

VOLUNTEERS STRATEGY AND VOLUNTEERS POLICY

Presented by the Head of Parklands

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

A Volunteers Strategy for the Authority was originally written and presented to Members in 2006. This document has received a number of revisions and became two documents, a draft Policy and a revised draft Strategy, specifically for the application of Investors in Volunteers in 2007.

As a policy document it has not been presented to Members previously. Due to formation of the Lee Valley Leisure Trust Ltd and General Data Protection Regulations the draft policy and amended strategy have been revised to reflect the updated situation early in 2018.

There were also a number of actions from the previous version which have now been completed and can become day to day actions rather than objectives.

Officers would now like to implement this as a policy on working with volunteers and to direct the next phases of work for the volunteers team for the Authority and Lee Valley Leisure Trust Ltd.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Members Approve:
- (1) a recommendation to the Authority to adopt the draft Volunteers Policy; and
 - (2) a recommendation to the Authority to adopt the revised draft Volunteers Strategy.

BACKGROUND

- 1 A Volunteers Strategy for the Authority was originally written and presented to Members in 2006. 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 draft Policy and a Strategy, specifically for the application of Investors in Volunteers in 2007.

- 2 Since 2007 two documents, a strategy and a draft policy, have been in use for the volunteers team, volunteers and staff working with volunteers to work to and guide the activities with volunteers and the development of the volunteers programme for the Authority and the Lee Valley Leisure Trust Ltd (the Trust). This policy has not previously been formally adopted by the Authority.
- 3 All reviews of both the draft policy and strategy have been conducted by the volunteers team initially and taken through the Policy and Procedure Group. The last review was in 2015 when no changes were made.
- 4 After introduction of the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) the policy and strategy required a revision in early 2018 to reflect the updated situation.

Volunteers Policy Current Position

- 5 The draft policy which is attached at Appendix A to this report sets out six objectives to ensure that the volunteers programme is fit for purpose and reaches the communities and partners we wish to work with. Currently the Trust, under the Leisure Services Contract, adhere to this draft policy and procedure.
- 6 Policy Objective 1 sets out how we will develop our volunteer programme by improving awareness and increasing access, raising the current ratio of volunteers to staff and working with all functions and venues to identify new opportunities. Securing Investors in Volunteers and constantly refining procedures to ensure we carry out our duty of care to volunteers by operating robust procedures in relation to safeguarding and mechanisms for dealing with complaints or disciplinary incidents involving volunteers.
- 7 Policy Objective 2 sets out to match the Authority's and the Trust's business needs with volunteer support, seeking to identify gaps and matching them up with volunteer skill sets through our volunteer recruitment process. It also seeks to ensure there is capacity to deliver a quality volunteer programme to both organisations.
- 8 Policy Objective 3 sets out to develop specific opportunities to promote diversity, involving groups from hard-to-reach communities and the voluntary sector, ensuring we are reflective of our regional community and operating a programme that is open to all.
- 9 Policy Objective 4 sets out to resource additional support within the volunteers programme to ensure the increase in volunteering can be managed. This objective also sets out to work with corporate groups and open up more of the Regional Park to activity with commercial partners. This objective also ensures an appropriate reward and recognition system for volunteers is in place and delivered to inspire and reward volunteering in both organisations.
- 10 Policy Objective 5 sets out to encourage staff to pursue volunteering opportunities which support communities across the region. This objective also seeks to review if the Authority requires a Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) policy and how as an organisation we might give back to the community and environment through our own CSR activities.
- 11 Policy Objective 6 sets out to actively seek opportunities for joint partner programmes for volunteer activities. This policy objective seeks to identify and

implement areas where companies, schools, community groups and other interested stakeholders can get involved in projects and programmes which are mutually beneficial.

- 12 The review also coincided with the implementation of GDPR and the review ensured that there were no GDPR linked issues with the wording of the draft Policy and Strategy.
- 13 Officers are now seeking approval from Members to recommend to Authority the formal adoption of the Volunteers Policy.

Volunteers Strategy Current Position

- 14 The volunteers 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.
- 15 Officers are now seeking approval from Members to recommend the Authority formally adopt the revised draft Volunteers Strategy.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

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

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 17 There are no financial implications arising directly from the recommendations in this report.

HUMAN RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

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

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

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

RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

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

EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

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

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PREVIOUS COMMITTEE REPORTS

Authority	Paper 3851	Development of a Volunteer Programme	23 February 2006
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APPENDICES ATTACHED

Appendix A	2018 Volunteers Policy Draft
Appendix B	2018 Volunteers Strategy Draft

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

CSR	Corporate Social Responsibility
GDPR	General Data Protection Regulations
the Trust	Lee Valley Leisure Trust Ltd (trading as Vibrant Partnerships)

Volunteers Policy

March 2018

Reference: [Version 6]



This document is controlled by Lee Valley Regional Park Authority.

Lee Valley Regional Park Authority,
Myddelton House, Bulls Cross,
Enfield, Middlesex, EN2 9HG

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i Document Information

Title: Volunteers Policy

Status: Policy

Current Version: v6 (March 2018)

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Version History		
Version	Date	Description
1	16 th January 2013	Initial draft, circulated to Performance Team
2	15 th January 2014	Working draft published on web site
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ii Contents

Preliminary Pages		
Section	Title	Page
Cover	Title Page	1
I	Document Information	3
ii	Contents	4

Main Body		
Section	Title	Page
1	Context	5
2	Policy Objectives	5
3	Responsibilities	5
4	Legal Considerations	7
5	Relevant Policies & Procedures	7
6	Policy Implementation	7
7	Monitoring & Evaluation	8
8	Review	8
9	Glossary of Terms	8
10	Appendices	8

1. Context

Volunteering plays a key part of the continued transformation of the Lee Valley Regional Park. The vision for the Lee Valley Regional Park Authority is to become a 'World Class Leisure Destination' 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.

2. Policy objectives

This Policy's objectives are derived directly from the Authority's aim for 'Community – a Park which will provide opportunities for wellbeing'; this includes a specific objective that recognises the importance of the 'provision of opportunities for volunteering'. Each objective identified below identifies actions that will deliver continuous improvements and enhancements to the service.

1. Develop our volunteer programme in the Authority's parklands and encourage the same activity at Venues for all by:
 - (i) Improving awareness and increasing access to volunteering opportunities for both the Authority and Trust
 - (ii) Seek to raise the current ratio of volunteers to staff.
 - (iii) Work with Youth and Schools, Rangers, Events, Myddelton House Gardens, Biodiversity, Holyfield Hall Farm, Fisheries and Vibrant Partnerships venue managers to constantly identify new opportunities to meet changing needs and business priorities.
 - (iv) Secure Investors in Volunteers (IiV) every three years at renewal.
 - a) By constantly refining all procedures and ensure they are 'best in class' in line with IiV standards.
 - b) Ensure we carry out our duty of care to volunteers by operating robust procedures in relation to safeguarding and mechanisms for dealing with complaints or disciplinary incidents involving volunteers.
2. Match the Authority's business needs with volunteer support through:
 - (i) Ensuring each organisation's capacity can support the volunteer programme by identifying gaps and matching these with existing skill sets of existing and new volunteers.
 - (ii) 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 groups from hard-to-reach communities and the voluntary sector by:
 - (i) Promoting the strategy and programme to 'target groups' using the increasing diversity plan written for the 2017 IiV review.

4. Resource additional support for volunteers by:
 - (i) Reviewing the operation and function of the existing staff team.
The existing establishment has been in operation since 2007 and has managed a significant increase in volunteer numbers. This should be constantly reviewed to ensure there are no capacity issues.
 - (ii) Actively promote the involvement, including sponsorship of sites by 'corporates' through presentations and visits. 'Corporates' represent a good opportunity for volunteering as part of their corporate 'social responsibility' programmes. Seek to develop new options for companies to contribute to the Park through their CSR activities.
 - (iii) Rewarding dedication, endeavour and contribution. Maintaining the enthusiasm and commitment of our existing volunteer base and through word of mouth will lead to improved numbers.
 - (iv) Constantly review and examine our reward and recognition activities.
5. Encourage staff to pursue volunteering opportunities which support communities across the Region:
 - (i) The Volunteers team to actively encourage opportunities for staff to pursue volunteering opportunities initially in their own free time but potentially longer term as part of CSR programme.
 - (ii) The Authority will work with Human Resources and Vibrant Partnerships to assess the implications of a Corporate Social Responsibility Policy for both organisations before committing to any agreement on staff volunteering in company time:
 - a) Complete review by Q1 2019-20.
6. Actively seek opportunities for joint partner programmes for volunteer activities through:
 - (i) Identifying areas where further joint working can be identified and delivered. This should build on one or two partners that currently undertake projects with the organisation – for example Canal and River TRUST and Cheshunt Extended Schools Service. Where identified deliver joint projects across the Park.

3. Responsibilities

The Volunteers and Community Engagement Manager is responsible for the overview of the volunteer's policy, along with the Volunteers Officer who is responsible for the monitoring and evaluation of the policy.

4. 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 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 (IIV) the Authority is seen as maintaining the highest standards of Volunteer Management.

5. Relevant Policy & Procedures

There is a Volunteers Strategy that is directly linked to this policy and a Volunteers Handbook that supports the overall volunteers programme. The volunteers 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 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 forms the day to day running of the volunteer's programme, the responsibility of which is down to the Volunteers and Community Engagement team and staff who work with volunteers. The policy will be reviewed every 3 years in line with and prior to the re assessment for Investors in Volunteers. The policy will be rolled out via the Compass for all staff and via staff training for those working directly with volunteers. The policy will also be available on the Lee Valley Visit and Authority Corporate web sites.

7. Monitoring & Evaluation

The effectiveness of this policy will be measured against the following targets:

- Volunteer Hours.
- Active Volunteers.
- Monetary Value of Volunteering
- Non-Riparian Volunteers percentage changes.
- Minority Volunteers percentage changes.
- Ratio of Volunteers to Staff
- Corporate Activity Budget

Stretch Targets set until 2022

Current Position	By 2022 we will
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 25,000 volunteer hours 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase volunteer hours year on year to a target of 40,000
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 800 registered volunteers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase number of registered volunteers to 1000
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Non-riparian volunteers 120 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase to 250
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minority Group Volunteers 90 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase to 150
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ratio of volunteers currently 2.5:1 (Volunteers to FTE's) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ratio of 5:1 volunteers to FTE's
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Corporate Activity Budget Income £9,000 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Achieve £10,000

These figures will be monitored on an annual basis by the Volunteers and Community Engagement team against a 10 year target.

8. Review

The policy will be fully reviewed every 3 years or specifically if and when 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.

- **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 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.
- **Hard-to-Reach / Minority** - ('target groups') current 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 ethnic minority communities, disabled people or young or old sections of the community.

10. Appendices

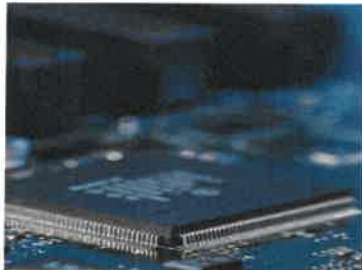
There are a several companion documents to this policy:

- Volunteer Strategy Document.
- Volunteers Handbook.
- Staff Guide to working with Volunteers.

Volunteers Strategy

March 2018

Reference: [Version 6]



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Lee Valley Regional Park Authority,
Myddelton House, Bulls Cross,
Enfield, Middlesex, EN2 9HG

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i Document Information

Title: Volunteers Strategy**Status: Live****Current Version: v6 (March 2018)**

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ii Contents

Preliminary Pages		
Section	Title	Page
Cover	Title Page	1
I	Document Information	3
ii	Contents	4

Main Body		
Section	Title	Page
1	Context	5
2	Background	5
3	Strategy Aims, Objectives and 10 year plan	5
4	Responsibilities	7
5	Legal Considerations	7
6	Relevant Policies & Procedures	7
7	Strategy Implementation	8
8	Monitoring & Evaluation	8
9	Review	8
10	Glossary of Terms	8
11	Appendices	8

1. Context

- 1.1 Volunteering increasingly forms an important and distinct element in the delivery of services by many private and public sector organisations. At an intrinsic level volunteering demonstrates a strong commitment to human values of support and empathy which provides stimulus and reward, 'the 'economics of well-being'. On a practical level it can ensure that jobs can be completed effectively with a minimum of resources.
- 1.2 The Authority has adopted the National Council for Volunteering Organisations (NCVO) definition of volunteering as:
- '..... any activity that involves spending time, unpaid, doing something that aims to benefit the environment or someone (individuals or groups) other than, or in addition to, close relatives. Central to this definition is the fact that volunteering must be a choice freely made by each individual.'*
- 1.3 Volunteering plays a key part of the continued transformation of the Lee Valley Regional Park and its aim to become a 'World Class Leisure Destination'. The Authority's adopted strategic aims include 'Community – a Park which provides opportunities for well-being'; this includes a specific objective which recognises the importance of the Park for the 'provision of opportunities for volunteering'
- 1.4 The dedication of the Authority's registered volunteers continues to grow year on year through a range of mutually beneficial volunteering opportunities, quality volunteer management activities and reward and recognition initiatives. This Strategy outlines how the Authority will seek to improve its volunteer programme.
- 1.4 In line with the Authority's corporate approach to strategy development the current strategy has been reviewed and revised to account for changes which have occurred in the environment externally to the Authority since 2016.
- 1.5 The strategy is supported by a Policy which outlines how its aims will be delivered.

2. Background

- 2.1 In 2017 across the Authority's parklands and Vibrant Partnerships managed venues over 800 volunteers contributed over 25,000 hours. This was carried out to support Fisheries, Events, Myddelton House Gardens, The Ranger service, Holyfield Hall Farm Biodiversity and the Youth and Schools Team for the Authority and all Vibrant Partnerships venues. Additionally there are a number of joint 'volunteer' programmes some of which are not yet fully developed. They represent partnership working with Major Event organisers, National Governing Bodies and smaller voluntary groups or partners to facilitate Lee Valley Park volunteer involvement.

3. Strategy Vision, Aims and Objectives

- 3.1 Officers from the Authority consider that the strategy requires a clear vision to drive forward the strategy and to ensure that we can grow and develop our volunteer's 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.

- 3.2. The service areas include the following:

- Human resources – there are two elements to this.
 - Firstly, although not directly 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 and support. If all else fails this may involve corrective action. We will ensure that the appointment of volunteers is delivered to the same standards to those which underpin our directly employed staff.
 - Secondly, the Authority's human resources policies allow 'flexible' working which allows all staff the freedom to become volunteers themselves.
- The Authority owns only 42% of the area of the Regional Park. Only through working with partners such as the Canal and Rivers Trust, Conservation Volunteers 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.

- 3.3 The Volunteers Strategy has 6 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 Trust venue managers, Rangers, Gardens, Events, Holyfield Hall Farm, Youth and Schools, Biodiversity and Fisheries to continuously identify new opportunities as business direction directs.
- (iii) Secure Investors in Volunteers and maintain accreditation at successive renewals.

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

- (i) Continue reviewing the organisations capacity gaps and matching these with existing volunteer skill set.
- (ii) Regularly review 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 hard-to-reach ethnic minority, disabled, private, diverse age ranges, community and voluntary sector groups:

- (i) Actively promote the strategy and programme to 'target groups'.

4) Resource additional support for volunteers by:

- (i) Reviewing the operation and function of the existing team.
- (ii) Actively promoting engagement of companies through presentations and visits. 'Corporates' represent a good opportunity for revenue linked to volunteering as part of their corporate 'social responsibility'
- (iii) Rewarding dedication, endeavour and contribution.

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 Volunteers team to work with HR 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 Park Authority.

6) Actively seek opportunities for joint partner programmes

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:

- (i) Identifying partners where jointly agreed volunteer or corporate programmes can be delivered.

4. Responsibilities

The Volunteers and Community Engagement Manager is responsible for the overview of the Volunteer's Strategy, along with the Volunteers Officer who is responsible for the monitoring and evaluation of the 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 (IIV) the Authority is seen as maintaining the highest standards of Volunteer Management.

6. Relevant Policy & Procedures

There is a Volunteers Policy that is directly linked to this strategy and a Volunteers Handbook that supports the overall volunteers 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's programme, the responsibility of which is down to the volunteer's team and staff. The strategy will be reviewed every 3 years in line with the re-assessment of Investors in Volunteers and rolled out via Compass and internet for all staff via volunteer supervisor training for those working directly with volunteers.

8. Monitoring & Evaluation

The effectiveness of this strategy will be measured against the volunteer programme targets which are included in the Policy.

9. Review

The policy will be fully reviewed every 3 years or when specifically appropriate.

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.
- **Hard-to-Reach / Minority** – (referred to as ‘targets groups’) current 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 ethnic minority communities, disabled people or young or old sections of the community.

11. Appendices

There are three companion documents to this strategy:

- Volunteers Policy.
- Volunteers Handbook.
- Guide to working with Volunteers.

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