

View this email in your browser



OCTOBER 2024

# World Volunteering Conference

*Denise Hayward, CEO, Volunteer Now*



Volunteer Now will be presenting two papers at the World Volunteering Conference in Busan, South Korea in October this year. We will be sharing our learning about cascading safeguarding training for volunteers as well as in involving older adults as volunteers. We are delighted to have been offered the opportunity to represent volunteering in Northern Ireland at this event.

The theme of the conference will be around the sustainability which comes from volunteering both in relation to the climate and also the power of renewal in our communities. Speakers from across the world will inspire the 800 delegates. The Global Network of Volunteer Leadership will also spend time reviewing the International Volunteering Declaration ahead of the [UN International Year of the Volunteer for Sustainable Development in 2026](#).

Over the coming months I will be sharing some reflections from the conference in VConnect.

---



- Keeping Children Safe: Designated Officer Training
- Measuring the Impact of Volunteering
- Keeping Adults Safe: Adult Safeguarding Champion & Appointed Person Refresher Training
- First Aid

[View Training Calendar](#)



### Positive Ageing Month

***Volunteer Now highlights the power of connecting as Positive Ageing Month kicks off across NI***

Volunteer Now, the leading voice for volunteering in Northern Ireland, is getting fully behind Positive Ageing Month this October, promoting and celebrating the positive aspects of growing older and recognising the contribution that community organisations make to older people in our society.

Events are taking place across local Council areas that welcome and encourage people age 50 and over to connect with others, particularly those who are vulnerable or who may be experiencing loneliness or disconnection.

Volunteer Now is also keen to remind people that older volunteers are crucial and that volunteering as you get older is hugely rewarding. A shining example of the many benefits of

through making phone calls. Ray has been volunteering for over 25 years and believes it is something that helps both her and the people she connects with.

“After I retired, I thought, I’m not just going to do nothing!” said Ray Wilson. “So I tried volunteering and have been doing it ever since. I keep myself involved with lots of things in the local area and the church and through Volunteer Now – it all keeps my mind active and it’s great to stay in touch with people.

“Through the befriending service, I used to visit people in the local area and have a wee chat with them but now that I don’t drive, I make phone calls instead. We still have a good old chat, I love to chat! It is something to look forward to for both me and the people on the other end, who often don’t have anybody else in their lives or are just relying on a few family members to keep in touch. There are a lot of lonely people in the world and everyone needs someone to talk to. Sometimes all people need is someone to listen.

“I am more than happy to keep volunteering and will do it for as long as I can. Age is only a number, you can keep doing your best for as long as you want to and making a difference in someone’s day is good for you and them,” Ray said.

**To find out more about Positive Ageing Month and activities in your local area and to find out about volunteering opportunities currently available in Northern Ireland, visit the [Opportunity Search](#) on our website or find more inspirational stories like Ray’s on Volunteer Now’s social media channels.**

---

## Draft Programme for Government 2024-2027

The draft Programme for Government is currently out for consultation, with a closing date of **Friday 4 November!** Volunteer Now have already been involved in the delivery of a series of engagement sessions, alongside NICVA, The Development Trust, Rural Community Network and CO3, to gather a range of feedback and collate a joint response.



We would encourage all organisations (small or large) to complete a response. We are in the process of drafting our response and are keen to hear your views on the document. Please send your thoughts and/or your organisation's response to [Andrew.Hanna@volunteernow.co.uk](mailto:Andrew.Hanna@volunteernow.co.uk), as this can aid us with our efforts and ensure all views are reflected to The Executive Office.

### About the consultation:

- [The Draft Programme for Government](#): Closes Monday 4 November
  - [Equality Impact Assessment, Child Rights Impact Assessment, Rural Needs Impact Assessment](#): All close on Monday 2 December
-



**VOLUNTEER NOW**  
connect · build · change

14.11.24 | 2.30 PM

Custom House, Belfast on Thurs 14 November at 2.30pm! Clair, who is part of the team of statisticians working in the area of voluntary activity in Department for Communities, will talk about the latest volunteering trends. You are then welcome to join us for our AGM afterwards, where we will be sharing our new Strategic Plan.

If you would like to attend, please email [Nicole.Fitzsimons@volunteernow.co.uk](mailto:Nicole.Fitzsimons@volunteernow.co.uk).



### **Election of New Trustees: *Could you be a Trustee of Volunteer Now?***

Volunteer Now's AGM is coming up on the 14 November at 2.30pm and we are keen to elect some new Trustees from our member organisations. We are looking for people who are strong supporters of volunteering, who are interested in good governance and who want to help to shape the services and support which Volunteer Now provides to volunteers and organisations.

Trustee's meetings are usually in the late afternoon once every 6 weeks for approx. 2 hours and if possible, all Trustees get involved in at least one subcommittee.

If you think this role is of interest to you, please get in touch with Denise for a chat and more details at [denise.hayward@volunteernow.co.uk](mailto:denise.hayward@volunteernow.co.uk) or call her on 07850 851814. Closing date is 8 November 2024.

Application Pack

October 2024 marks the 21st year of Cyber Security Awareness month, a reminder of the importance of managing our cyber security risks and doing all we can to protect our organisations against cyber threats.

Charities are increasingly reliant on IT and technology and are falling victim to a range of malicious cyber activity. As the [Charity Sector Threat Report](#) illustrates, losing access to this technology, having funds stolen or suffering a data breach through a cyber attack can be devastating, both financially and reputationally. NICVA have produced an article providing links to resources and advice that are available to support charities with their cyber security.



## CYBER SECURITY A W A R E N E S S M O N T H

— OCTOBER —

[Find Out More](#)



### Phishing Awareness Workshop

NICVA are running a Phishing Awareness workshop on 7 November, 11am-12pm to educate participants about the dangers of phishing attacks and how to equip them with the knowledge of how to recognise and respond to these threats effectively.

The session, delivered by the NI Cyber Security Centre will cover various phishing tactics and best practice for safeguarding personal and organisational information from these threats.

[Find Out More](#)

The background image shows a spiral-bound calendar with a pencil resting on it. The word 'Elevate' is written in large, bold, blue letters. To the right of the word is a circular graphic composed of many small, colorful dots in shades of blue, yellow, and red. Below the word 'Elevate' is the tagline 'Working together to build healthier communities' in a smaller, pink font. To the right of the graphic is the text 'Community Development Capacity Building Programme' in a pink font.

# Elevate

Working together to build healthier communities

Community Development Capacity Building Programme

## Elevate Training Dates

Elevate offers free, interactive full-day training programme focusing on community development as a way to reduce health inequalities. Participants must be available for both the morning and afternoon session of the training.

### *What will the sessions cover?*

- What are health inequalities and what do they look like in your work or community?
- The social determinants of health
- Understanding community development values
- Understanding the role of community development in reducing health inequalities

### *Who is the training for?*

This is FREE interactive training programme suitable for anyone with an interest in community development and health inequalities including staff and volunteers in voluntary organisations, community groups, councils, health and social care and government agencies.

[Find Out More](#)

---



## Strengthening Communities Grant Programme

National Lottery Community Fund have launched their Strengthening Communities grant programme which will provide multi-year funding of up to £500,000 for projects which make communities stronger, healthier and more inclusive. The annual budget for this new programme will be around £20 million and it will open to applications from voluntary and community sector organisations on 21 October 2024 with no closing date.

The grant programme will invest most where the need is greatest, ensuring that those who experience poverty, discrimination and disadvantage – adults, children and young people alike – have the same opportunity to fulfil their potential, participate in their communities and live healthier, happier lives. It will be their main funding offer up to 2030 and will start off by specifically targeting two of their strategy mission areas:

- help children and young people thrive
- enable people to live healthier lives

They will continue to expect project proposals to be community-led, to build on existing strengths and to increase connection and strengthen networks. They will also want people applying to the programme to tell them why they are best placed to deliver, how they will know their project has made a difference and how they will measure that impact.

[Find Out More](#)

---



## Nominations Open for Mayor's Community Awards 2025

The Mayor's Community Awards 2025 which recognise and celebrate the outstanding contribution individuals and groups make in our communities have been officially launched.

Have you got a community champion? Is there a local group or organisation that stands out and deserves recognition? If so, residents are encouraged to nominate people and groups who have made a significant impact through their selfless service to the Mayor's Community Awards.

There are six award categories including the Brian McDowell Volunteer of the Year Award, Fiona Irvine Community Champion Award, Young Volunteer of the Year Award, Health & Wellbeing Awards, Environmental Champion Award and Community Group of the Year Award.

Mayor of Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council (LCCC), Councillor Kurtis Dickson, said:

"There is so much fantastic voluntary and community work taking place in Lisburn & Castlereagh. This is why awards like these are so important. They allow us to recognise the part individuals and groups play in our community.

"I am constantly amazed by the dedication and selflessness of individuals who so work hard to serve and improve their communities. I urge residents to nominate the most deserving stars in their local area so we can recognise the amazing community spirit of Lisburn and Castlereagh.

"Tell us about the incredible individuals or groups who have made a positive impact in your local area by organising local projects, engaging in fundraising or providing support to individuals. Be sure to nominate them so we know what a huge difference they make. I am really looking forward to hosting The Mayor's Community Awards to show my gratitude and thank our community heroes."

Nominations will close on **Monday 11 November at 4pm**. The winners will be announced at a Gala Awards Ceremony on Thursday 20th March 2025.

Click the button below to submit a nomination form. Check out the council's social media platforms for up-to-date information.





## Kindness Postbox Exhibition

Libraries NI are hosting a Kindness Postbox exhibition in Ballymena, Carrickfergus and Larne libraries during Positive Ageing Month. The Kindness Postbox is part of the Loneliness Networks' Chatty Cafés and Chatty Benches project to give people something to smile about. Every card, letter, poem, picture or drawing goes a long way in brightening someone's day.

We were delighted to have the Mayor of Mid and East Antrim, Alderman Beth Adger launch the exhibition in Carrickfergus Library. Several schools and nursing homes are involved in the Kindness Postbox throughout Mid and East Antrim and Antrim and Newtownabbey which is the brain wave of the lovely Nuala O'Loan from Enniskillen to "Connect people through difficult times".

It's not only older people that can feel lonely and isolated, loneliness can affect anyone no matter what age so if there is a youth organisation, school, nursing home or fold that would like to get involved in this project then contact our Volunteering Support Officer and Loneliness Champion Wenda Gray [wenda.gray@volunteernow.co.uk](mailto:wenda.gray@volunteernow.co.uk).

and is a time for us to come together to celebrate the achievements of early one million trustees across the UK.

In Northern Ireland we would love you to celebrate and recognise your existing Trustees but we will also be shining a light on the opportunities available on Be Collective and encouraging more people to get involved! Watch this space!



4-8 November 2024

#TrusteesWeek



### Christmas Intergenerational Small Grants Scheme Open

LGNI have launched their Christmas Intergenerational Small Grants Scheme as part of **Positive Ageing Month 2024!**

This funding aims to create festive **connections across generations** and between organisations that wouldn't normally work together. Christmas and the festive season spirit offers a great opportunity to develop connections and make a difference in our communities. LGNI's vision is that these connections and relationships will continue into the future.

Activities can be a one-off event or a project delivered over a number of sessions promoting the value of intergenerational connections at a time of year that so many may feel lonely and disconnected.

The small grants are **£125** and open to a range of groups across Northern Ireland including: **older people's groups, care homes, schools, community groups, youth groups etc.** All activities must take place during December and be mutually beneficial for all involved. The grants will form part of LGNI's Christmas Campaign and we ask that grantees share their activities and good news stories with us and on social media to inspire and spread festive cheer!

**For more info and to apply simply click the button below.**

**Find Out More & Apply**

### Investing in Volunteers Congratulations!

Congratulations to [Foyle Search & Rescue](#) who recently renewed their Investing in Volunteers quality standard for the second time!

Investing in Volunteers is the UK quality standard for all organisations which involve volunteers in their work. By being assessed against the standard, your organisation can publicly demonstrate its commitment to good practice and receive a National Award for



---

## Find Out More



### Introducing: Deirdre Murphy

*Project Officer*

Hi, I'm Deirdre and I provide capacity building for seniors in Belfast, assist groups with good governance, funding applications, event planning, linking and networking. I also provide training, sign post to training, information to organisations and tutors to assist groups with activities

I also provide opportunities for Mens 50+ groups in Belfast to engage with each other, provide volunteering opportunities and direct them to other mens groups and activities

I plan and organise events across the city for all older people to enjoy and attend, as well as supporting and maintaining Senior Forums.

[Contact Deirdre](#)

---

### Member Spotlight

***Parkinson's UK***

Together we will find a cure and improve life for the Parkinson's community. We're close to major breakthroughs. Funding the right research into the most promising treatments, we get closer to a cure every day.

Until then, we're here for everyone affected by Parkinson's. Fighting for fair treatment and better services. People with Parkinson's, scientists and supporters, fundraisers and families, carers and clinicians, all working side by side.



[Parkinson's UK](#)

---



## Older People & Volunteering Checklist

October is Positive Ageing Month, and is an opportunity to celebrate the role of, and support older people across Northern Ireland. Older People can often be at the epicentre of their communities. The attached publication is a checklist for organisations hoping to involve volunteers aged 50+, focusing on methods to recruit and retain them within your volunteer programme.

### Older People & Volunteering



#### New Members

Welcome to our newest organisational members: [Devon Partnership NHS Trust](#), [Parkinson's UK](#), [The Rainbow Project](#), [Ardmonagh Family & Community Group](#). This brings our organisational members total to 1143!

### Become A Member



#### Flexible, accessible training

Did you know you can learn all you need to know about volunteer management in just 8 hours with our on demand courses? You can complete these anytime, anywhere & on any device! Click below to find out more.

### Find Out More



---

*Copyright © 2024 Volunteer Now Enterprises Ltd, All rights reserved.*

Want to change how you receive these emails?  
You can [update your preferences](#) or [unsubscribe](#) from this list.

