



## Challenge Poverty Week Event: Volunteering and Communities

11<sup>th</sup> October 2024

### Agenda:

- 9.30 Introduction and setting the scene, Sarah Latto, and Vikki Carpenter
- 9.45 Guest speaker 1: George Eckton, Citizens Advice Scotland
- 10.05 Guest speaker 2: Louise McVey & Calum McLellan, Inverclyde Council CLD
- 10.25 Guest speaker 3: Paul Sullivan & Damian Sherwood-Johnson, Sistema Scotland
- 10.45 Guest speaker 4: Paul Irwin, Ferguslie Park Housing Association
- 11.05 Break
- 11.10 Breakout room discussions
- 11.35 Q&A with guest speakers and hosts
- 11.50 Plenary and evaluation
- 12.00 Event close

### Notes:

#### Menti Results Part 1: Who are we?

Do You Volunteer?				Do you support Volunteers within your organisation?		
Yes	No	Would Like to	Previously Did	Yes	No	Previously Did
60%	24%	2%	14%	86%	6%	8%

What are the benefits from volunteering with your organisation?
Helpful experience, sense of achieving something worthwhile
Volunteering with our organisation offers numerous personal and professional benefits. Volunteers gain valuable skills, such as leadership, communication, and teamwork, while making a meaningful impact
Great work experience for anyone looking to build their skills. Excellent chance to meet and mix with lots of different people from all walks of life
Putting in a great event, supporting other parents. Meeting new people
Learning new skills
Good experience, excellent training
Gaining skills and experience. Accredited awards. Meeting new people. Contributing to our community
Experience and references, travel expenses covered
Support people mental health
Make a difference to children. Build CV. Gain qualifications.
Being support for further employment or volunteering. Having multiple supports.
Learn new skills or use existing ones, be part of the community and help people within the community
Good for mental health and employability
Sense of contributing to something worthwhile. connecting with people and helping them on their journeys. developing skills and understanding
Employability, skills for life

Wellbeing increases, learning new skills and info
Saltire hours for young people.
They are the heart of our organisation. We couldn't run the services we do without them.
Our entire organisation relies on volunteers and would not be able to provide the services it does without our volunteers
It is very rewarding and makes such a huge difference to the community and young people. And it's fun!
Making a difference / meaning Meeting other great people New skills and experiences Confidence
Sharing of lived experience for policy development and planning, as well as delivery of services.
Gain a diverse range of skills and meet lots of different people.
Benefits for our customers in supported living and for our community gardens. Benefits to volunteers and ourselves in helping others understand the work we do. Building confidence and skills
Keep the whole thing running!
Experience and leadership skills
Work experience, social interaction. Get to know local area -qualifications, reduce isolation
Flexible options to fit around volunteers' personal life
Giving back after lived experience sharing knowledge
Move into paid roles. Skills. Peer support. Mental health

<b>What are the current challenges around supporting volunteers?</b>
Time and capacity
Maintaining volunteer engagement and motivation over the long term can be difficult.
Maintaining regular volunteering opportunities. Short term is less beneficial
We have too many volunteers which although it is a great position to be in, we are now wondering how to manage this without bad feeling/publicity.
Recruitment
Don't always have volunteering opportunities so some volunteers aren't regularly volunteering with us
Funding - a dedicated volunteer coordinator would really benefit our organisation
Flexibility and transport
Getting the volunteers
Volunteer's time. Need for paid work. Ability to commit
Having multiple people from different walks of life working together.
It is difficult to recruit volunteers We have been doing well at retaining volunteers We ask a lot of volunteers, and the work is getting even more challenging, so we need to ensure their wellbeing
Funding
enough capacity to support them well. very diverse needs and aspirations
Recruiting new volunteers
Resources, it takes time of a paid member of staff and finances to train and recruit, ongoing training very important to retention, but has to be high quality and so costs.
Time
Staff resources to train them and space restrictions within our premises
Main challenge at the moment is retaining volunteers in the longer term
Can sometimes be unreliable, lack of training, lack of confidence, need to be aware of H&S and risks that exist in order to protect them., which can be onerous and is a major responsibility

Some volunteers won't claim expenses which hides the true cost of volunteering.
Engagement in rural areas so transport is an issue.
The geographical nature as our volunteers is spread across a wide area in the Scottish Borders. Funding and staff time to support our commitment to volunteers
Instability. People needing to concentrate on paid work
Funding threats hard to plan ahead- change of premises. Having additional qualified staff.
Time. Increased caseloads, no extra staff.
Assisted volunteering needs
Lack of funding to support their work

### Sarah Latto, Volunteer Scotland

- Key stats about the current volunteering landscape in Scotland, including the four percentage point decline in formal volunteering since 2019, and the increase in volunteers supporting community/ neighbourhood organisations.
- The impact of the cost of living crisis on volunteering and volunteer involving organisations has led to declining overall volunteer satisfaction.
- The importance of the Volunteer Charter for underpinning sustainable and legitimate volunteering, with the opportunity for organisations to pledge their support as a Charter Champion.
- The recent launch of the National Recruitment Campaign, including a suite of resources for volunteer involving organisations.

### Vikki Carpenter, CLD Standards Council

- The CLD Standards Council Scotland is the professional body for people who **work** and **volunteer** in Community Learning and Development (CLD).
- Vision is that the communities and people of Scotland are served by CLD practitioners that are recognised as competent, confident, and committed to equality, empowerment, and life-wide learning for all.
- Mission is to drive high standards of professional practice in the CLD sector by the approval of professional learning, the registration of practitioners and the enabling of professional development, working with our members to be a voice for the profession.
- Membership is currently free: “ *more members more clout*”
- Professional Induction Programme introduces members of the CLD Standards Council to the purpose and functions of the Council and what is expected of membership based on its professional standards.
- Recent independent review of the sector by Kate Still as part of larger Education Reform in Scotland.
- CLD is a values-based profession, values underpin CLD practice and the CLD Competences provide a framework for practice.
- Benefits include buddy and mentoring schemes to support members, paid and voluntary practitioners, with professional development.

### George Eckton, Citizens Advice Scotland

- Twin aims of CAS – advice and advocacy
- Citizens Advice Bureaux provide a volunteer-led service with 1750 volunteers

- Have a range of volunteer roles including advisors, tutors, administrative and policy roles.
- Volunteer advisors do not just provide advice, also provide compassionate support
- Volunteer advisors receive considerable training:
  - Induction → shadowing → supported interviewing → solo practice
  - This takes at least 6 months to complete
- Social policy volunteers are essential for driving change – often get the most traction with policy makers
- Volunteering help volunteers to develop a range of meta-skills
- Most volunteers are motivated by the desire to make a difference so communicating impact is important
- Many clients have reported increased confidence in addressing issues themselves

#### Louise McVey & Calum McLellan, Inverclyde Council CLD

- Louise spoke about the Child Poverty Local Action report, with key priorities of bringing about systems change and co-designing services
- Community participation in decision-making is very flexible – not just events
- Inverclyde is an early adopter for affordable childcare
- ‘Warm Hand of Friendship’ - £100,000 funding for local communities for food and warm spaces.
- Multiply project for improving everyday numeracy skills – volunteers have important role in delivery and receive 8 training sessions
- Invergrow community food project – have huge network of community gardens which provide more informal volunteering opportunities
- Stressed importance of support for volunteers in less formal roles

#### Paul Sullivan & Damian Sherwood-Johnson, Sistema Scotland

- Sistema Big Noise projects are about collaborative music making for the whole community, from babies to adults
- Intensively place-based – all Big Noise projects are in areas of high deprivation
- Now have the Big Noise national orchestra
- Have been evaluated by GCPH – considerable outcomes and impact that is not just related to music
- Volunteer Programme has a range of roles, including a Baby Noise helper which tends to be recruited from the local community.
- They have a new Achieve and Ambition fundraiser role which supports young musicians who need help with educational costs
- For volunteer recruitment, need to be very flexible.
- Try to recruit from the local community, including through local universities which has been successful
- Often host events for recruitment in local communities in local libraries or through groups like the Rotary.
- The framing of roles is important for recruitment – useful to focus on the impact/purpose of the role rather than just focussing on the tasks
- Centrality of relationships is key.

Paul Irwin, Ferguslie Park Housing Association

- They have a range of activities including a choir, 'T at the Tanny' and Ferguslie Seniors.
- Volunteer recruit process is very organic
- Focus on training, support and celebrating volunteers.
- Shared Cheryl's story, who started out as a service user, became a volunteer, gained qualifications and employment at the centre, and is now doing a course in community education.
- They offer all training to volunteers and host a regular community breakfast
- They run an 'Activate' course which empowers local people to bring about change
- Staff are all trained in trauma informed practice
- They use a local CIC called Hopeful Spaces to provide counselling to staff and volunteers
- Importance of engaging with partners, both other organisations within the centre and locally in the community.

**Link to all presentations mentioned above, along with further information on Volunteering [HERE](#)**

**Evaluation**

Menti Result Part 2: How Was It For You?

<b>What is the key "takeaways" from today's session?</b>
Organic volunteering recruitment. Intersection with CLD
Lots of amazing work going on out there
Great talks today
Hearing practical examples
The organic approach to volunteering, specifically around Ferguslie Park! Brilliant work, great pathway for volunteers and would love to follow up and learn from Paul
Paul's talk on the range of services provided.
Listening to everyone experiencing
How other service support their volunteers
The ways a lot of organisations can work together
The model at Ferguslie Park
The benefit of Sistema which has great input for those experiencing poverty
Communities have the answers
Local is powerful.
Network sharing inspiration thanks
The importance of volunteering the impact of volunteering for both volunteers and their communities - the amount of similar work going on in other areas so perhaps looking at ways to share that inform
Great ideas and sharing of organisations and resources I wasn't aware of
Hearing the range of volunteer recruitment approaches and work going on.
Great collaboration leads to a better impact. Lovely to see that we are all heading in the same direction. Some super ideas and take aways
Connect more with Volunteer Scotland and other partners
The decrease in volunteer satisfaction is something we need to take note of and take action on.
Get to know more in-depth about community development
Lots of information, common issues across the board - collective work is key with our communities

What, if anything, are you going to change or do differently after today's event?
How, as a national organisation, we can be more grassroots. Join CLD
Looking at "job descriptions" for volunteers to help with blurring of lines
Have a look at volunteer pathway we currently have and expand it! Be more relaxed and open to volunteer opportunities
Consider the wide variety of ways poverty can affect volunteers and understand how to best support them.
Networking, getting best practices and support from other organisations
Access resources discussed.
Networking
Get my volunteers better trained
Link my work to local projects.
Involve more music projects at events
Ensure volunteers are satisfied and don't feel like they are doing a staff role.
Continue my learning and keep myself up to date.

