve the collection, analysis, and use of data and information about volunteers, volunteering involving organisations, and volunteering opportunities;

**Data suggests the presence of 550+ volunteering involving organisations in North Glasgow.**  
**FMR Key Finding**

4. Work to improve access to volunteering by increasing understanding around appropriate roles for volunteers
  - taking into account their current circumstances and starting points
  - ensuring that volunteering is not seen as a substitute for paid work
  - developing new and appropriate volunteering opportunities;
5. Research, produce and raise awareness of good practice models in volunteering including the development of local case studies to enable the building of capacity of volunteering involving organisations;
6. Develop a support network for people, from across the voluntary, public and private sectors, that provide volunteering opportunities and support to volunteers;

7. Prioritise support for individuals, and organisations working with local people, who are new to volunteering and that face barriers to participation in volunteering e.g. disabled people, asylum seekers, carers and disengaged individuals;

**Data suggests the level of all types of volunteering in North Glasgow to be about just over 16,500 participants.**  
**FMR Key Finding**

8. Develop pre or 'preparation for volunteering' programmes including opportunities for potential volunteers in the North of Glasgow to experience a diversity of volunteering opportunities or 'tasters' and to receive a certificate of engagement and achievement;
9. Work with partners and local organisations, to positively promote volunteering in the North through identified target groups and to develop appropriate marketing strategies and methods;

**A considered and intuitively reasonable estimate places an annual value of volunteering in North Glasgow of £11,300,000. This is based on volunteers providing unpaid work at an average rate of 1 hour per week and at a unit value of £13 per hour.**

**FMR Key Finding**

10. Facilitate and encourage the pooling of partners and other resources to improve local accessibility to volunteering e.g. through a "drop-in" or one-stop-shop approach;
11. Work to increase understanding about routes into volunteering, pathways within the volunteering experience, and pathways through volunteering and into training and work.

## **The Development of Volunteering in North Glasgow for 2009/10**

The following three headings taken from the priorities above outline the work to be undertaken by the VAG:

### ***The Volunteering Activity Group Plan of Action – Priorities 1, 2, 9, 10 & informing 11***

By in large, priorities 1 and 2 have been achieved and the VAG Steering Group will further develop its plan of action informed by the findings from the *Good Practice Model* and *Volunteering 'Tasters'* outlined in full later in the report.

The group will take account of the findings of the citywide Strategic Volunteering Framework paper, available April 2009, specifically for priority 9. The VAG has started the process of linking with local networks and forums to raise the profile of volunteering and as this work progresses. Access to volunteering opportunities in the North will be improved.

The final priority, 11, will benefit from our experience during year 2009/10 and it will pick up impetus and prominence in year 2010/11.

The VAG is well positioned to develop local responses to any changing national and citywide priorities.

### ***Good Practice Model – Priorities numbered 3 – 6***

Following the research (internal and external) into good practice models in volunteering the VAG will design and produce materials including local case studies to focus on practical methods of providing improved or new volunteering experiences for local residents, key target groups and organisations. Materials produced will be in 'plain English' and will also be designed for those where English is not their first language. Appropriate media will be used to engage effectively with target groups e.g. young persons, as well as some adults.

Volunteering involving organisations (VIO) and organisations new to volunteering will be supported to follow good practice in volunteering through participation in one of five facilitated workshops provided free of charge.

Volunteer Co-ordinators/Organisers, paid or unpaid, identified in the FMR research as vital to the sustainability of volunteering, will be asked to sign up to helping develop and deliver the model of good practice.

There will be a major promotional and engagement conference in Year 1 targeting the voluntary, statutory and private sectors. Support will be sought from a number of organisations including North Glasgow Voluntary Sector Network.

Intensive capacity building will take place in the first year for three organisations to increase the number of volunteers they could engage from those furthest from volunteering including business planning and the development of funding applications.

As an example of '*added value*', Culture & Sport Glasgow has agreed to engage with youth projects to commit to best practice and will offer volunteering placements to local young people that will contribute to the achieving of a 'Duke of Edinburgh Award', which historically has proven strong links with employment opportunities and career choices for young people.

The long term aim is to achieve wider adoption of the package of support designed to benefit volunteers and volunteering organisations across North Glasgow.

### ***Volunteering 'Tasters' – Priorities 7 and 8***

Building upon a successful pilot co-ordinated by the Volunteer Centre (VC) in another area of the city, the VC will work with the VAG and local organisations to design programmes of tasters in volunteering. Across 2009/10 the VAG will support North area residents furthest away from volunteering/still at the early stages of the employability pathway. Participants will be identified from hard-to-reach, excluded and/or isolated groups. A number of organisations have expressed an interest with varying client groups including asylum seekers/refugees, women's projects, residents in supported tenancies, youth groups, and people with disabilities and recovering from an addiction.

The pre-programme stage will match participants with a relevant taster programme which will include an introduction to volunteering, capacity building support and an introduction to a range of services across North Glasgow e.g. adult learning, leisure centres, libraries, and client identified needs. Participants will engage in 5x½ day volunteering taster experiences designed to fit their identified needs. During the programme participants will feed back their views on programme design and content and will identify perceived or real barriers to participation and discuss where

they would like to go from here in terms of volunteering. The VAG will work with partners on an ongoing basis to overcome barriers to support sustainable action. At the end of programme delivery there will be the presentation of a certificate of engagement and achievement.

### How to make contact with us?

The Volunteering Activity Group is interested to hear from organisations and services to learn of your activities that involve volunteers or indeed new or potential activities that you are considering. The conference planned for year 2009/10 would benefit from your input also. In the first instance you should email us at [caroline@healthynorthglasgow.co.uk](mailto:caroline@healthynorthglasgow.co.uk) or contact Caroline Elder on 0141 336 7000 or Fax 0141 336 7100 or at the following address:

North Glasgow Healthy Living Community  
Ardoch House  
25 Ardoch Street  
Glasgow  
G22 5QG

A full copy of the FMR Research Report can be found at [www.healthynorthglasgow.co.uk](http://www.healthynorthglasgow.co.uk)

### More of what Volunteers in North Glasgow have to say

"I am a woman of 53 years old. I am divorced and I attend a mental health project because I could not go out on my own and suffer from depression. Since I started volunteering I get to go out for a few hours and I feel my health is improving. If this project goes, then I feel I will be back at the beginning again. I have been suicidal at times but since I started this project I have not thought of ending my life. Volunteering has built up my confidence, given me new skills as well as an opportunity to meet people and forge friendships. I am eternally grateful to the staff for this opportunity."

**Jean\* (\*Name changed)**

"I am enjoying my voluntary work. It is great knowledge and new experiences. A lot of new skills (have) improved my confidence. I really feel no burden and happy to work with the staff."

**Saima Butt**

"I've been volunteering as an adult literacies tutor since August 08 and I'm really enjoying it. The staff is very welcoming and I am treated as one of the team. I took part in the recent training course, 'What about Me?' which was great. I feel really valued as an individual as well as a volunteer. For me, tutoring gives me the opportunity to develop my skills, work with learners and literacies professionals, and gain valuable work experience to help me get a job".

**Liz Harris**

"I am a volunteer helping out in the Library. When I am volunteering my son goes into the nursery. Through my coming to this centre I have started an accredited Childcare Development Course and attended shorter courses and have really enjoyed them. I am planning to do my ECDL in the near future. I am really happy volunteering and it helps to keep me sane. The staff is so supportive and helpful".

**Feven Yemane**