

Young People and Volunteering. East Sussex Guide

GUIDE



“Really like”

“I really like this guide - I think it clearly shows the benefits of volunteering for both young people and the charity or organisation”

Edward Peasgood
Student, Uckfield College



Welcome!

This guide is a practical resource for those in the voluntary and community sector who offer or hope to offer volunteering opportunities to young people (particularly aged 14-18) in a variety of settings. It discusses the benefits of volunteering, aims to help organisations prepare to involve young people in their

activities and includes tips on creating attractive volunteering roles and ways to recruit young people as volunteers. We hope it will embed social action and volunteering in the lives of young people and encourage all community groups to engage and promote the energy, enthusiasm, creativity and talents of young people. It's written to help make this journey easier.

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Definition of volunteering



We define 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. Volunteering must be a choice freely made by each young person. This can include formal activity undertaken through public, private and voluntary organisations as well

as informal community participation and social action (Source: NCVO). Social action is often defined further, as young people taking practical action in the service of others to create positive change (Source: #iwill Campaign).

4 in10

Currently 4 in 10 young people aged between 10 and 20 get involved in activities that make a positive difference. Research indicates that almost double this number would take part in things like campaigning, fundraising and volunteering if they had a chance.

(Source: #iwill Campaign)



The benefits of volunteering

For young people	
✓	Opportunity to better understand our communities and take an active part in shaping what's happening locally
✓	Enhances skills and career prospects
✓	Adds depth to personal statements and CVs, helping with experience prior to applying for further education or employment. "67% of employers report that entry level candidates who have voluntary experience demonstrate more employability skills." (Source: CIPD)
✓	Volunteering is fun. It helps to develop new networks and friendships
✓	Aids personal development, raises aspirations and promotes personal resilience increasing self-confidence and self-esteem
✓	Enables young people to feel part of their community, more included and with a stake in wider society

"Thank you"

"This guide has helped cement things in my mind and given me motivation for our next endeavours, so thank you for that."

Charlotte Cross
Sussex Police



For organisations	
✓	Young people bring enthusiasm, fresh outlook and innovative solutions
✓	Provide skills your organisation (adult volunteers and staff) don't have
✓	Allows you to tap into more people resource, who can volunteer and give time
✓	Young people can raise awareness and champion your work amongst their peers, teachers, parents and the wider community. Diverse young volunteers can help you engage effectively with a diverse community across all ages
✓	Young volunteers can support meaningful service improvement by improving communication and accessing young people's voices
✓	Helps create a strong future workforce. Opportunities can be linked to apprenticeships and employment
✓	Sends out a positive message about your organisation and can bring positive coverage of your work.

What the young people say

Eight Key messages

1. Seek me out and find me, it might take a while, but it will be worth it. You'll find me on my turf, not yours!
2. Make it easy for me to get involved and play a part (e.g. ask me what help I need); I might need extra help and/or time to do this.
3. Involve me in discussions about what's possible and how to make it happen.
4. Help me to find out what I'm interested in and passionate about, and to work on the things that matter to me.
5. Work with me to find out what I'm good at as well as what I can gain through my involvement.
6. Use my talents, experiences and ideas; and stretch and support me to develop new talents, gain different experiences and be confident in my own abilities.
7. Recognise and celebrate my success and help me realise my aspirations and ambitions, but remember....
8. Tailor and adapt what you do to enable me to make change happen; personalise the opportunity for youth social action and my experience of it

(Source: "Embedding inclusive practices in opportunities for youth social action", The National Development Team for Inclusion)

Loretta's story



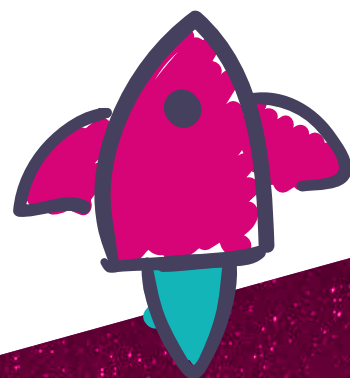
Loretta Lock, Director of Defiant Sports shares her experience of working with young volunteers

"James volunteered with us during his first year of College in 2018. His course required him to complete 30h of volunteering and he chose to use it with Defiant Sports. Most of James' time was spent at our tennis sessions for adults with learning disabilities. He volunteered alongside our Head Coach, delivering tennis based skills and activities. This was of great benefit to us, allowing our Coach to focus on more complex or individual needs whilst James kept the general activities going. We were able to mentor James, enhancing his coaching and communication skills. As he was a media student, James also helped redesign our newsletter 'Breaking Boundaries' which is now far better than our previous attempt! Due to James' efforts and enthusiasm, we offered him a part-time

paid position at the end of his volunteering, which he took up and continues to work with us as an Assistant Coach."

"Aaron and Sam, who were 16 and 17, began volunteering with us as part of the Duke of Edinburgh's Award. They are both very enthusiastic and adaptable. Aaron had a lot of experience, both playing and studying football, and Sam is a naturally sporty individual with a great understanding of people with differences or special needs. Being quite a fun pair, the boys very quickly became popular with our teens and primary age groups. The boys have developed into confident assistants at our sessions and we will soon be supporting them through coaching qualifications."

Creating the role & recruiting young people



Six principles

Be challenging

Make opportunities stretching and engaging, as well as exciting and enjoyable.

Be youth led

Enable young people to create the opportunities, develop their own, or have a role to play in reviewing and future developments.

Be socially impactful

Ensure roles create positive social change that is of benefit to the wider community as well as to the young people themselves.

Be progressive

Consider how young people can progress from this role to other opportunities or activities.

Be embedded

Consider how the role will support young people developing a habit.

Be reflective

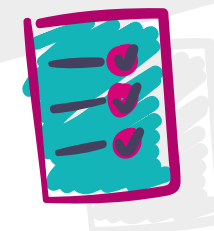
Ensure roles enable young people to reflect on their volunteering and recognise their achievements.

Role defining

Examples

Attractive and successful youth volunteering roles

Activity	Example
Befriending/ Buddies	Meal time buddies, dementia companions, gig buddies
Helping to run social activities	IT clubs/surgeries, film clubs, photography sessions, music sessions, after-school and youth clubs, sports activities, quizzes, knit and natter, intergenerational activities
Helping out at events	Stewarding, raising money, helping at information stand or with marketing beforehand
Wellbeing	Using existing skills e.g. beauty therapy, helping with a shift at a telephone helpline, supporting counselling sessions for young people
Comms /Feed back	Helping with writing guides, completing surveys, running focus groups with peers
Influencing policy	Developing messages and campaigns with the organisations
Publications and Marketing	Editing newsletters and other publications, developing PR Plans, designing marketing materials, social media campaigns
Social media and websites	Helping set up and teaching others how to use them
Organisational level roles	Membership of boards, advisory groups, youth forums etc
Work based activities	In a shop or office, admin, clerical, IT support
Action Days or Task Force	Beach or park clean, planting plants, painting local play area
Peer to peer support	Informal support where young people are able to model ways of doing things to new volunteers
Leadership	Engaging new volunteers through mentoring



Guidance

Tick our role checklist as you go

- ☐ Think about making your opportunities sound **interesting and worthwhile**. Link them to individuals' career or social aspirations.
- ☐ **Spell out the benefits** and how the role can fit into young people's schedule. Young people have many competing demands on their time, so show clearly the return for their 'investment of time'.
- ☐ **Use Role Description** to explain what the tasks are. Try to involve young people in the creation of it, they will be able to highlight missing or additional areas that you may have not thought about. Consider how the role fits in with your organisation's overall aims and objectives. How will this role complement staff roles. Ensure it does not directly replace paid roles?
- ☐ Don't forget to consider how to **make the experience fun** for the young people involved.
- ☐ **Be realistic about time involved**. Flexible times for volunteering mean young people can fit it around other commitments – education, carers responsibilities etc. Intensive placements may work over extended school holidays. During other periods, time limited tasks, for example creating a poster for an event can be just as rewarding for both parties. Be mindful of exams and revision times.
- ☐ **Be clear that reasonable 'out of pocket' costs, including travel will be covered**. Many young people lack personal transport or access to public transport. Support with transport or its cost can be especially important.
- ☐ **Offer incentives**. Rewards systems are particularly effective in recruiting young people. Something as simple as offering a reference can be highly valued. You can look out for local volunteering cards or passports, or visit vinspired to learn about their Awards Scheme - <https://vinspired.com/get-awards>.



Mark's story

Marc lives in Heathfield and volunteers through the Duke of Edinburgh's Award scheme. He maintains a local churchyard and helps at an after-school club.



Why did you want to volunteer?

"I became interested in volunteering as many of my family members have volunteered, but I also thought it would be useful for my C.V. The Duke of Edinburgh's Award is recognised by universities and employers nationwide.

"My mentor offered me the chance to help maintain a churchyard that had become rather overgrown. As I prefer being outdoors, it seemed ideal to combine helping others with something I enjoyed. I also volunteered at an after-school club".

How do you feel you have played a part?

"The churchyard is much more accessible now and it was nice to hear the positive feedback from people. I felt good that people could go and remember their loved ones in a tidy and pleasant environment. We were invited to a free BBQ as a 'thank you', so I know our efforts were appreciated. The after-school club was a lot of fun and I really enjoyed seeing the children get excited

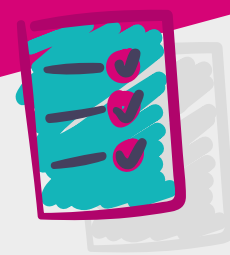
at painting and doing various crafts we helped them with. Whilst not everyone enjoys being at school, I feel I helped make the after-school club a lot of fun for the kids. Their enthusiasm was infectious!"

What have you got out of volunteering?

Much more than I anticipated! It felt good to be part of a team, where everyone wanted to do well and was motivated – not always true when at school! I made friends that I may have otherwise not had the chance to get to know. Although the work was hard at times, I learnt new skills including how to lay and manage a natural hedge properly. My commitment to the DoE Scheme is now finished, but I enjoyed volunteering so much, that I want to continue with it in the future."

(Source: Volunteer Centre East Sussex, <http://www.vces.org.uk/case-study-categories/volunteers/>.
Story captured by Heathfield & District Volunteer Centre)

Recruiting



Guidance

Tick our role checklist as you go

- ☐ **Have an accessible and welcoming space** where young people, who want to volunteer, feel able to approach.
- ☐ **Advertise wisely and creatively.** Use social media and other channels which are used by young people. Many young people get into volunteering through word of mouth, encouraged by someone they know, celebrities or (social) media.
- ☐ **Everyone has something to contribute.** Improve young people's confidence. Emphasise that 'no previous experience or specialist skills are required', or look for soft skills young people may have already gained through their education like listening, team work, leaderships, friendliness, patience. Be honest, say why you are recruiting young volunteers; for example you want to increase diversity of your organisation or listen to the views of younger people.
- ☐ **Speedy Recruitment.** Set up simple processes that keep the young person motivated so that their interest is maintained. Young people, in particular, tend to be at a transitional point in their lives. They may be between school and work or college, so they may not have the time to engage in projects with a long lead-in time.
- ☐ **Match and listen.** Focus on what the young person can offer your organisation rather than forcing them into pre-existing roles. Consider their other commitments.
- ☐ **Reference.** Young volunteers may not have past experience to draw on. In order to avoid creating barriers, you will need to be flexible about whom you will accept a reference from.

What and where to try

Reach out and recruit young volunteers

1. Invest time to establish and develop relationships with **local schools**: Make the extra effort to contact schools near your area or your project. Then try to find the right person in the school (e.g. career adviser, head of year, head teacher) who will offer you the opportunity to come and talk with their students about volunteering. Some schools run extracurricular programmes, so there may be opportunities for young people to volunteer through the schools' enrichment programme. Schools can be difficult to make connections with, as they have so many organisations and parents trying to communicate with them. Don't be put off though. Contact your local Voluntary Action for help, if you are struggling.
2. **Local universities**: Identify if there are volunteer programmes at your local university. University of Brighton, for example, runs Active Student Programme <https://www.brighton.ac.uk/business-services/community-partnerships/working-with-our-community/recruiting-volunteers.aspx> which can help with formal, time limited placements. Contact Student Unions to see how you can promote more informal or long-term roles. Think how the roles you offer, or your organisation as a whole, fits in with the actual courses available at your local campus.
3. **Local colleges**: College students are often local and have a long-term connection with

Continues over...



What and where to try continued

the area. Many courses run at college (for example health and social care) require students to complete placements. This could provide a regular flow of applications to volunteer. You can search for a college near you, or contact East Sussex College, Katy Watson, katy.watson@sussexdowns.ac.uk.

4. **Organisations Within the Community:** Approach Scouts, Guides, Woodcraft Folk, local youth clubs, community centres and home-schooling networks.
5. **Local Volunteer Hub** (or Volunteer Centre): Identify and contact your local hub to see if they can advertise the opportunity for you. They may currently support young people who are looking for volunteering and could help you with the placement. Find local Hubs/Centres in East Sussex on <http://www.vces.org.uk/volunteer/now/>
6. **Do-It:** Many young people look for opportunities to volunteer or get involved on-line. Do-it.org is a national on-line platform to advertise and apply for local opportunities.
7. **Volunteering Schemes:** this can offer another avenue to recruit young people through and involve them within different local roles. Try Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme or advertise with Sussex Police Cadets, who already work with an existing group of community engaged young people who are interested in volunteering -<https://www.sussex.police.uk/police-forces/sussex-police/areas/careers/jobs/volunteer-cadet-corps/>
8. **Social Media:** Use trends and events to your advantage, e.g. make a twitter post on A Level results day about volunteering opportunities. Reach out to parents' groups, who might then speak with their children about an opportunity they've seen and think may be appropriate.



John's story

AGEconcern
Eastbourne

Chief Executive of
Age Concern Eastbourne,
John Trainor

"We care greatly about involving young volunteers to support our services for older people. We have roles in the Venton Centre helping out socially isolated people or those with memory issues; or in the community helping with shopping or supporting people on our transport bus. It is easy to be clichéd about the energy and verve that young volunteers can bring to a project, but it's true. Our clients like to be surrounded by the young, it reminds them of their grandchildren or even of themselves once upon a time.

We have successfully worked with students from the University of Brighton. We learnt it's important that expectations for both the young volunteer and the charity are clear – agree the role together, the amount of time to be spent, support they can expect and what they can get out of it. More so than our more mature volunteers, we find that it is better to engage younger volunteers for set projects that are time limited - recent examples include helping us with setting up Twitter and developing a PR strategy."

Managing young people in your organisation



Step

Practical guidance

Develop Volunteer Involvement Policy

This is important if you involve volunteers of any age. For help visit Volunteer Centre East Sussex website - Best Practice Resources for Organisations

If you have a policy, but are new to involving young people, ensure that your policy sets out what you have to offer and what you expect from young volunteers.

Discuss how you will integrate young people into your volunteer and staff team. Ensure they are an equal member and have an input into your project or organisation. Avoid at all cost involving young people in volunteering as a token measure, or being perceived as such.

Other Necessary Policies & Procedures

Organisations should ensure that they have taken appropriate steps to meet their legal obligation to ensure young people's safety and promote their well-being. Children are classed as a 'vulnerable' group, so any organisation that takes on young volunteers must be careful to protect them. Legally a child is defined as someone who is under 18 years old.

As a minimum you need to have in place:

- Safeguarding Policy and Child Protection Statement.
- Data Protection Policy.
- Supervision policy should consider DBS checks for adults working with young people, with trained staff only as supervisors. No young person can be left alone. It's good practice to have two adults overseeing at all times.
- Risk Assessment. Are the roles suitable and safe for under 18s? Undertake a full risk assessment of all volunteer roles, activities and settings. Identifying potential hazards, dangers and vulnerabilities and take action to mitigate or avoid these factors.

DBS checks for young volunteers - check on the level of DBS required, remembering that it is not legal to obtain DBS checks on under 16s.

TIP: Get help from your local Voluntary Action to create bespoke policies for your organisation or obtain templates.

Volunteering England has produced a Risk Toolkit "How to take care of risk in volunteering".



"Already helped"

"This guide has already helped me to think about how to improve the experience of the young people I currently work with, including how to have a more thorough induction process"

Jane Spencer, Youth Work Volunteer,
Seaford Youth Forum

Step	Practical guidance
Insurance	Check that your insurance policy covers volunteers under the age of 18 or, if required, under 16.
Allocate Staff Time to Support Volunteers	<p>Managing volunteers is a special skill. If you already manage volunteers, there may be a high level of understanding and support for volunteering in general amongst staff. However, they will need to be prepared to support younger volunteers and understand any additional considerations and risk assessments which this entails. Prepare the staff and the organisation (including at the Board/Trustee level). Ensure training and support is provided to those managing volunteers, as well as opportunity to network with other people who manage volunteers (check for training and events from your local Voluntary Action). Nurture and support (not supervise). Ensure you have staff and/or adult volunteers available at times when the young person volunteers, to provide support and advice when needed.</p> <p>Consider how you will communicate with the young people volunteering with you. Check what mediums do they want to use.</p> <p>IDEA Create a seat on the Board or Committee for a young person. Young people over 16 can formally join Board of Trustees. Read Young Trustees Guide for more information https://pearsfoundation.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/How-to-recruit-trustees-for-your-charity-Getting-on-Board-larger-March-2019-1.pdf</p> <p>Or think of other ways young people can scrutinise the work you do and get involved with the leadership.</p>
Peer Volunteer Support	Mentors can accompany young volunteers on their first day of placement and catch up later on in the project to provide advice and support.
Induction & Training	<p>A good induction and training programme help retain volunteers.</p> <p>Ensure volunteers have a clear understanding of their role and how they will carry it out, as well as what support is provided. Make young people feel part of your organisation. Remember to involve your young volunteers in communication from your organisation – add them to your regular newsletters, social media, e-mails and invitations to events.</p> <p>Ensure quality and safety - identify training needs, based on the role and the young person undertaking it.</p> <p>Many young people are attracted to volunteering. If it offers an opportunity to gain qualifications, identify what is available.</p> <p>Sussex Clubs for Young People offer low cost training locally, including Youth Leader Qualifications https://sussexcyp.org.uk/what-we-do/training/</p> <p>British Youth Council is a great organisation, which provides resources and training to support Youth Participation https://www.byc.org.uk/resources</p>
Young Volunteers' Liaison Group	If you engage more young people, invite them to come together and discuss their experiences and roles.

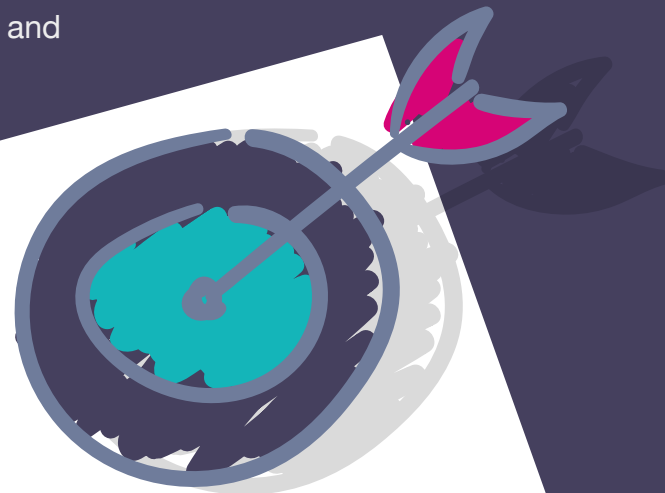


Step	Practical guidance
Identify Funding	<p>Volunteers will need their reasonable costs, such as travel expenses, to be covered. It's also worth considering other costs such as training, producing a volunteers' handbook, advertising and social events.</p> <p>Try to prevent young people needing to incur expenses and ensure those are discussed and agreed before the placement begins. Volunteers should have access to a local contact who can make prompt payment.</p> <p>TIP: Local grants often require groups to match funding. Volunteering hours can be used to demonstrate community support and sustainability. Seek help with gaining funding from your local Voluntary Action.</p>
Legal Stuff	<p>Don't be put off by legal obligations, it's not too difficult to adapt existing arrangements. Organisations should ensure they have taken appropriate steps to meet their legal obligations to ensure the safety and wellbeing of a young person and the organisation's service users. If you already have adequate policies covering adult volunteers, it is a matter of extending policies to cover younger people.</p> <p>Parental consent. Obtain informed consent from parent /guardian for under 16s. It's good practice to send information to under 18s and gain their written consent, too. Consent should include medical information/special arrangements (diet, behaviour needs) and photography. If young people have special educational needs (SEND), parental consent is required up until they reach 25 years of age.</p>
Say Thank You	<p>Celebrate key achievements and publicise individual stories. Simple things like certificates and letters of achievements work well. Or you can link with existing reward schemes such as Duke of Edinburgh's Award, Scouts or Guides, local achievement awards or volunteering cards and passports. Celebrate young volunteers' contributions during the UK's national Volunteers' Week, held annually from 1-7 June.</p> <p>Make sure all the effort that has gone into recruiting young volunteers means that they stay with you and attract other good quality volunteers.</p> <p>Include the amount of volunteer hours in your annual report and newsletters.</p> <p>TIP: Think of ways you could measure the success of your volunteering programme, and the involvement of the young people. This is a great way to acknowledge volunteers' contribution and could help you attract funding to grow it. If you would like support with this, contact your local Voluntary Action.</p>



Resources

For further information about young people and volunteering, take a look at the following:



#iwill Campaign

<https://www.iwill.org.uk/>

vinspired

<https://vinspired.com/>

Young Time Bank

“Involving Young Volunteers: A Toolkit”

<http://timebank.org.uk/> <http://www.volunteeringbrent.org.uk/userfiles/files/Young%20Volunteers%20-%20Toolkit%2C%20Timebank.pdf>

Volunteering Matters

“Youth Volunteering and Social Action in Health and Social Care. Toolkit”

https://volunteeringmatters.org.uk/app/uploads/2018/11/YSA_Toolkit_2018_FINAL.pdf

Essential Guides

Volunteer Centre East Sussex

<http://www.vces.org.uk/organisations/resources/>

Sussex Clubs for Young People

<https://sussexcyp.org.uk/what-we-do/training/>

Young Trustees Guide

<https://pearsfoundation.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/How-to-recruit-trustees-for-your-charity-Getting-on-Board-larger-March-2019-1.pdf>

“Embedding inclusive practices in opportunities for youth social action”

The National Development Team for Inclusion

https://www.ndti.org.uk/uploads/files/iwill_NDTi.pdf

“Raising the Quality of Youth Social Action: Applying 6 quality principles”

Generation Change and #iwill Campaign

<https://www.iwill.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/Generation-Change-6-Quality-Principles-Report.pdf>

“Managing Volunteers Toolkit”

Love Libraries. Love Volunteering

NHS Trusts

Young Volunteer Programmes (Pears #iwill Fund)

<https://pearsfoundation.org.uk/partners/nhs-trusts-young-volunteer-programmes/>

NHS Youth Forum

<https://www.england.nhs.uk/participation/get-involved/how/forums/nhs-youth-forum/>

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We are grateful to Young Time Bank and Volunteering Matters for their Toolkits (see Resources section), our Guide often refers to or cites information from those two comprehensive documents.

Any questions

Contact 3VA, on info@3va.org.uk, tel. 01323 639 373, www.3va.org.uk.

Visit **Volunteer Centre East Sussex** website www.vces.org.uk or contact your local Voluntary Action (<http://www.vces.org.uk/organisations/support-for-organisations/>).



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