



LEE VALLEY REGIONAL PARK AUTHORITY
AUTHORITY MEETING
24 OCTOBER 2024 AT 14:00

Agenda Item No:

7

Report No:

A/4357/24

UPDATED VOLUNTEER STRATEGY AND VOLUNTEER POLICY

Presented by the Head of Human Resources

SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to seek Member approval for the revised volunteer policy and volunteer strategy that have been updated as part the Authority's policy review programme.

The revised policy and strategy were considered by the Executive Committee on 19 September 2024 (Paper E/864/24). Subject to some revisions to the draft policy it was approved for recommendation to Authority.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Members Approve:
- (1) the Volunteer Policy as set out in Appendix A to Paper E/864/24 attached at Annex A to this report;
 - (2) the Volunteer Strategy as set out in Appendix B to Paper E/864/24 attached at Annex A to this report; and
 - (3) adoption of the term Global Majority throughout volunteer documentation and data as detailed in paragraph 10 of Paper E/864/24 attached at Annex A to this report.

BACKGROUND

- 1 The Authority has a register of policies that ensure the organisation works efficiently and consistently towards delivering its Business Strategy. These policies are regularly reviewed to ensure they are relevant and up to date with legislation and best practice.
- 2 A Volunteer Strategy for the Authority was originally written and presented to Members in 2006 (Paper 3851). This document has directed the work of the volunteers team and development of the volunteers programme since that date. The initial Strategy received a number of revisions and became two documents,

a Policy and a Strategy, specifically for the application of Investing in Volunteers in 2007.

- 3 Since 2007 two documents, a Strategy and a Policy, have been in use for the volunteers team, volunteers and staff working with volunteers to work to and guide activities with volunteers and the development of the volunteers programme for the Authority.
- 4 Subject to some revisions the Executive Committee approved for recommendation to Authority a revised Volunteer Policy and Strategy at its meeting on 19 September 2024 (Paper E/864/24) and is attached at Annex A to this report for Members' consideration and approval.
- 5 Any environmental, financial, human resource, legal, risk management and equalities implications are covered within paper E/864/24 attached as Annex A to this report.

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BACKGROUND REPORTS


None

PREVIOUS COMMITTEE REPORT

Executive Committee Authority	E/864/24 A/4305/21	Updated Volunteer Strategy and Volunteer Policy Updated Volunteers Strategy and Volunteers Policy	19 September 2024 21 October 2021
Executive Committee Authority	E/735/21 A/4262/18	Updated Volunteers Strategy and Volunteers Policy Volunteers Strategy and Volunteers Policy	23 September 2021 18 October 2018
Executive Committee Authority	E/578/18 3851	Volunteers Strategy and Volunteers Policy Development of a Volunteer Programme	20 September 2018 23 February 2006

ANNEX ATTACHED

Annex A Paper E/864/24

 <p>LEE VALLEY REGIONAL PARK AUTHORITY</p> <p>EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE</p> <p>19 SEPTEMBER 2024 AT 10:30</p>	<p><u>Agenda Item No:</u></p> <p><u>Report No:</u></p> <p>E/864/24</p>
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**UPDATED VOLUNTEER STRATEGY
AND VOLUNTEER POLICY**

Presented by the Head of Human Resources

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to seek Member approval for the revised volunteer policy and volunteer strategy that have been updated as part the Authority’s policy review programme.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Members Recommend to Authority:
- (1) the Volunteer Policy attached at Appendix A of this report;
 - (2) the Volunteer Strategy attached at Appendix B of this report; and
 - (3) adoption of the term Global Majority throughout volunteer documentation and data.

BACKGROUND

- 1 The Authority has a register of policies that ensure the organisation works efficiently and consistently towards delivering its Business Strategy. These policies are reviewed to ensure they are relevant and up to date with legislation and best practice.
- 2 A Volunteer Strategy for the Authority was originally written and presented to Members in 2006 (Paper 3851). This document has directed the work of the volunteer team and development of the volunteer programme since that date. The initial strategy received several revisions and became two documents, a policy and a strategy, specifically for the application of Investing in Volunteers in 2007.
- 3 Since 2007 two documents, a strategy and a policy, have been in use for the volunteer team, volunteers and staff working with volunteers to work to and guide volunteer activities and development of the volunteer programme for the Authority.

- 4 The Volunteer Strategy and Policy were last reviewed and approved by Members in 2021 (Paper A/4305/21).

VOLUNTEER POLICY

- 5 The Volunteer Policy which is attached at Appendix A to this report sets out nine objectives to ensure that the volunteers programme relates to our business plan, our approach to volunteering, the role of volunteers within our organisation and what volunteers can expect from us as an organisation. There are nine key points identified within the policy's purpose that have been selected to be in line with advice from the NCVO (the National Council for Voluntary Organisations).
- 6 Volunteering plays a key part of the continued transformation of the Lee Valley Regional Park and the dedication of our registered volunteers continues to grow year on year through a range of mutually beneficial volunteering opportunities and quality volunteer management.

VOLUNTEER STRATEGY

- 7 The Volunteer Strategy is aligned to the Policy and has been a working document since it was initially written. It seeks to review and re-set targets and work activities to improve the volunteer experience and benefit to the Authority.
- 8 This Strategy is due for renewal this year and in line with the Authority's Investing in Volunteers (IiV) Assessment, which is taking place at the end of 2024 and the latest business plan.
- 9 The Strategy has also been updated to reflect changes that we have witnessed in volunteering because of increased work of the Volunteers Officer with Leisure Services Contract (LSC) venues and partners to provide a clearer picture of volunteering that takes place throughout our open spaces and venues rather than only focusing on volunteers who are directly managed by Authority staff. The current Scrutiny Committee review of volunteering was a driver for this change as it highlighted the need for more inclusive reporting.

GLOBAL MAJORITY

- 10 One of the proposed key updates to the Volunteer Policy and Strategy is to replace the term ethnic minority with the term Global Majority. Global Majority is a shortened version of 'People of the Global Majority', this term refers to all ethnic groups except white British and other white groups, including white ethnic minorities. This term has been adopted by the National Council for Voluntary Organisations (NCVO) who recently conducted research called Volunteering Among the Global Majority. The Volunteers Officer would like to adopt this term throughout all Authority volunteer documentation and volunteer data going forward.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

- 11 There are no environmental implications arising directly from the recommendations in this report.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 12 There are no financial implications arising directly from the recommendations in

this report.

HUMAN RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 13 There are no human resource implications arising directly from the recommendations in this report.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 14 There are no legal implications arising directly from the recommendations in this report.

RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

- 15 There are no risk management implications arising directly from the recommendations in this report.

EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

- 16 There are no equality implications arising directly from the recommendations in this report.

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PREVIOUS COMMITTEE REPORTS

Authority	3851	Development of a Volunteer Programme	23 February 2006
Executive Committee	E/578/18	Volunteers Strategy and Volunteers Policy	20 September 2018
Authority	A/4262/18	Volunteers Strategy and Volunteers Policy	18 October 2018
Executive Committee	E/735/21	Updated Volunteers Strategy and Volunteers Policy	23 September 2021
Authority	A/4305/21	Updated Volunteers Strategy and Volunteers Policy	21 October 2021

APPENDICES ATTACHED

Appendix A	Volunteer Policy
Appendix B	Volunteer Strategy

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

lIV	Investing in Volunteers
LSC	Leisure Services Contract
NCVO	National Council for Voluntary Organisations

Volunteer Policy

August 2024

Reference: Version 10



This document is controlled by Lee Valley Regional Park Authority.

Document Information

Title: Volunteer Policy

Status: Draft

Current Version: v10

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Sponsor	Victoria Yates – Head of Human Resources Tel: 03000 030 647 vyates@leevalleypark.org.uk
Consultation:	Senior Management Team Procedure Review Group Human Resources
Approved	Approved by: Authority Approval Date: October 2024 Review Frequency: Every 3 Years Next Review: October 2027

DOCUMENT HISTORY

Version History		
Version	Date	Comments
1	16 January 2013	Initial draft, circulated to Performance Team
2	15 January 2014	Working draft published on web site
3	31 July 2015	Revision and update
4	27 October 2015	Revised consideration at SMT
5	09 March 2018	Revision and update
6	20 September 2018	Approval and update following Executive Committee
7	18 October 2018	Member approval at Authority following recommendation from the Executive Committee
8	29 September 2021	Revision and update following Executive Committee
9	21 October 2021	Member approval at Authority following recommendation from Executive Committee
10	August 2024	Revision and update
10	September 2024	Revision and update following Executive Committee

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1. Background

The Volunteer Policy sets out the principles and practices that the Lee Valley Regional Park Authority (Authority) will adopt to ensure all volunteers are treated fairly and that it meets with its legal obligations.

The Authority has adopted the National Council for Volunteering Organisations (NCVO) definition of volunteering as:

“Volunteering is when someone spends unpaid time doing something to benefit others. Helping your close friends or relatives isn’t volunteering. But doing something to the benefit the environment (and through that, other people) is. Volunteering can be formal and organised by organisations, or informal within communities. It should always be a free choice made by the person giving up their time”

Volunteering plays a key part of the continued transformation of the Lee Valley Regional Park. The vision for the Authority is to be a world class leisure destination for nature, sport and discovery. The dedication of our registered volunteers continues to grow year on year through a range of mutually beneficial volunteering opportunities and quality volunteer management.

2. Purpose

This policy is designed to illustrate the Authority’s commitment to volunteering and its volunteers. To outline the Authority’s intention to treat all volunteers with fairness and ensure consistency throughout decisions made relating to our programme. This document will explain what volunteers should expect from the Authority and inform them of where they can find support if something goes wrong. It is also an important

tool in educating internal and external stakeholders of the role that volunteers play within the Authority and why.

This policy will outline how volunteering relates to our business plan as well encompassing the following key points defined:

- Volunteer recruitment
- Equality, diversity and inclusion
- Volunteer role accessibility
- Volunteer induction and training process
- Volunteer expenses
- Supervision and support process for volunteers
- Health and safety for volunteers
- Volunteers' role in confidentiality and data protection
- Problem solving and complaints procedures for volunteers

Our values

- **Environmentally focused:** reducing our carbon footprint and delivering nature-based solutions by applying the principles of sustainability and nature conservation in volunteering
- **Community centred:** working with communities across the region and actively promoting Equality, Diversity and Inclusion
- **Commercially driven:** maximising investment and delivering additional income streams to underpin a resilient budget position
- **Innovative:** at the leading edge of new thinking and developments in sport, leisure and conservation
- **Empowering colleagues:** through continuous professional and personal development
- **Collaborative:** with partners and stakeholders to deliver the greatest possible outcomes

1. Volunteer recruitment:

- (i) Match the Authority's business needs with volunteer support through:
 - a) Work with all departments within the Authority to constantly identify new opportunities to meet changing needs and business priorities
 - b) Ensuring each department's capacity can support the volunteer programme by identifying gaps and matching these with existing skill sets of existing and new volunteers
 - c) Reviewing our recruitment processes to ensure new volunteers have the right skill set where possible to serve our business needs.
- (ii) Continually improving awareness and increasing access to volunteering opportunities for both the Authority and its managed venues through advertising
- (iii) Seek to raise the current ratio of volunteers to staff
- (iv) Enable volunteers have the opportunity to communicate what they are looking to gain from their volunteering e.g. give something back to their local community or gain experience that may help them into paid work
- (v) Encourage staff to pursue volunteering opportunities which support communities across the Region by:
 - a) Actively creating volunteering opportunities and then promoting and encouraging staff to pursue those opportunities as part of a Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) programme

- (vi) Actively seek opportunities for joint partner programmes for volunteer activities through:
 - a) Advertising partner organisations volunteer programmes at our open spaces and venues
 - b) Provide opportunities for companies to contribute to the Authority's work through their CSR activities. Actively promote the involvement (including sponsorship of sites) of 'corporates' through presentations and visits. 'Corporates' represent a good opportunity for volunteering as part of their corporate 'social responsibility' programmes.

2. Equality, Diversity and Inclusion:

- (i) Continue to develop a volunteer programme that encourages Equality, Diversity and Inclusion including raising awareness of the Authority's positive approach to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion
 - a) Ensure the Authority's Equality Diversity and Inclusion Policy is accessible to all
 - b) Ensure volunteers from all backgrounds and ethnicities are represented
- (ii) Consulting with volunteers and staff as well as keeping up to date with the latest research and practices
- (iii) Identifying areas where further joint working with specialist organisations such as Sense.
- (iv) Promoting the Volunteer Strategy and programme to the Global Majority and other Hard-to-Reach groups.
- (v) Aim for volunteers to be representative of our community.

3. Volunteer role accessibility

- (ii) Provide our staff and volunteers with training on how to ensure that as far as practicable we can adapt our roles to make them accessible to as many volunteers as possible
 - a) Referring to the Authority's Health and Safety policies, risk assessments, safeguarding and relevant staff for guidance
- (iii) Work with individuals, local authorities and partner organisations to find new ways to reduce barriers into volunteering and support volunteers with specific needs
- (iv) Continue to research and update role descriptions on an annual basis or as and when necessary to improve accessibility including any changes to the language used and the places advertised

4. Volunteer induction and training process

- (i) Volunteers will receive an appropriate level of induction and training before taking part in volunteering
- (ii) Volunteers are made aware of Health and Safety and where to seek help when needed

5. Volunteer expenses:

- (i) All volunteers are entitled to claim for reasonable out of pocket expenses relating to travel to and from their home and their place of volunteering including as any other travel relating to their volunteering activities throughout the day
- (ii) Volunteers are encouraged to use public transport or car share wherever practicable to minimise their environmental impact

6. Supervision and support process for volunteers

- (i) Volunteers can expect to volunteer within a safe, friendly and supportive environment
 - a) The Authority will review the operation and function of the existing staff team, to ensure there are no capacity issues.
 - b) Staff who work with volunteers will receive training from Volunteer department on how best to supervise and support volunteers
 - c) Staff who work with volunteers can approach their line manager, the Volunteer department, Human Resources and the Authority's Health and Safety provider for advice and support to ensure they are providing the right level of supervision to volunteers
- (ii) The Authority will maintain the enthusiasm and commitment of our existing volunteer base by ensuring individuals and groups are rewarded for their dedication, endeavour and contribution
 - a) Constantly review and examine our reward and recognition activities
- (iii) Wherever practicable provide volunteers with opportunities to gain experience relevant to progressing their career, including the areas in which the Authority or its partners may be able to help them find employment
 - a) Staff who work with volunteers can approach their line manager, the Volunteer department, Human Resources and the Authority's Health and Safety provider for advice and support on how to provide these kinds of experiences in a safe and meaningful way that will also benefit the Authority

7. Health and safety for volunteers

- (i) Volunteers will be made aware of the importance of Health and Safety from the point of registration and throughout their time volunteering with the Authority and the venues that are managed on its behalf. More information can be found in the Volunteer Handbook.
- (ii) All registered and inducted volunteers are covered by the Authority's Employers & Public Liability insurance
- (iii) Staff will ensure that role descriptions, risk assessments are in place and updated on a regular basis in line with any changes. Staff must ensure all volunteers who carry out these roles are made aware of any changes.
- (iv) The Authority has a Safeguarding Policy in place and each volunteering role is checked by a Safeguarding Officer to determine whether a DBS check is necessary to take part within that role.
- (v) Staff will ensure the appropriate levels of staff supervision are in place

- (vi) Volunteers have the right to refuse to take part in any activity that they do not feel consider to be safe
- (vii) Staff and volunteers are made aware of how to report accidents, incidents and near misses

8. Volunteers' role in confidentiality and data protection

- (i) The Volunteer department works closely with the Authority's legal team to ensure that we have a robust and up-to-date Volunteer Privacy Policy and that any updates are communicated out to all staff and volunteers
- (ii) Staff and volunteers who handle personal data will receive training in data protection
- (iii) Staff and volunteers are made aware of the importance of confidentiality as part of their induction

9. Problem solving and complaints procedures for volunteers

- (i) All volunteer feedback both positive and negative is recorded appropriately
- (ii) The Authority has a Volunteer Problem Solving Policy which is referred to in the Authority's Volunteer Handbook which also includes a Code of conduct for volunteers.

3. Responsibilities

The Head of Human Resources is responsible for the delivery of the Policy and the Volunteers Officer is responsible for the overview, monitoring and evaluation of the Volunteer Policy.

4. Legal Considerations

1. There is no legislation in relation to working with volunteers (although there is case law which provides guidance). As an organisation using volunteers we have a duty to keep abreast of changes in good practice and ensure these are conveyed appropriately. Working with organisations such as National Council for Voluntary Organisations (NCVO), local volunteer centres and holder of the Investing in Volunteers Award (liV) the Authority is seen as maintaining the highest standards of volunteer management.
2. Set out below are some suggestions (derived from the case law) to reduce the risk for the Authority of creating a legally binding contract with volunteers. It may not be realistic to avoid all of the potential risk factors, but removing some of the indicators of a contractual relationship should be possible:
 - (i) Avoid making payments to volunteers that could be construed as wages. Payments to cover actual expenses should be clearly identified as such and ideally reimbursed against receipts.
 - (ii) Remove or, at least, minimise perks that could be seen as consideration.

- (iii) Reduce obligations on the part of the volunteer. Giving a volunteer the ability to refuse tasks and choose when to work will point away from the existence of a binding contract.
- (iv) Avoid using language that makes the arrangement sound contractual and adopt flexible language, such as "usual" and "suggested".
- (v) Treat volunteers fairly by dealing with problems and grievances and good communication between the parties should reduce the likelihood of disputes with volunteers.

5. Relevant Policy & Procedures

There is a Volunteer Strategy that is directly linked to this policy and a Volunteer Handbook that supports the overall volunteer programme. The volunteer programme is managed through process and procedure that is part of the Quality Management System process and there are relevant procedures available to all staff working with volunteers via the Authority's intranet (Compass) and the Authority's Corporate and Visit web sites. There is also support in the form of a guide for staff who manage volunteers and an e-learning module which is available to all staff.

6. Policy Implementation

The implementation of this policy is the responsibility of the Volunteers Officer and staff who work with volunteers. The policy will be published on Compass for all staff and training will be provided for those working directly with volunteers. The policy will also be available on the Lee Valley Visit and Authority Corporate websites.

7. Monitoring & Evaluation

1. The effectiveness of this policy will be measured against the following targets:
 - Volunteer hours
 - Number of active volunteers
 - Monetary value of volunteering
 - Non-riparian volunteer percentage changes
 - Global majority volunteer percentage changes
 - Ratio of volunteers to staff
2. The following Performance Indicators are reported via the Authority Scorecard to the Members:
 - Usage
 - Customer Satisfaction
 - Complaints
 - Compliments
 - Regionality
 - Health and Safety Audit

8. Review

The policy will be fully reviewed every 3 years or sooner if any legislation comes into place or changes.

9. Glossary of Terms

Some of the terminology used in this document may be unfamiliar so this glossary has been attached to clarify some new terminology.

- **Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)** – Groups of volunteers who are attached to a company or organisation undertaking a single day of volunteering activity. Normally funded by the company and undertaken on a normal working day. Used also as team building days or also called community days.
- **Diversity** – In this context means the variety of people that you have within your volunteering force and will include ethnic diversity, age diversity, gender diversity, disability diversity and community diversity. The essence is not to discriminate against any level of diversity within an organisation.
- **Global Majority** – NCVO defines this term as “...a shortened version of the term ‘people of the global majority’. It is used to refer to all ethnic groups except white British and other white groups, including white minorities. This includes people from black, Asian, mixed, and other ethnic groups who are often racialised as ‘ethnic minorities’”.
- **Hard-to-Reach** - terminology used by the government and volunteering organisations to describe any person or group who may not have access to general information due to language or technical barriers. This includes many Global Majority communities, people with disabilities or young or old sections of the community.

10. Appendices

There are a several companion documents to this policy:

- Volunteer Strategy
- Volunteer Handbook
- Staff guide to working with volunteers



Volunteer Strategy

August 2024

Reference: [Version 9]



This document is controlled by Lee Valley Regional Park Authority.

i Document Information

Title: Volunteers Strategy

Status: Draft

Current Version: v9 (August 2024)

Author	Jessica Whitehead – Volunteers Officer Tel: 03000 030 612 jwhitehead@leevalleypark.org.uk
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Consultation:	Procedure Review Group Human Resources Senior Management Team
Approved	Approved by: Approval Date: October 2024 Review Frequency: Every 3 Years. Next Review: October 2027

Version History		
Version	Date	Description
1	16 January 2013	Initial draft, circulated to Performance Team
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1. Context

- 1.1. Although nationally there has been a downward trend in volunteering, especially since the pandemic, volunteering within the Lee Valley Regional Park (Regional Park) has recovered well and is on the rise. Volunteering continues to add value to the delivery of services by many private and public sector organisations. Volunteering as an act demonstrates a strong sense of community and empathy towards others and the environment through commitment to a cause that an individual feels passionate about. In return, volunteering provides unique opportunities for individuals to develop or utilise skills resulting in an increased sense of purpose and achievement, having a positive effect on both mental and physical wellbeing. From a practical perspective volunteering can help to ensure that tasks are completed in a more effective way due the additional resource they provide.
- 1.2. Volunteering plays a key part of the continued transformation of the Regional Park. The vision for the Lee Valley Regional Park Authority (the Authority) is to be a world class leisure destination for nature, sport and discovery. The Authority's adopted strategic objectives are at the heart of this strategy.
- 1.3. The strategy outlines how the aims of the Volunteer Policy are to be delivered.

2. Background

- 2.1. During 2023-24 1,272 volunteers contributed 41,417 hours of their time across the Authority's parklands and venues, a 242% increase on the figures recorded in the previous year financial year. This significant increase is due to targeted data collection aimed at partners organisations across our open spaces and venues to gain a better picture of volunteering. Around 318 of these volunteers were part of the Authority's programme and dedicated 14,911 hours to supporting Rangers service (Rye House Gatehouse, Wildlife Discovery Centre, livestock checking, litter picking, conservation, honorary wardens and events), Biodiversity (wildlife surveys), Myddelton House Gardens (gardening, cataloguing and events), Holyfield Hall Farm (general assistance and cattle checks), Learning & Engagement, Volunteers (admin, volunteers committee and guided walks), Geographical Information Systems (admin and fieldwork) and Sport and Active Recreation (events, Life walks and Sensory walks). Our LSC managed venues had 33 volunteers who contributed 3,398 hours across Lee Valley Riding Centre (vet student placements and "Have a Go" lesson assistants) and Lee Valley White Water Centre (centre maintenance and activity instructors). The remaining contribution is accounted for through a variety of programmes run by various partners ranging from Major Event organisers or National Governing Bodies to smaller voluntary groups or charities who facilitate volunteer involvement.

3. Strategy Vision, Aims and Objectives

- 3.1. This Strategy outlines how the Authority will seek to improve its volunteer programme.

3.2. The strategy requires a clear vision to drive forward the strategy and to ensure that we can grow and develop our volunteer network.

The Authority aims to be an exemplar of how it attracts, involves and supports its volunteers in the delivery of its vision.

The successful delivery of this requires integration of a range of service areas to ensure a clear and consistent approach.

3.3. The service areas include the following:

- (i) Human resources – there are two elements to this.
 - a) Firstly, although not employed by the Authority the use of volunteers raises many of the same issues that the employment of staff raises in terms of their ‘recruitment’, training, support and problem solving. We will ensure that the appointment of volunteers is delivered to the same standards to those which underpin our directly employed staff.
 - b) Secondly, the Authority’s human resources policies allow ‘flexible’ working which allows all staff the freedom to become volunteers themselves.
- (ii) The Authority owns just under 43% of the area of the Regional Park. Only through working with partners such as the Canal and River Trust and event providers working with volunteers can this vision be realised. In working with its partners we will ensure that our high standards of support and interest can be maintained through the negotiation of ‘local’ agreements with partners.

3.4. The Volunteer Strategy has six aims which are in turn supported by a series of objectives which will:

1) Develop our volunteer programme at venues and the Authority’s parklands for all by:

- (i) Improving awareness and increased access to volunteering opportunities to raise the current ratio of volunteers to staff.
- (ii) Working with Authority departments to continuously identify new opportunities as our business plan directs.
- (iii) Maintain the Investing in Volunteers accreditation at successive renewals.

2) Match the Authority’s business needs with volunteer support through:

- (i) Continually reviewing the organisations capacity gaps and matching these with existing volunteer skill set.
- (ii) Regularly reviewing our recruitment processes to ensure new volunteers have the right skill set where possible to serve our business needs.

3) Develop specific opportunities to promote diversity involving Global Majority and Hard-to-Reach community and voluntary sector groups:

- (i) Actively promote volunteering and programmes to specific 'target groups', through new and established links with local authorities, external partnerships, volunteer centres, action groups and community groups.

4) Attract additional support for volunteers by:

- (i) Actively promoting engagement of companies through presentations and visits. 'Corporates' represent a good opportunity for partnerships linked to volunteering as part of their corporate 'social responsibility'.
- (ii) Rewarding dedication, endeavour and contribution.
- (iii) Supporting with routes into employment within the Authority and beyond.

5) Encourage staff to pursue volunteering opportunities to support communities across the Region.

The Authority recognises the importance of volunteering as a means for personal 'enrichment' and the achievement of new skills. These skills should not be denied to our staff.

This will be achieved through:

- (i) The Volunteer team working closely with Human Resources to find a system to actively encourage opportunities for staff either within the park or in other areas across the region to volunteer as part of a Corporate Social Responsibility activity for the Authority or external organisations.

6) Actively seek opportunities for joint partner programmes

- (i) The delivery of joint programmes and the shared use of a 'dedicated' pool of volunteers across the range of opportunities. The Regional Park represents a major extension to our current activity which is consistent with our corporate vision.

This will be sought through:

Identifying partners where jointly agreed volunteer or corporate programmes can be delivered.

4. Responsibilities

The Head of Human Resources is responsible for the delivery of the Volunteer Strategy.

The Volunteers Officer is responsible for the overview, monitoring and evaluation of the of the Volunteer Strategy.

5. Legal Considerations

There is no legislation in relation to working with volunteers (although there is case law which provides guidance). As an organisation using volunteers we have a duty

to keep abreast of changes in good practice and ensure that these are conveyed appropriately. Working with organisations such as National Council for Voluntary Organisations (NCVO), local volunteer centres and holder of the Investing in Volunteers Award (iV) the Authority is seen as maintaining the highest standards of Volunteer Management.

6. Relevant Policy & Procedures

There is a Volunteer Policy that is directly linked to this strategy and a Volunteer Handbook that supports the overall volunteer programme.

7. Strategy Implementation

This strategy will be implemented through the series of objectives identified above in section 3 and forms the day to day running of the volunteer programme, the responsibility of which is down to the Volunteer team and Authority staff.

8. Monitoring & Evaluation

The effectiveness of this strategy will be measured against the volunteer programme targets and Performance Indicators detailed on the Authority Scorecard.

Stretch Targets set until 2027

Current position in 2024	Targets by 2027
Total volunteer hours 41,417* Authority programme: 14,911 LSE programmes: 3,398 Partner orgs (venues): 18,939 Partner orgs (open spaces): 4,139	Total volunteer hours 45,560 Authority programme: 16,400 Retain the same level of volunteering hours at LSE venues and throughout our partner organisations at our venues and open spaces as achieved in 2024
1,272* total number of active volunteers recorded on Authority database (includes LSE and partnerships) 318** Authority volunteers	1,500 total number of active volunteers recorded on Authority database (includes LSE and partnerships) 350 Authority volunteers
Non-riparian / national volunteers 90**	Non-riparian / national volunteers 100
Global majority volunteers 41**	Global majority volunteers 48
Ratio of Authority volunteers to Authority FTE 2.5:1**	Ratio of Authority volunteers to Authority FTEs 2.8:1
5 employment events attended a year*	10 employment events attended a year
No staff volunteering experiences on record*	Each staff member to have experienced at least one day of volunteering

*end of financial year 2024, **August 2024 estimates

These figures will be monitored annually by the Volunteers department.

9. Review

The strategy will be reviewed every 3 years in line with Investing in Volunteers and rolled out internally to staff via our QMS and publicly via our website. This includes updating the wording within our Volunteers Handbook which is also available on our website.

10. Glossary of Terms

10.1. Some of the terminology used in this document may be unfamiliar so this glossary has been attached to clarify a number of new terminologies.

- **Private and Commercial Sector Groups (Corporate Tasks)** – Groups of volunteers who are attached to a company or organisation undertaking a single day of volunteering activity. Normally funded by the company and undertaken on a normal working day. Used also as team building days or also called community days.
- **Diversity** – In this context means the variety of people within your volunteering force and will include ethnic diversity, age diversity, gender diversity, disability diversity and community diversity. The essence is not to discriminate against any level of diversity within an organisation.
- **Global Majority** – NCVO defines this term as “...a shortened version of the term ‘people of the global majority’. It is used to refer to all ethnic groups except white British and other white groups, including white minorities. This includes people from black, Asian, mixed, and other ethnic groups who are often racialised as ‘ethnic minorities’”.
- **Hard-to-Reach** - terminology used by the government and volunteering organisations to describe any person or group who may not have access to general information due to language or technical barriers. This includes many Global Majority communities, people with disabilities or young or old sections of the community.

11. Appendices

There are three companion documents to this strategy:

- Volunteer Policy
- Volunteer Handbook
- Staff guide to working with volunteers