

# Volunteering Strategy Action Plan

This is an ambitious three year action that identifies the actions to be undertaken to support the delivery of Camden's refreshed Volunteering Strategy.

The purpose of the strategy is to broaden the pool of volunteers and volunteering opportunities in Camden and improve the quality of the volunteering experience in the borough. The actions within the plan will be delivered by Camden Council, Volunteer Centre Camden and other partners. The overarching aims of the plan are to make Camden a place where:

- the full range of economic, social, environmental and personal benefits volunteering brings is recognised by residents, organisations and businesses;
- volunteering is encouraged and undertaken by a high proportion of people across diverse backgrounds;
- volunteering is supported, rewarding and where everyone feels that they can make a difference;
- volunteering brings people together and makes a significant contribution to all aspects of life.

In order to be most effective in improving the volunteering offer in Camden, our efforts and resources have been directed at the five volunteering priorities for the borough. These areas of focus address the most pressing challenges and crucial gaps in the borough's existing volunteering programme.

- Priority 1: Encouraging the development of volunteering approaches and structures that effectively support a mutually beneficial volunteer experience
- Priority 2: Developing pathways to employment
- Priority 3: Promoting individual resilience, health and well-being
- Priority 4: Building stronger, more resilient communities
- Priority 5: Supporting business/organisations in delivering corporate social responsibility programmes that include employee volunteering

Progress against the action plan will be reviewed in March 2014 to ensure that the activities within are still relevant and to identify and include work streams that support new developments in volunteering.

The actions in the plan cover the following years:

- Year 1: April 2013 – March 2014
- Year 2: April 2014 – March 2015
- Year 3: April 2015 – March 2016

**Priority 1: Encouraging the development of volunteering approaches and structures that effectively support a mutually beneficial volunteer experience.**

Actions		Lead Partner(s)	Year(s)	
Camden Plan Strategic Objective: Delivering value for money services by getting it 'right first time'	<b>Area of focus: Developing new approaches to volunteering to make giving time easier</b>			
	1.1	Develop and support student design projects that encourage and promote volunteering amongst those studying in Camden	UCL VSU	1-3
	1.2	Increase numbers of professionals registering to support their communities through volunteering.	VCC	1-3
	1.3	Work with partners to explore new volunteering models.	VCC, LBC	2
	<b>Area of focus: Improving the promotion, communications and marketing of volunteering as a mainstream activity, making better and more creative use of new technology and electronic media to reach as wide an audience as possible.</b>			
	1.4	Create a dedicated webpage for volunteering on the Camden council website that includes all relevant information to encourage more volunteering and best practice in volunteer support	LBC	1
	1.5	Utilise electronic media to better promote volunteering within the borough.	VCC, LBC, VAC	1-3
	1.6	Run a volunteering publicity and promotions campaign to raise awareness of volunteering as a leisure time activity and to increase volume of enquiries about volunteering opportunities in the borough	VCC, LBC, UCL VSU	2
	<b>Area of focus: Supporting those (individuals and organisations) with responsibility for managing and coordinating volunteers</b>			
	1.7	Provide guidance and information about best practice in volunteer management to local groups, voluntary and community sector organisations and faith organisations	VCC	1
	1.8	Facilitate the development of a network of officers within the council with responsibility for recruiting, co-ordinating and supporting volunteers across Camden Council to provide mutual support and learning from one another	LBC	1
1.9	Recognise the contribution of Camden's volunteers through local media	VCC, LBC	1-3	
1.10	Promote the Volunteer Investment and Value (VIVA) as tool to measure the economic value of volunteers to organisations (including producing guidance on VIVA created for Camden volunteer involving organisations)	VCC	2-3	
1.11	Consider cost effective ways to recognise the contribution of volunteers to the delivery of council services	LBC	2-3	

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## Priority 2: Developing pathways to employment

Actions		Lead Partner(s)	Year(s)	
<b>Area of focus: Young people not in education, employment or training (including those who are care leavers or have special education needs and disabilities)</b>				
Camden Plan Strategic Objective: Creating the conditions for harnessing the benefits of economic growth	2.1	Roll out sports apprenticeships programme, which will be targeted at those who have volunteered with local community organisations for at least three months	LBC	1
	2.2	Utilise volunteering as one of a range of progression pathways for 14-19 year olds to increase those in employment and training, particularly for those from low attaining groups.	LBC, VCC	1-3
	2.3	Pilot business volunteering programme that includes new business/workplace mentoring and peer to peer mentoring programme to build get young people's resilience and support them in to work	CBB	3
	<b>Area of focus: Those furthest away from employment</b>			
	2.4	Produce guidance for voluntary and community sector organisations that shows how to develop volunteering opportunities that support out of work volunteers into employment.	VCC	1
	2.5	Use volunteering small grants to encourage VCS to recruit and support volunteers from two of the target groups seen as furthest away from employment (ex-offenders and NEETS over 18)	VCC	1
	2.6	Establish scheme to link ex-offenders to volunteering opportunities, thus improving their employability.	LBC, VCC	2
	2.7	Develop a community 'signposters' pilot which would involve local people, businesses and voluntary and community sector employees providing advice and assistance for parents in accessing employment.	LBC	2
	2.8	Support the development of volunteering programmes to improve digital literacy and capacity across the borough, particularly amongst our vulnerable communities	LBC, VCC	2
	2.9	Identify which existing and potential volunteering opportunities can be linked to gaining entry level/basic qualifications	LBC, VCC, VAC	2
	2.10	Identify new areas of local work (council or others) where there is a training/development opportunity for local volunteers that could be better done as a pathway to employment.	LBC, VCC	2
	2.11	Actively pursue opportunities to work more closely with Job Centre Plus to support their understanding of the value that volunteering can bring to support those out of work into employment.	LBC, VCC	2
	2.12	Work with Job Centre Plus and other agencies to provide greater support to benefits claimants who are using volunteering as a means to increase their skills, experience and employability.	LBC	3
2.13	Explore opportunities to work with private recruitment firms to encourage their unemployed clients to take up volunteering between jobs.	LBC, VCC	3	

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### Priority 3: Promoting individual resilience, health and well-being

Actions		Lead Partner(s)	Year(s)	
Camden Plan Strategic Objective: Developing new solutions with partners to reduce inequality	<b>Area of focus: Reducing isolation amongst vulnerable older people and those with mental and physical health issues</b>			
	3.1	Establish mental health peer support advocates project targeting ethnic minority communities to support outreach programme to raise awareness within targeted communities around mental health issues.	VAC	1-3
	3.2	Support community organisations and resident groups to continue effective befriending programmes that support those who are most vulnerable within their communities.	LBC, VCC, UCL VSU	1-3
	3.3	Provide support to disabled people or those with low to moderate needs, and their carers to enable them to access volunteer opportunities within their communities	LBC, VCC	2
	3.4	Support community organisations that wish to involve those with mental and physical health issues to ensure that they support the additional needs of this particular cohort of volunteers.	VCC	3
	<b>Area of focus: Those most severely affected by the changes in welfare provision</b>			
	3.5	Ensure that professionals and non-professional who volunteer to provide information and support around welfare reform are suitably trained.	CAP, VCC	1
	3.6	Ensure that volunteers providing community support to those most affected by the reforms (e.g. food banks) have training to provide appropriate support to deal with stresses arising from these changes and/or to signpost to appropriate services (e.g. providers of advice on debt or GPs' services to deal with mental ill health)	VCC, VAC	2
	3.7	Promote volunteering as a beneficial use of time for those on the lowest incomes, particularly lone parent and large families (developing skills and reducing isolation)	LBC, VCC	2
	3.8	Ensure that VCS organisations involving volunteers (especially from the cohort on the lowest incomes) adhere to best practice, specifically around paying expenses, providing pastoral support and addressing additional needs	VCC	2
	3.9	Encourage young people (14-18) most affected by the changes in welfare to get involved in positive activities within their communities, creating social connections that would build their resilience and well-being and could support them in to training or employment	LBC, VCC	2
<b>Area of focus: Supporting complex families through volunteering</b>				
3.10	Support existing community-led complex family support programmes that involve volunteers to identify alternative funding sources to enable continuation of that support.	LBC, VAC	2	
3.11	Identify opportunities to support those within complex families into volunteering.	LBC	3	

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## Priority 4: Building stronger, more resilient communities

Actions			Lead Partner(s)	Year(s)
Camden Plan Strategic Objective: Investing in our communities to ensure sustainable neighbourhoods	<b>Area of focus: Targeting professionals to use skills locally to help increase levels of community cohesion and economic growth</b>			
	4.1	Develop specialised training courses to enhance the skills of trustees on local management boards.	VAC	1-3
	4.2	Organise an event during Trustees' Week (November) to promote trusteeships	VAC, VCC, BC, CBB	1-3
	4.3	Target Camden based recent UCL graduates and professionals to give their time	UCL VSU	2-3
	4.4	Work with the police, emergency services and armed forces to encourage them to participate in, and promote volunteering opportunities.	LBC, VCC	3
	<b>Area of focus: Developing mutual exchange schemes to support our aging population</b>			
	4.5	Use Camden's 50+ project to develop a membership network of older people who support one another to remain independent, to learn new skills and to stay socially connected.	LBC	1-3
	4.6	Target Camden's over 50+ professionals to use their skills locally to support people over retirement age	VCC	2-3
	<b>Area of focus: Ensuring appropriate skills amongst volunteers running community services</b>			
	4.7	Support community groups that have successfully bid to provide community services on skills mapping, volunteer recruitment, support and management	LBC, VCC, VAC	2-3
	4.8	Encourage groups that have successfully bid to run community services involving volunteers to join VCC and sign up to the Volunteering Management Charter	VCC	2-3
	<b>Area of focus: Supporting individuals and communities to take responsibility for their neighbourhoods</b>			
	4.9	Develop a Camden-wide green network to encourage residents to share and exchange their time, skills and unwanted items.	LBC	1
	4.10	Provide information and guidance to communities on how to self-organise to undertake social action to address local issues and build stronger communities.	LBC, VCC	1
4.11	Involve volunteers in providing community and emergency safety support to their communities	LBC	1-3	
4.12	Provide effective support to neighbourhood forums to ensure best practice in volunteer support and management	LBC, VCC	1-3	
4.13	Organise Creating Connections events to bring together UCL staff and postgraduate students with representatives from community organisations, charities, residents' groups, social enterprises and statutory organisations, with the aim of finding ways to work together to address community issues	UCL VSU, Camden Shares	1-3	
4.14	Pilot a small grants programme to encourage residents/communities to identify local volunteering projects to address challenges to their neighbourhoods and enhance local resilience	LBC, VCC	2	

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## Priority 5: Supporting business/organisations in delivering corporate social responsibility programmes that include employee volunteering

Actions		Lead Partner(s)	Year(s)	
Camden Plan Strategic Objective: Creating the conditions for harnessing the benefits of economic growth	<b>Area of focus: Providing a more coherent infrastructure that encourages and supports business and other organisations in their efforts to promote employee volunteering.</b>			
	5.1	Develop a corporate social responsibility (CSR) offer based on employer supported volunteering to business on the borough's Business Portal	LBC	1
	5.2	Provide advice and guidance on how businesses can support local communities (including through mentoring, trusteeships and volunteering)	LBC	1
	5.3	Develop an employer supported volunteering offer that suits the needs of Camden businesses as well as the requirements of the voluntary and community sector	VCC, VAC	1
	5.4	Support voluntary and community sector organisations to engage better with businesses to ensure effective mutually beneficial relationships	LBC, VAC , VCC	2
	5.5	Support schools to work with businesses and to get their offer right	LBC, CPEE	2
	5.6	Encourage technology businesses within Camden to involve their staff in supporting communities to increase levels of digital literacy and inclusion	LBC, VCC	2
	5.7	Explore the establishment of a business to business peer support programme to promote the benefits of employer supported volunteering	LBC	3
	5.8	Develop enhanced business mentoring and coaching support programmes to support low attaining young people	LBC, VCC	3
5.9	Support the development and delivery of model which enables businesses and organisations to work with schools and education/ training providers.	LBC, CPEE, CBB	3	

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