

Volunteer Involving Organisations: Incorporating the Plan

The [Volunteering Action Plan](#) is our shared roadmap to improve volunteer participation in Scotland over the next 10 years.

The goals of the plan are to:

- Increase volunteering participation
- Widen access to volunteering
- Listen to volunteers
- Provide great experiences

Volunteer Scotland, the Scottish Government and other key partners are working together to ensure that the Plan achieves these goals. However, we need volunteer involving organisations across the country to embed the Plan into their own approaches to volunteer engagement. In this short guide, we provide some hints and tips for how you might do this.



Contents

Page 2	Getting Started
Page 2	Outcomes or Principles
Page 4	Aligning Priorities
Page 6	Get Involved!

Getting Started

First, you need to decide on your approach to planning. There are lots of planning models and your organisation will likely have its own preferred approach to planning. You might want to create a Volunteer Strategy which is quite strategic in nature and aligns volunteering with your organisation's strategic goals. This is a great idea if volunteers are central to how your organisation delivers its services.

Another option is to create an operational volunteering plan focusing on more practical steps related to volunteer engagement. This is a good model if your plan is focused more on the detail around improving volunteer experiences.

It is always a good idea to network with other volunteer practitioners to learn about the different approaches before deciding which one is right for you. Volunteer Scotland also hosts a range of courses on this topic that you can find on their [website](#). Similarly, your local [Third Sector Interface](#) might offer training courses which will help with this too.

Case Studies



“In line with the first of the Volunteering Action Plan aims, we’re aiming to increase volunteering participation by developing more flexible volunteering roles and working across communities in Scotland.”

Fiona Harvey
Head of Volunteering at CHAS
Children’s Hospices Across Scotland

[Read CHAS full case study](#)

**Chest
Heart &
Stroke
Scotland**



“At Chest Heart & Stroke Scotland we are committed to embedding the Volunteering Action Plan (VAP) throughout the organisation. The Volunteering team have driven this forward in a number of ways including:

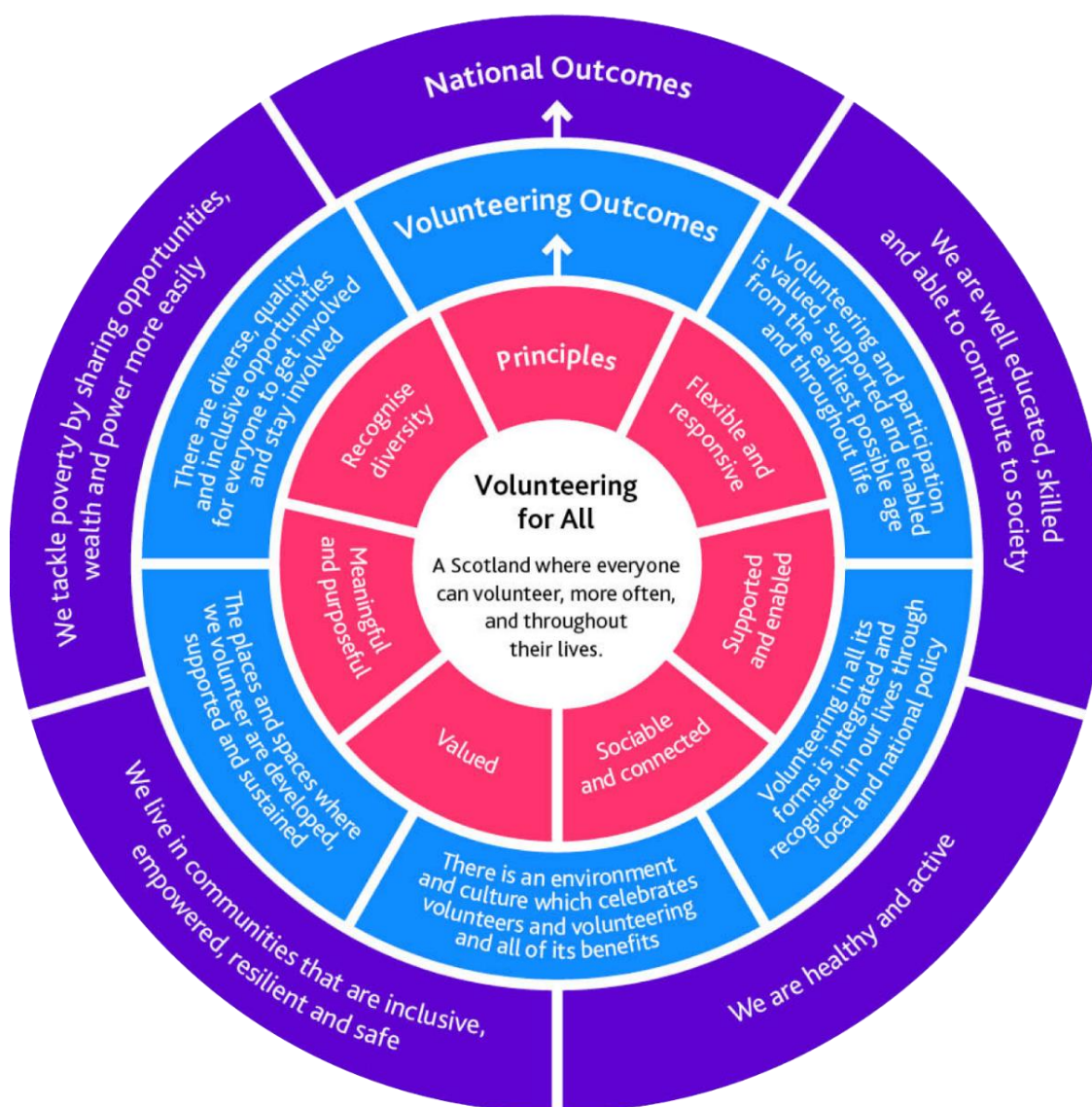
- a) Demonstrating our commitment and support or VAP both internally and externally.
- b) Raising awareness and understanding of VAP with colleagues and volunteers.
- c) Ensuring key groups and stakeholders understand how VAP applies to them and their responsibilities in implementing it.
- d) Aligning the actions outlined within VAP with our volunteering operational plans and strategy.”

Chest Heart & Stroke Scotland

Outcomes or Principles

However you decide to structure your plan, it is a good idea to start with what you want to achieve. Why are you engaging volunteers? What difference would you like them to make? What difference do you want to make to ensure your volunteers have a positive experience? These questions will help you to identify

The Volunteering Action Plan is built upon the outcomes identified in the [Volunteering for All framework](#), published in 2019. This framework maps the 5 volunteering outcomes to the [National Outcomes](#).



A good first step for ensuring that your own volunteering plan or strategy aligns with the Volunteering Action Plan is to reference the Volunteering for All outcomes within your own outcomes. Another option is to use the 5 Volunteering for All principles as headings in your plan or strategy to ensure that your actions will promote better volunteer experiences.

Aligning Actions

The next step is to read the Plan and identify any actions or themes which align with your organisation's priorities. The Plan contains 47 actions in total but some of these are quite high level and are not likely to be relevant for you. However, it might be possible to reinterpret an action to make it fit your priorities whilst also supporting the implementation of the Volunteering Action Plan.

Another option is to focus on the cross-cutting themes of the Plan and identify your own actions which work within those.

We have identified some of the Plan's actions that are likely to be relevant for volunteering involving organisations and how you might include or reinterpret these in your own plans.

No.	Volunteering Action Plan Action	Possible Volunteer Involving Organisation Interpretation
4	Organising for policy success through a Policy Champions Network, developed and supported by the Scottish Government and Volunteer Scotland, with representation from across the volunteering sector.	Commit to getting involved with the Policy Champions Network, sharing data or case studies on systemic barriers that could be used to influence decision-makers.
12	Build Voice capacity through embedding Voice (especially volunteers' voice) into key decision-making structures and building 'voice gathering' capacity (developing skills, educating and providing guides for individuals and organisations).	Implement a mechanism for volunteers to share feedback on their experience, and commit to using this information to implement changes. You can also use this evidence to influence change in your own organisation about resource or capacity.
19	Supporting Digital practice and Digital access in volunteering by helping organisations to apply digital tools and share best practice; which includes signposting to existing support (from SCVO and others) that increases use of digital generally; and providing guidance to create accessible content around a volunteering programme.	Identify actions for improving digital accessibility for your volunteers, including access to IT training, invest in digital networking opportunities for volunteers and providing roles which support online delivery.

25	Encourage people to consider volunteering through tailored, comprehensive and accessible information and guidance that addresses key questions for non-volunteers.	Review your recruitment and selection materials/processes to ensure that they are accessible and transparent.
32	Volunteering Opportunities by lifestage through collating, reviewing and recommending changes based on motivations and needs at each life stage, including employer supported volunteering and intergenerational activity.	Identify or develop specific roles which reflect the motivations and needs of volunteers at particular lifestages and implement targeted recruitment strategies. Implement opportunities for sustainable employer supported volunteering and/or intergenerational activity.
41	Fair Volunteering. Reinforce the distinction between volunteering and paid employment by reviewing and relaunching the Volunteer Charter, introducing fair volunteering principles, and reinforcing the importance of paying expenses amongst others	Ensure that your organisation is committed to the principles of the Volunteer Charter, including assessing each new role for propriety and paying expenses in a fair and timely manner.
43	Build knowledge, skills and capacity in inclusive volunteering through practical resources, training and peer support.	Commit to building your knowledge of inclusive volunteering practices through training, networking and peer support
45	The right level of bureaucracy through understanding where bureaucracy can be streamlined (with relevance to VIOs, infrastructure bodies, funders, and others) and the application and impact for different types of volunteers / volunteering.	Review your volunteering processes to ensure that you are not creating unnecessary barriers to volunteers. Again, commit to finding out about new and innovative approaches which limit bureaucracy.
47	Improve and widen the uptake of standards of practice through the increased promotion of 'a quality pipeline' which includes the Volunteer Charter, Volunteer Friendly (VF) and Investing in Volunteers (IiV). Assess potential for 'QA marked' opportunities.	Commit to work towards a relevant quality standard such as Volunteer Friendly, Investing in Volunteers and Quality in Befriending . This will provide an opportunity to review your whole approach to volunteering, and provide opportunities to network with others going through the process.

Get Involved!

You can also commit to supporting the wider implementation of the Volunteering Action Plan in several ways.

Sign Up

If you have not done so already, sign up for updates on the Volunteering Action Plan by visiting the website. This is a living plan and we will be providing regular updates as the plan grows and evolves. You don't want to miss out!

Volunteer Scotland and the Scottish Government are in the process of establishing a range of groups and networks to support the implementation of the plan. There will be other groups set up during the lifecycle of the Plan to achieve specific actions.

Spread the Word

Share your commitment to the Plan with your volunteers or on your social media channels to encourage others to get involved.

You can find guidance on how to use the Action Plan can be found <https://volunteeringactionplan.co.uk/living-the-plan/>

Join the Cross Party Group on Volunteering

Volunteer Scotland provides the secretariat for the Cross Party Group (CPG) on Volunteering at the Scottish Parliament. A CPG provides regular opportunities to influence MSPs, and other relevant stakeholders on a particular theme. The CPG currently has two MSP conveners - Jeremy Balfour MSP (Conservative) and Foyso Choudhury (Labour), with Fulton McGregor MSP (SNP) as vice convener.

For more information on the CPG and how to get involved, email Margaret Starkie on margaret.starkie@volunteerscotland.org.uk

“This living plan is our map to a brighter future for volunteering in Scotland. There is a long road ahead. We invite you to join us on the journey.”

Alan Stevenson, CEO Volunteer Scotland



volunteeringactionplan.co.uk

#VolunteeringActionPlan