



Volunteering in Scotland

A guide to getting started



Volunteer Development
SCOTLAND

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Foreword

The working ethos at Standard Life is underpinned by traditional values such as honesty, prudence, integrity and an ethic of working for customers. But this should not be taken as corporate stodginess - we can and are doing new things.

Standard Life is aware of its responsibilities to the wider community and takes this extremely seriously. As a mutual company if people give money to us, it is improper to then give the money to charity. However, it is also wrong for us to be distanced from activities taking place in the community around us.

We have a thriving employer-supported volunteering programme in place which allows our staff to get involved in the community. In doing this they are highly valued by the community, yet it also helps them to develop as people, as it provides them with experiences they wouldn't necessarily get in the workplace.

Currently, around 10 new members of staff take on board a volunteering challenge each month through this programme, whilst many others are involved through their own arrangements. Teamwork is very important in Standard Life and an excellent way of building team spirit is for our staff to work on volunteering challenges together. There are a whole range of team challenges available from tidying a garden to decorating a children's playroom. They help to improve teamwork but they are also fun and give a real sense of achievement.

Standard Life is delighted to be involved with sponsoring Volunteers Week and I would like to take this opportunity to wish every reader, volunteer and potential volunteer, success in the work they do with their community.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'J. Stretton'. The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal line extending from the end.

Jim Stretton

Chief Executive Standard Life

Volunteering in Scotland

Volunteering is one of Scotland's greatest success stories. The facts speak for themselves:

- 50% of the adult population volunteer
- volunteering is on the increase
- Scotland has the highest rate of volunteering in the UK

The idea of volunteering is simplicity itself. People give of their time to help to do things which matter to them and their communities. The scale, range and value of what is achieved is huge. It's only when we add up the value of an individual's gift of time that we realise just how much is given - an estimated 12 million hours a week in Scotland. This is a resource to be taken seriously and a powerful statement about citizenship and community.

Everyone has something to give - their time, skills and experience and there is no shortage of people and organisations eager for help. We can only give you a small selection of the many organisations who need your help. As you read through this guide I hope you will see how you too can join Scotland's ever-increasing numbers of volunteers.



“Everyone has something to give”

Liz Burns OBE

Director Volunteer Development Scotland



Why volunteer?

Ten good reasons

- 1 • get involved in something that's great fun and enjoyable
- 2 • feel you are contributing to something worthwhile
- 3 • share or expand a hobby or interest
- 4 • use your free time in a useful way
- 5 • gain experience for work or further education
- 6 • add to your CV
- 7 • learn new skills and use the skills you already have
- 8 • gain new experiences
- 9 • build your self-confidence
- 10 • meet people and make new friends



Voluntary work is carried out by people who care about others, about their community and the world about them. So much vital work would not be done if it were not for people's willingness to give freely of their time.

No matter who you are and what you do, you will have skills and experience that can benefit others and your expertise and willingness to help will be appreciated whatever voluntary work you do.

To give just a little time is all that's needed to be a volunteer.

Although there is no payment for voluntary work you should be able to recover any relevant expenses incurred. But there are other rewards - the satisfaction of doing a good job, the stimulation of taking on a challenge and the appreciation of people you've helped. Volunteering can enrich your life in many ways. It can also be a good way of making a new circle of friends and can lead to a new career.

Quite simply, volunteering should be a pleasant and rewarding experience for all concerned. That means choosing something you enjoy doing and that fits in with your lifestyle.

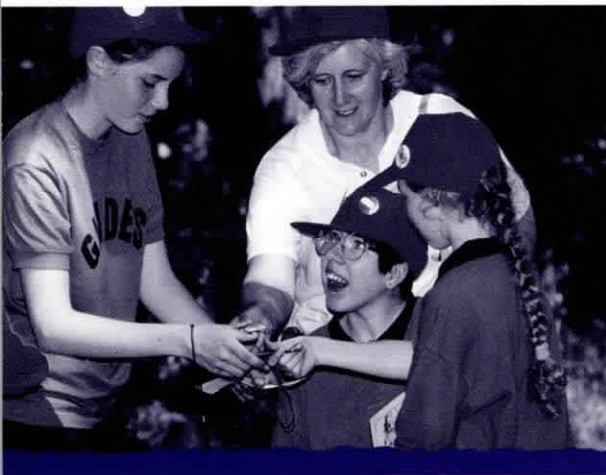
There are literally thousands of ways in which you can be a volunteer. This Guide lists just some of them. To find out more contact your local volunteer bureau, the organisations listed or Volunteer Development Scotland's Information Service.

“No matter who you are and what you do, you will have skills and experience that can benefit others”

Why Volunteer?

Children, families and young people

Childhood and early adulthood are times of great changes and increasing demands. The encouragement and support of an enthusiastic volunteer can have a lasting, positive impact on the life of a young person. If you have a special skill or interest you may well be able to pass on your knowledge.



There is a huge range of opportunities for those who want to volunteer to help children and young people. In most cases no formal qualifications are needed, just a natural ability to relate sympathetically and patiently to younger

“In most cases no formal qualifications are needed...”

people. The work usually involves helping with play, sport and crafts and providing services like befriending, counselling or tutoring. You will need to think about whether you would prefer to help with a particular age group - pre-school, primary school-age, young people or families.

Most areas have organisations and projects which provide social contact and activities for children. Information is usually available from education and social work departments, community education services and libraries. Examples of the type of areas you could become involved with include: pre-school - toddler groups, playgroups and family centres; school age - holiday playschemes, out of school groups, and youth clubs.

Some schools welcome volunteers to help with coaching and mentoring and work as a member of a school board or parent teacher association is carried out on a voluntary basis.

Could your family take in a school student from overseas for a year? At Youth for Understanding, a charity which organises international educational exchanges for 15 - 18 year olds, families can volunteer to act as host to foreign students. Volunteers can also speak at schools about the work of the charity, and become area representatives.

Or could you assist children and families in need? NCH Action for Children provides support for homeless young people, and care for children under five, for those affected by family instability, and for children with disabilities.

Contacts

Action for Sick Children
15 Smith's Place
Edinburgh EH6 8NT
Tel: 0131 553 6553

ChildLine Scotland
18 Albion Street
Glasgow G1 1LH
Tel: 0141 552 1123

Children's Hospice Association Scotland
18 Hanover Street
Edinburgh EH2 2EN
Tel: 0131 226 4933

Guide Association Scotland
16 Coates Crescent
Edinburgh EH3 7AH
Tel: 0131 226 4511

NCH Action for Children, Scotland
17 Newton Place
Glasgow G3 7PY
Tel: 0141 332 4041

Scout Association - Scottish Council
Fordell Firs, Hillend
Dunfermline KY11 5HQ
Tel: 01383 419073

Youth Clubs Scotland
Balfour House, 19
Bonnington Grove
Edinburgh EH6 4BL
Tel: 0131 554 2561

Youth for Understanding
Unit 1-D-3, Templeton
Business Centre
Glasgow G40 1DA
Tel: 0141 556 1116

Volunteers help with advice, befriending, driving, escorting, and play.

ChildLine is a free, confidential telephone counselling helpline for children and young people with any problem. It's counsellors are based in Glasgow but the service and its fundraising effort covers the whole country. Volunteers should be over 18 and more male and minority ethnic community volunteers are particularly needed.

Not to be forgotten, however, the traditional and uniformed youth organisations still provide great opportunities for volunteers who would like to assist in teaching young people new skills. Scouts, Guides, and many others, play a large part in the lives of many young people, and have adapted to meet the challenge of changing times. Within these organisations, the range of activities volunteers can get involved in is huge, from drama and crafts to training and tutoring.

When considering this area of volunteering you should know that any volunteer who will have substantial access to children or young people may be subject to police checks. In some cases it is a legal requirement to carry these out. The volunteer's permission is required before any check is made.



Older people

Many people keep an eye on an older neighbour or relative, making time for a chat or checking they are up and about. This informal help can sometimes lead to a more regular commitment to a project or an organisation.

A wide variety of opportunities exist to provide welcome support for older people.

There are clubs for older people of one kind or another throughout the country - lunch clubs, drop-in and day centres and groups that meet for specific purposes. Some are organised by older people themselves, others run by social work departments, community education services or organisations like Age Concern or the Women's Royal Voluntary Service. All kinds of help is usually appreciated to assist with games, meals, teas and coffees, or to entertain and run activity sessions.

Alzheimer Scotland helps people with dementia and their carers and has a 24 hour helpline. Volunteers provide advice, advocacy and other services. Helpline volunteers must be over 18 and can work from home.

Getting out of the house to attend appointments can be a real problem for those with mobility difficulties. Some organisations need drivers and escorts for minibuses, others have transport schemes where drivers use their own cars.

“A wide variety of opportunities exist to provide welcome support for older people.”

Isolation and loneliness can be a major hardship for some older people. Volunteer visiting or befriending schemes for people in their own or residential homes or long stay hospitals exist throughout Scotland.

Advice, information and counselling services specifically targeted at older people are provided through different agencies in different areas. To find out more about volunteer schemes in your area contact Age Concern Scotland.

Respite services to carers are arranged differently from area to area. In some parts of the country volunteer schemes give carers that desperately needed break while in other parts sessional workers or day care is used. If you are interested in respite care your first line of enquiry should be your local social work department.



Older
people

Contacts

Abbeyfield Society of Scotland

15 West Maitland Street
Edinburgh EH12 8EA
Tel: 0131 225 7801

Age Concern Scotland

113 Rose Street
Edinburgh EH2 3DT
Tel: 0131 220 3345

Alzheimer Scotland -

Action on Dementia
22 Drumsheugh Gardens
Edinburgh EH3 7RN
Tel: 0131 243 1453

British Red Cross

204 Bath Street
Glasgow G2 4HL
Tel: 0141 332 9591

Carers National Association (Scotland)

162 Buchanan Street
Glasgow G1 2LL
Tel: 0141 333 9495

Crossroads (Scotland) Care Attendant Schemes

24 George Square
Glasgow G2 1EG
Tel: 0141 226 3793

Help the Aged

Heriot House
Heriot Hill Terrace
Edinburgh EH7 4DY
Tel: 0131 556 4666

WRVS

44 Albany Street
Edinburgh EH12 5EL
Tel: 0131 558 8028

LOCAL INFORMATION

Check the telephone directory under the name of your local council for the social work or community education department.

Volunteering in the Health Service

Hospitals and doctors' surgeries can be daunting places for all of us, whether visiting friends or relatives, or as a patient. Having a friendly face to greet us, someone to talk to us while in the waiting room, or books brought round on a trolley can make all the difference, even to a short stay.

The Women's Royal Voluntary Service, the Red Cross and hospital support groups always need volunteers to help with a huge range of voluntary activities in NHS hospitals and in the community. As a volunteer you could help fundraise; welcome patients; organise and take part in activities such as running shops, restaurants, flower stalls; take patients on outings; deliver books on the wards; be involved in the social, personal and spiritual care of patients through befriending, advocacy, providing legal and benefits advice, reading and letter writing, and teaching arts and crafts; support health services by assisting with health promotion campaigns, providing complementary therapies such as reflexology and aromatherapy, and giving of your time to support patients and their families.

For children especially, spending time away from home and family can be frightening.

Radio Lollipop has two radio stations in Scotland, in Edinburgh and Glasgow. The stations are run entirely by volunteers, who spend at least 2 hours a week with the children.

The volunteers are given plenty of training - in play, confidentiality, hospital do's and don'ts and coping with bereavement - and after 6 months they can go on to train in radio skills. Lollipop is much more than a radio station. The children and their families come to rely so much on this support that after going home they often stay in touch - some even return as volunteers when they are old enough.

"It is well demonstrated that play is one of the best therapies for children recovering from illness. The enthusiastic working of the Radio Lollipop volunteers has surpassed even my expectations." Gordon MacKinlay, Consultant Paediatric Surgeon, Edinburgh Sick Children's Trust

You too can help. As the National Health Service celebrates its 50th birthday why not join in by becoming a volunteer? Contact your local hospital or hospice and ask for the Voluntary Services Manager or the main contact person for volunteers. Alternatively get in touch with one of the organisations listed or your local volunteer bureaux.

Contacts

Hospital support groups:
contact your local hospital or hospice

WRVS
44 Albany Street
Edinburgh EH1 3QR
Tel: 0131 558 8028

British Red Cross
204 Bath Street
Glasgow G2 4HL
Tel: 0141 332 9591

**MacMillan Cancer Relief
Office for Scotland**
9 Castle Terrace
Edinburgh EH1 2DP
Tel: 0131 229 3276

Radio Lollipop
Edinburgh Sick Children's Trust
Tel: 0131 668 3097

Yorkhill NHS Trust
Glasgow
Tel: 0141 201 0781

**Scottish National Blood
Transfusion Service**
21 Ellen Glen Road
Edinburgh EH17 7QT
Tel : 0131 664 2317

**St. Andrew's Ambulance
Association**
St. Andrews House
48 Milton Street
Glasgow G4 0HR
Tel: 0141 332 4031



"As a volunteer you could help fundraise; welcome patients; organise and take part in activities..."

*Volunteering in
the Health
Service*

Conservation and the environment

Awareness of the need to protect and conserve our environment has never been greater. More and more people are finding that rolling up their sleeves and enjoying contact with nature is one of the most rewarding ways of volunteering.

The Scottish Wildlife Trust manages over 100 nature reserves throughout Scotland. One of these reserves is the Jupiter Urban Wildlife Centre established in partnership with Zeneca in Grangemouth. Since 1991 a patch of derelict land has been transformed into a haven for wildlife and an invaluable green space for local people. The creative conservation of Jupiter continues to depend on an enthusiastic volunteer workforce from the local community. Together young and old work on organic wildlife gardens, create and manage habitats and give the urban wildlife of Grangemouth somewhere to flourish. The message from Wildlife Trust is simple "Whether you are green fingered, creative or just enjoy lending a hand and working outdoors, we can always use your help"

Scottish Conservation Projects supports and promotes practical outdoor conservation in Scotland including the management of nature reserves, the improvement of public amenities and access to the countryside, the environmental renewal of Scottish towns and cities, and increasing appreciation of Scotland's natural heritage. Around 5,500 volunteers are needed annually mostly between March and October to work on residential and non-residential outdoor projects. Training in tree planting, dry stone dyking, fencing and habitat management is given.

The RSPB (Royal Society for the Protection of Birds) takes action to protect wild birds and the environment. It depends on support from dedicated volunteers who work to achieve a healthy environment rich in birds and other wildlife. For instance, volunteers play a vital role in protecting ospreys and red kites in the UK; help to manage 130 RSPB nature reserves for wildlife; encourage gardeners to buy peat alternatives and save peat bogs; and help tens of thousands of people to enjoy wildlife at first hand. Put simply, the RSPB says it couldn't manage without its volunteers "There is always more to do and we urgently need more help".

The National Trust for Scotland runs over 80 properties and more than 80,000 acres of land which are open to the public. Volunteers can work for one or two weeks on a seasonal basis to carry out practical conservation work on NTS properties such as fencing, footpath repair and tree planting or take part in on-going weekend activities.



Contacts

National Trust for Scotland
Conservation Volunteers
5 Charlotte Square
Edinburgh EH2 4DU
Tel: 0131 243 9423

Royal Society for the
Protection of Birds
17 Regent Terrace
Edinburgh EH7 5BN
Tel: 0131 557 3136

Scottish Wildlife Trust
Cramond House
Kirk Cramond
Cramond Glebe Road
Edinburgh EH4 6NS
Tel: 0131 312 7765

Scottish Conservation
Projects
Balallan House
24 Allan Park
Stirling FK8 2QG
Tel: 01786 479697

Conservation and the environment



"More and more people are finding that contact with nature is one of the most rewarding ways of volunteering."

Volunteering with animals

If you are concerned about animals and their welfare, helping to look after pets, reduce neglect and cruelty and protect and preserve wildlife is one of the most rewarding ways to show how you care.

Providing advice to pet owners; helping with the short-term care of the pets of older people; working on wildlife reserves; providing a hospital visiting scheme; shop work and fundraising; and even giving veterinary assistance, are just some of the many ways in which animal charities need

volunteer help.

Canine Concern Scotland Trust promotes responsible and caring dog ownership and runs the Therapet pet visiting scheme throughout Scotland. Through no fault of their own many people find themselves deprived of the companionship of a

much loved dog. It may be they have had to go into sheltered housing, residential accommodation, or are simply no longer able to care for a pet properly. Therapet hopes to fill a little of the gap in their lives by providing a voluntary service of dog owners, who, with their dogs, are willing to spend an hour or two visiting homes, hospitals or individuals on a regular basis.

Marjory Henley Price from Therapet says "Sadly for some residents or patients the Therapets are their only visitors. Sometimes small miracles occur - people who never speak magically come to life at the appearance of a dog in a ward. The service is free and has proved so popular that what we need more than anything else is more volunteers"

The Pet Fostering Service Scotland needs volunteers throughout Scotland to offer short term care to look after animals if their owners are unable to do so. Locally based volunteer organisers recruit people who may wish to be 'pet owners' for short periods of time. The pets are cared for in the homes of the volunteers themselves, whilst the pet's owner meets the feeding costs.

Contacts

Canine Concern Scotland Trust and Therapet
Minard House, Machrihanish,
by Campbeltown
Argyll PA28 6PZ.
Tel: 01586 810314

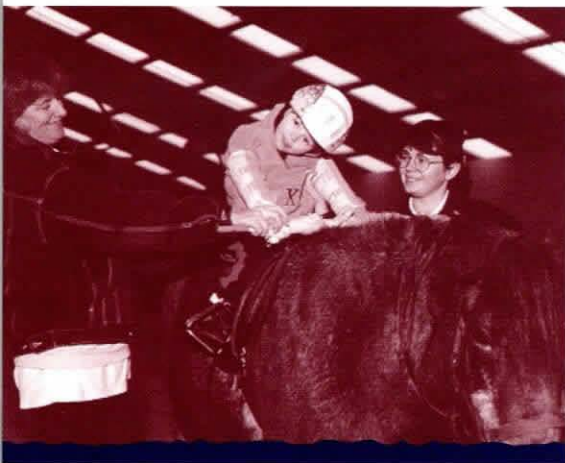
Cats Protection League
17 Kings Road
Horsham
RH13 5PN
Tel: 01403 221900

PDSA
Design House
7 Great Minster Street
Winchester SO23 9HA
Tel: 0800 854194

Pet Fostering Service Scotland
PO Box 6
Callander FK17 8ZU
Tel: 01506 843114

An essential element of the work of the Cats Protection League is educating the public on cat welfare issues. The task is enormous as every year volunteers throughout the UK help in the work to rescue and re-home over 150,000 unwanted cats and kittens.

The PDSA (People's Dispensary for Sick Animals) provides free veterinary treatment for qualifying pet owners who cannot afford private veterinary fees. The charity has veterinary centres, shops, fundraising offices and supporter groups throughout Scotland.



"Therapet hopes to fill a little of the gap in their lives by providing a voluntary service of dog owners, who, with their dogs, are willing to spend an hour or two visiting..."

Volunteering
with animals

Volunteers - the real champions of sport

Volunteers could be said to be the "real champions" of sport. Without the dedication of administrators, officials and coaches, the vast array of sporting opportunities available in Scotland simply wouldn't exist. In short, volunteers have a crucial role to play in sport. But why should you get involved?

There are lots of reasons. Not only will you be helping other people, but you'll find there are lots of benefits to you personally. You might share a love of sport with other people, gain experience for your work or further education, add to your CV, make the most of your particular skills and learn new ones, get involved in something fun and worthwhile, gain confidence and self esteem, or simply meet people and make new friends. Volunteers come from all age groups and all

sectors of society. You could be at school, a student, a career person, or retired with some spare time on your hands.

Volunteers are the lifeblood of major sporting events, and it's not unusual to find the number of volunteers outweighing the number of competitors.



You don't always have to take part in sport to be involved, you can help out with the administration, or as a coach, referee or official. Everyone has something to offer - it might be organising an office, talking on the phone or getting on well with people.

Volunteers too play a major role in the support of sport for people with disabilities. In particular the Scottish Sports Association for People with a Disability relies heavily on support from volunteers.

There are over 70 different sports to choose from in Scotland - from hockey to sub-aqua, skiing to petanque and not all are competitive. Lots of people take part in sport just for fun. Scotland also has a network of over 50 local Sports Councils and these voluntary bodies represent the views and opinions of sports clubs all over Scotland.



"The opportunity for disabled sports people hasn't arrived overnight. The competitors have worked incredibly hard to raise standards, and so have thousands of volunteers."

Barry Schofield, General Secretary, The British Paralympic Association

Contacts

Scottish Sports Council
Caledonia House
South Gyle
Edinburgh EH12 9DQ
Tel: 0131 317 7200.

Scottish Sports Council for People with a Disability
Fife Institute of P.&R.E.
Viewfield Road
Glenrothes
KY6 2RB
Tel: 01592 415700

Scottish Association of Local Sports Councils (SALSC)
c/o 37 Donibristle Gardens
Dalgety Bay
Fife KY11 5NQ
Tel: 01383 820950

Scottish Sports Association (SSA)
Caledonia House
South Gyle
Edinburgh EH12 9DQ
Tel: 0131 339 8785

Advice and counselling

Giving practical and emotional support in a crisis, pleading the case for someone unable to do it for themselves, or offering advice and information are some of the many ways in which volunteers lend a sympathetic ear and a helping hand.

The areas you can get involved in are very varied. They may be to do with legal rights, consoling bereaved parents, talking through marital problems or advising women or children that have been abused. The volunteers who assist often provide their service through telephone helplines and usually have extensive training in the type of counselling or advice work they have chosen. The training can be time consuming but the eventual rewards can be immense to both clients and volunteers.

There are many ways to become involved. Here are just a few.

Citizens Advice Bureaux service is Scotland's largest independent advice agency - over one in ten people in Scotland take their problems to one of the 150 CAB service points every year. The CAB gives free, independent, impartial and confidential advice on subjects such as benefits, debt, consumer matters, employment, housing, tax and legal issues. John Crotch, the Chair of Citizens Advice Scotland says "Over 90% of people in the service are volunteers. Last year 2,500 people volunteered over 700,000 hours. The service depends on volunteers and their commitment, dedication, breadth of experience and enthusiasm". Volunteer roles in the CAB include helping with office administration, interviewing and giving advice to clients, undertaking social policy work and helping on a management committee. To be a CAB volunteer you need to be a good listener, willing to learn, enjoy helping others, be able to commit yourself to a certain number of hours a week, and support equal opportunities.

Marriage Counselling Scotland promotes and co-ordinates a confidential counselling service to married people and others in intimate personal relationships.

Cruse - Bereavement provides a nationwide counselling, information and social support service to anyone who has been bereaved

The Scottish Council on Alcohol calls on volunteer help to reduce alcohol misuse in the community

Volunteers at the Samaritans are available at any hour of the day or night to befriend those passing through personal crises and in imminent danger of taking their own lives and those at DIAL Scotland (Disablement Information and Advice Line) help people with disabilities of all ages and their carers.

"The areas you can get involved in are very varied. They may be to do with legal rights, consoling bereaved parents, talking through marital problems or advising women or children that have been abused."

Advice and counselling



Contacts

Citizens Advice Bureaux:

See your local telephone directory

Cruse - Bereavement

33-35 Boswall Parkway
Edinburgh EH5 2BR
Tel: 0131 551 1511

DIAL Scotland

Braid House
Labrador Avenue
Howden East
Livingston EH54 6BU
Tel: 01506 433468

Marriage Counselling Scotland

105 Hanover Street
Edinburgh EH2 1DJ
Tel: 0131 225 5006

Samaritans:

See your local telephone directory

Scottish Council on Alcohol

2nd Floor
166 Buchanan Street
Glasgow
Tel: 0141 333 9677

Volunteering in law, justice and crime

Sitting on Children's Panels, supporting the victims of crime, giving advice and information to witnesses attending court, and visiting prisoners and their families, are just some of the many ways in which volunteer help is needed. Legal qualifications are not usually required for the kinds of voluntary work listed below and full training is offered by all the organisations mentioned.

Children's Hearings are unique to Scotland. Volunteers sit on panels to give guidance on individual cases involving child welfare, juvenile crime, child abuse and neglect. To find out more about becoming a volunteer member of a Children's Panel in your area you can contact your local Reporter to the Children's Panel or Children's Panel Advisory Committee. The Chief Executive's office of your local authority should be able to help with information.

Every year people become victims of violent crimes with often devastating effects. It is often thanks to the immediate help of victim support volunteers that victims are able to put their life back together again. One victim said:

"Without my victim support volunteer I wouldn't have been able to carry on. She took all the pressure off me. I was a physical and emotional wreck and she was the only one who didn't seem shocked or upset by the state I was in. She was my emotional strength in the first few days."

Trained volunteers contact people following a crime to offer free, confidential support and advice. Volunteers are also needed to act as committee members, fundraisers or office assistants to keep local schemes running.

Victim Support Scotland provides approved volunteers' training spread over several weeks followed by a period of supervised visiting. Volunteers also have the on-going support of a local co-ordinator. Enquires can be made to Victim Support Scotland or directly to local schemes (see local telephone directory).

Attending court and giving evidence can be a very gruelling experience for victims and witnesses of crime. For some victims a court appearance can provoke anxiety and confusion.

Becoming a specially trained volunteer to support and give advice to both victims and witnesses is a very practical way of meeting witnesses' needs and will interest anyone who would like to work in a formal court environment.

A number of Victim Support Scotland witness support projects exist in different parts of Scotland.

Prison Fellowship Scotland supports the work of the churches and chaplains in serving the needs of prisoners, ex-prisoners and their families. The work carried out by volunteers

includes befriending, helplines, office work, training, and visiting prisoners.

Volunteering with Helping Offenders, Prisoners & their Families (HOPE) involves offering help and support to those in prison, to offenders in the community and to the families of prisoners and offenders.

"Children's Hearings are unique to Scotland. Volunteers sit on panels to give guidance on individual cases involving child welfare, juvenile crime, child abuse and neglect."

Volunteering in law, justice and crime

Contacts

Victim Support Scotland

14 Frederick St
Edinburgh EH2 2HB
Tel: 0131 225 7779

The Witness Support Projects can be contacted by phoning:

Ayr: 01292 619 122
Hamilton: 01698 281 152
Kirkcaldy: 01592 646 391

Prison Fellowship Scotland

P O Box 366
101 Ellesmere St.,
Glasgow G22 5QS
Tel: 0141 332 8870

HOPE

18 Stevenson St
Calton
Glasgow G40 2ST
Tel: 0141 553 2545

Children's Panels:

Contact your local authority



Volunteering overseas

People decide to undertake voluntary work overseas for many different reasons. Some take time off between school and further study or see it as a career break. Unemployed people may see it as an opportunity to gain valuable experience whilst those ending their paid working lives early may be looking for a new challenge. Alternatively, a holiday with a purpose, or summer camp might be the most appropriate choice.

Organisations vary in their requirements and what they offer. Some are looking for people with particular skills and experience - often related to health, education, technology or welfare. Others require no prior skills and experience, because the desire to give a commitment to others is the most important thing.

Training is particularly important for overseas voluntary work. Many organisations run 'orientation weekends' and training sessions for prospective volunteers. Check what is on offer very carefully.

If you intend doing voluntary work in Third World or in some eastern European countries you should remember to check medical aspects. Information on this should be available from the organisations themselves but a range of free leaflets and advice is also available from your GP.

Once you get there, you should feel confident that the organisation provides adequate back-up and cover in case of an emergency. Make sure you know what support they provide 'on the ground' before you leave.

Many organisations expect volunteers to raise fairly large sums of money to cover things like travel. If you wish to work for one of them, your commitment to the project may have to begin well in advance while you do your fundraising. Allow plenty of time for this.

Some agencies take quite some time to process applications, or only consider them once a year. Make sure you apply as far in advance as possible and don't expect to be on your way in a couple of weeks. If you are talking about a commitment of months, or even years, the organisation will expect you to demonstrate that you have really thought the matter through, know what you are letting yourself in for and are ready to meet the challenge.

Finally, ask the organisation you are considering to give you the names of some people who have already worked with them. Some organisations are very keen on this kind of feedback and build it into their training and induction.

Contacts

Concern Worldwide Scotland
Level 2, 80 Buchanan Street
Glasgow G1 3HA
Tel: 0141 221 3610

Concordia (YSV) Limited
8 Brunswick Place
Hove BN3 1ET
Tel: 01273 772086

International Voluntary Service Scotland
7 Upper Bow
Edinburgh EH1 2JN
Tel: 0131 226 6722

Project Trust
The Hebridean Centre
Isle of Coll
Argyll PA78 6TE
Tel: 0187 9230 444

QUISP
Friends House
173-177 Euston Road
London NW1 2BJ
Tel: 0171 663 1042

Raleigh International
27 Parsons Green Lane
London SW6 4HZ
Tel: 0171 371 8585

Returned Volunteer Action
1 Armwell Street
London EC1R
Tel: 0171 278 0804

Scottish Churches World Exchange
6a Randolph Place
Edinburgh EH3 7TE
Tel: 0131 225 8115

Voluntary Service Overseas (VSO)
9 Minto Street
Edinburgh EH9 1RG
Tel: 0131 667 3073

“Many organisations run ‘orientation weekends’ and training sessions for prospective volunteers. Check what is on offer very carefully.”

Volunteering overseas



Employer Supported Volunteering

An increasing number of companies throughout Scotland are building links with their local communities through encouraging and supporting their employees to volunteer.

They do this by giving time off from work and other forms of help to support volunteers. Companies gain through improving their image in the community and from the new skills acquired by their employees, and the community gains by being able to access resources which might not otherwise be available to them.

A partnership of voluntary, public, and private sector organisations called SEVI (Scottish Employee Volunteering Initiative) has been set up to promote employer supported volunteering at national and local levels. It provides advice and assistance to companies who want to have a volunteering programme for their employees and encourages voluntary and community organisations to approach businesses with volunteering opportunities.

Some of these opportunities come in the form of one-off time-limited challenges for an individual or staff team from a company to complete on behalf of a voluntary group. An annual award is given to the best examples of partnership between a business and a voluntary organisation and many of Scotland's leading companies have been involved. Edinburgh Cyrenians in partnership with Standard Life, and the North Lanarkshire Volunteering Development Agency in partnership with the Inland Revenue in Cumbernauld have both been recent winners.

If you or your company would like more information about employer supported volunteering contact Volunteer Development Scotland or your local volunteer bureaux.

“Companies gain through improving their image in the community and from the new skills acquired by their employees, and the community gains by being able to access resources which might not otherwise be available to them.”

Employer Supported Volunteering



Volunteering and Welfare Benefits

Receiving welfare benefits should not prevent you from becoming a volunteer so long as you follow the correct procedures.

To find out more you should ask at the appropriate social security office. If you receive:

- Income Support or a Retirement Pension ask your local Social Security Office
- Jobseeker's Allowance ask your Job Centre
- Housing Benefit ask the Housing Benefit section of your local council
- Council Tax Benefit ask the Council Tax Benefit section of your local council
- Statutory Maternity Pay ask your employer

Voluntary Work Outside Great Britain

If you are planning to do voluntary work overseas and are also claiming benefit, you should contact your Job Centre or Benefits Office in good time. You should also check your position with the embassy of the country to which you are going and obtain advice from the Pensions and Overseas Benefits Directorate.

Notional Earnings

The Benefits Office may assume that as a volunteer you are being paid for your voluntary work if they consider that it would be reasonable to expect payment (called "notional earnings"). On page 6 of the leaflet FB26 (Volunteering and Part-time Working: Your Benefits, Pensions and National Insurance contributions), there is a statement which implies that this would not normally apply if you are volunteering with a charity, voluntary organisation or local social services department.

If problems arise, organisations should initially contact the Benefits Office concerned and also seek expert advice.

Jobseeker's Allowance

Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA) replaced Unemployment Benefit and Income Support for people who are unemployed. To be in receipt of JSA you have to be available for and actively seeking work.

Provided these conditions are met there is no stated limit as to the number of hours per week volunteers can volunteer and still claim JSA.

Volunteers claiming JSA should inform their local Job Centre what they are doing and if possible give details about how to contact them when they are volunteering.

A letter to the Job Centre from the volunteer's organisation may help to create a positive relationship. This letter should



refer to the actual out-of-pocket expenses paid and the organisation's understanding of the JSA regulations. It should also highlight how volunteering may help the claimant to develop skills, obtain a reference for employment etc.

Volunteers should from the outset inform the organisation they volunteer with that they may be asked to attend an interview or start a paid job at 48 hours notice.

Incapacity Benefit

This benefit is paid to people unable to do a full-time job because of sickness or disability.

Volunteers receiving this benefit may do voluntary work for up to 16 hours on average per week without it affecting their entitlement to benefit.

It is no longer possible to volunteer for more than 16 hours a week and receive this benefit, even if volunteers have the approval of their doctor.

Volunteers should inform their local Social Security and other relevant offices before starting their voluntary work and await approval before beginning their placement.

Local Differences in Interpretation

All the above regulations are subject to interpretation by adjudication officers in both local Benefits Agency offices and by the Inland Revenue. If all the steps outlined have all been followed and volunteers still have problems with benefits and/or tax, Volunteer Development Scotland, Local Volunteer Development Agencies, Volunteer Bureaux, or Citizens Advice Bureaux are well-equipped to advise on what to do next.

Further information on this topic can be found in the booklet Guidelines on Volunteers' Expenses available from Volunteer Development Scotland, ISBN 1 899301 135

Volunteering
and Welfare
Benefits

Volunteering - How to go about it

What should you ask when considering volunteering for an organisation?

About the organisation

Find out what the organisation is set up to do. Are its aims and values ones which you share? How is the organisation managed and how many staff and volunteers are there?

About the volunteering activities

What is the exact nature of the work you would be doing, where you would be working, with whom you would be working (either on your own or as part of a team) and to whom you would be responsible? Is there a job description? Find out how the volunteers' work fits in with that of paid staff. Volunteering is about enhancing services, not about replacing staff with unpaid workers.

About the time commitment

Consider how much time you have to spare and for how long. You may see voluntary work as a means of building up your CV so that you can get a job or a place on a college course. Or you may be considering a more long term commitment. Find out what the organisation expects of its volunteers and how this suits your own situation.

About expenses

While many organisations pay expenses, some do not. Ask right at the start about the organisation's position on expenses so that you are clear about what you claim for (travel, meal costs, etc). Also check how you would go about it - for example, are expenses paid weekly, monthly, in cash or by cheque, etc?

About health, safety and insurance

As a volunteer you should be protected from dangerous situations and should have the same rights in this respect as paid employees. Insurance cover for volunteers varies from organisation to organisation, and from job to job. You should be told whether your volunteering work will be covered by insurance.

About any special requirements

Some organisations take everyone who applies. Others may only want people with special skills or interests or those who are prepared to take part in some kind of training. There are organisations - particularly in sensitive areas like befriending and counselling - who insist that volunteers are specially trained to do the job. If an organisation has nothing for you, don't take it personally - there are always other opportunities. Ask for suggestions or contact other organisations listed in this booklet.

About references, etc

It is now fairly common to ask for referees when volunteers work in areas of trust. In order to make sure that children, young people or other vulnerable groups are safe from harm, prospective volunteers who will have substantial access to children or young people are usually asked to undergo a police check. Screening procedures are carried out only with the permission of the potential volunteer and organisations are usually happy to discuss what is involved.

Taking it further

If you are interested, arrange a face to face meeting or interview so that you can find out more. Remember that successful volunteering is based on the volunteer and the organisation each having a clear understanding of each other's expectations. You will be expected to make a commitment, so it is important to know exactly what you will be doing and how the organisation will support you.



*Volunteering
- How to go
about it*

Volunteer Bureaux

There are volunteer bureaux offices throughout most of Scotland. Their job is to make it easier for people to volunteer by offering a range of free and impartial services.

Information

One visit will give you information about a whole range of local volunteering opportunities. You can find out where and when volunteers are needed, if training and preparation is provided, how travel expenses are paid, what checks may be made on prospective volunteers, and whether disabled access is in place or not.

Advice

Staff will be happy to spend time with you helping you to think about what you hope to gain from volunteering, the kind of activities you enjoy and what you have to offer. You will be able to explore the kind of volunteer opportunities best suited to your own circumstances.

Introduction

Volunteer Bureaux can put you in touch with the organisations that need you. Some will make arrangements for you to visit an organisation giving you a formal introduction.

Support

Volunteer bureaux offer support to people throughout their volunteering. They are always available to give you information about other or new volunteer opportunities. A number hold social events for volunteers and a few organise training opportunities.

Taking the first step

Get in touch with your local volunteer bureaux. You will probably be invited in for a chat. Do not worry about being put under pressure to volunteer - you will be given time to think about volunteering before making a commitment. The staff will be happy to put you in touch with appropriate organisations. If things do not work out you can go back to look at other opportunities. Volunteer bureaux are there to support you throughout your involvement in volunteering and are happy for you to keep in touch with them.

A list of bureaux is included as an insert to this booklet

Other Volunteering Opportunities

Council Social Work Departments

Some social work departments have volunteer liaison officers or co-ordinators who can refer you to agencies looking for volunteers.

Libraries

Most libraries keep lists or directories of local organisations. Some might be able to provide help with where to go locally to volunteer. Some libraries use volunteers to deliver books to homebound people.

Community Centres

Your local community centre is often a good place to find out about what goes on in your own neighbourhood and whether volunteers are wanted.

Museums and Heritage Centres

Volunteer guides are often employed by museums and heritage centres. Sometimes volunteers are used in fundraising. Contact the Scottish Museums Council for information (tel: 0131 229 7465) or check your local telephone directory or yellow pages.

Education: Schools, Adult Literacy and Volunteer Tutors

Contact your local authority education or community education department to find out if volunteers are needed to work with children or young people in or out of school. Often volunteers are required for adult basic education.

Youth Information Points

Youth Information Points offer a wide variety of advice and information to young people, including different volunteering opportunities at home and further afield. To find out if there is a youth information point in your area contact Viva: Young Volunteers in Action on 0131 313 2488.

Police

The Community Services Unit of your local police force will be able to provide information about Neighbourhood Watch Schemes and perhaps other types of volunteering activities. A new volunteer service, called the Appropriate Adult service, is now being introduced to provide support for individuals with learning difficulties or mental health problems who find themselves in an interview situation with the police - information may be obtained from your Chief Constable. To find out about becoming a Special Constable, or volunteer auxiliary, contact the Personnel and Training Unit of your local police force.

Fire Brigade

In rural areas there are opportunities to volunteer for the fire service. Contact your local Fire Brigade Headquarters.

Millennium Volunteers

Millennium Volunteers is a new government funded initiative to promote volunteering among young people aged 16 - 24. For information contact your local volunteer bureaux or Volunteer Development Scotland.

Community Service Volunteers (Scotland)

CSV is a national charity which aims to tackle all areas of social need and create opportunities for people to participate actively in the community through volunteering, training, education and the media. CSV has many varied volunteering opportunities in local projects throughout Scotland. Contact: CSV (Scotland), 236 Clyde Street, Glasgow G1 4JH. Tel: 0141 204 1681

Retired Senior Volunteer Programme (RSVP)

RSVP aims to encourage everyone over 50 to participate in voluntary activities. Volunteers are supported locally under the leadership of a volunteer co-ordinator. Contact: CSV - RSVP, 3 St. James Place, Edinburgh EH1 3JH Tel: 0131 557 5905

Viva: Young Volunteers in Action

Viva is a project set up to promote volunteering to young people (ages 15 - 25) and offer information on volunteering opportunities. Contact: Viva, c/o Scottish Community Education Council, Roseberry House, 9 Haymarket Terrace, Edinburgh EH12 5EZ Tel: 0131 313 2488

Prince's Trust Volunteers (Scotland)

The aim of the Prince's Trust is to help young people to succeed through a community service based personal development programme. Contact: Prince's Trust Volunteers (Scotland), Fleming House, 7th Floor, 134 Renfrew Street, Glasgow G3 6ST Tel: 0141 331 0211

Duke of Edinburgh's Award

A challenging programme of practical, cultural and adventurous activities for young people aged 14 -25. Volunteers give support to young people, act as group leaders, instructors, supervisors etc. Contact: Duke of Edinburgh's Award, 69 Dublin Street, Edinburgh EH3 6NS Tel: 0131 556 9097

Discovery Award Association

The equivalent of the Duke of Edinburgh's Award scheme for the over 50s. Contact: Ancrum Centre for the Environment, 10 Ancrum Road, Dundee DD2 2HZ Tel: 01382 641800

SCORE

The Scottish Corps of Retired Executives maintains a register of retired people with business or management experience who are willing to offer their skills to the community. Contact: SCORE, 30 Hanover Street, Edinburgh EH2 2DR Tel: 0131 220 3001

REACH

This organisation finds places for retired or otherwise available business or professional people who want to help voluntary organisations. Contact: REACH, Bear Wharf 27, Bankside, London SE1 9DP. Tel: 0171 928 0452. Scottish contact: Dr Pat Thomas 0131 667 8992

Councils for Voluntary Service (CVS)

If there is not a volunteer bureaux in your area the local CVS may be able to help. See your local telephone directory or contact Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations, 18/19 Claremont Street, Edinburgh EH7 4QD. Tel: 0131 556 3882

Look out for other opportunities!

Contact your local volunteer bureaux or look out for adverts for volunteers in your local press.

Further Reading

Volunteering in Scotland

Directory 1997/98

ISBN 1 899301 12 7. Published by Volunteer Development Scotland, 72, Murray Place, Stirling FK8 2BX Tel: 01786 479593 Fax 01786 449285 e-mail vds@vds.org.uk Listing of national agencies in Scotland which engage volunteers with information on volunteering tasks, activities and areas of work.

Directory of National Voluntary Organisations in Scotland

10th edition. 1997 ISBN 1 870904 61 3. Published by SCVO, 18/19 Claremont Street, Edinburgh EH7 4QD Tel: 0131 556 3882 Fax 0131 556 0279.

A listing of national voluntary organisations. Also gives addresses of local Councils for Voluntary Service.

Directory of Volunteering and Employment Opportunities

2nd edition. ISBN 1 873860 71 4. Published by Directory of Social Change, 24 Stephenson Way, London NW1 2DP Tel: 0171 209 5151 Fax 0171 209 5049 Lists opportunities throughout the UK.

Fifty Plus Guide to Volunteering

Revised 1997. Published by Engage Scotland, Age Concern Scotland, Suite 1-C-1 Templeton Business Centre, Glasgow G40 1DA.

Guidance about volunteering for those considering taking it up in retirement or later life. Single copies free on receipt of a large s.a.e.

Go For It: Martyn Lewis's Essential Guide to Opportunities for Young People

Revised edition 1997. ISBN 1 852291 131 x. Youthnet production for Lennard publishing. A shortcut to the vast range of youth volunteering opportunities throughout the UK

Information Sheets on Volunteering (on Children, Families and Young people, Elderly People, Volunteering Overseas)

Published by Volunteer Development Scotland, 72, Murray Place, Stirling FK8 2BX Tel: 01786 479593 Fax 01786 449285 e-mail vds@vds.org.uk Details of volunteering agencies in specific fields. Single copies free of charge.

International Directory of Voluntary Work

ISBN 1 85458 164 3 (softback) ISBN 1 85458 165 1 (hardback). Published by Vacation Work Publications, 9 Park End Street, Oxford OX1 1HJ Tel: 01865 241978 Includes information about residential work in the UK and abroad.

Third World Directory 1997/98

ISBN 1 900360 07. Published by the Directory of Social Change, 24 Stephenson Way, London NW1 2D Tel: 0171 209 5151 Fax 0171 209 5049

Lists opportunities, organisations, regions, and countries along with types of activities.

Volunteer Work: Complete Guide to Voluntary Service

6th edition 1995. ISBN 1 898601 05 4. Published by the Central Bureau for Educational Visits and Exchanges, 10 Spring Gardens, London SW1A 2BN Tel: 0171 389 4004 Fax 0171 389 4426

Gives information about volunteering opportunities in the UK and abroad aimed mainly at younger people and students.

Who's Who in the Environment in Scotland

3rd edition 1996. ISBN 0 90915862 0. Published by the Environmental Council, 21 Elizabeth Street, London SW1W 9RP Tel: 0171 824 8411 Fax 0171 730 9941 An invaluable work for anyone interested in environmental organisations and volunteering opportunities.

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