Here are just some of the roles that volunteers undertake within the Criminal Justice System...
Youth justice
• Appropriate adult
• Mentor
• Youth Offender Panel member

Restorative justice
• Victim-offender mediator
• Family group conference facilitator
• Community Justice Panel member

Victims
• Witness Service volunteers in Crown and Magistrates’ Courts
• Victim Support volunteer
• Helpline advisor
• Counselling

Probation
• Probation Board member
• Teaching literacy and numeracy volunteer tutor
• Supporting training courses
• Mentor
• Probation volunteer

Prisons
• Official prison visitor
• Custody visitor
• Prison visitors’ centre (support and advice, assisting with practical tasks)
• Play worker for children during prison visits
• Literacy, numeracy and basic skills volunteer tutor
• Chaplaincy (from the main world faiths)
• Volunteer orchestra leader

Police
• Special Constable
• Police Cadet
• Independent custody visitors
• Police support volunteer
• Crimestoppers volunteer
• Crime Prevention Panel member
• Diamond Initiative volunteer

Other
• Independent Monitoring Board member
• MAPPA (Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements) lay advisor
• Neighbourhood Watch co-ordinator
• Magistrate or Justice of the Peace
• Providing helpdesks in Magistrates’ Courts
• Raising awareness of Prisons Week and Prisoners’ Sunday
• Community Chaplain
• Circles of Support member (working with sex offenders to reduce the risk of re-offending)
• Fundraiser for charities and voluntary and community organisations that support offenders, ex-offenders, prisoners, those at risk of offending or the victims of crime
• Volunteer for charities and voluntary and community organisations that support offenders, ex-offenders, prisoners, those at risk of offending or the victims of crime
• Campaigner
• Hate Crime Scrutiny Panel member
• Educating young people and promoting preventative measures
• Courts Board member
• Community Justice Panel member
• LCJB (Local Criminal Justice Boards) Independent Advisory Group member
• Trustee

Volunteer roles for prisoners
• Participating in park regeneration schemes
• Providing Braille transcriptions for blind people
• Creating artworks for hospices
• Making wheelchairs
• Citizens’ Advisor (in conjunction with Citizens Advice Bureau)
• Peer-advisers
• The Samaritans listeners
• Acting in plays
• Timebanking
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Foreword

There is a long tradition of organisations working with offenders and ex-offenders involving volunteers in the services they offer. Listed at the start of this guide are some of the valuable roles that volunteers perform which bring real benefits to the Criminal Justice System.

Volunteers are often in a position to provide a more personal response, which is particularly true of offenders and ex-offenders who choose to volunteer. They can provide an invaluable link to the local community which can be very important when challenging public perceptions about offenders and ex-offenders.

The purpose of this guide is to help ensure that organisations working with offenders and ex-offenders use volunteers well. There is a lot of good practice in the Criminal Justice System of involving volunteers, however, there is also inconsistency in the way that volunteers are recruited, managed and reimbursed.

This guide is part of a series commissioned by Clinks and funded by the Ministry of Justice. The others produced as part of this project are:

- Setting up a project
- Quality standards
- Demonstrating effectiveness

The guide is designed as a reference document and each section has links to further information, particularly Volunteering England’s Good Practice Bank which is a very valuable source of information.

About Clinks

Clinks is a national organisation that supports the work that voluntary and community sector organisations undertake within the criminal justice system of England and Wales. Clinks’ vision is of a vibrant and independent voluntary and community sector working with informed and engaged communities to enable the rehabilitation of offenders for the benefit of society.

About Volunteering England

Volunteering England is the national development agency for volunteering in England. Our vision is of a society where the potential and passion of people to transform lives and communities through volunteering is fully realised. Volunteering England’s mission is to support an increase in the quality, quantity, impact and accessibility of volunteering throughout England.
Managing volunteers.

Developing a volunteer programme.

1.1 The value of volunteering
1.2 Identifying the need for volunteers and creating volunteer roles
1.3 Writing volunteer policies and agreements
1.4 Induction
1.5 Training
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in this section:
1.1 The value of volunteering

In March 2009 the Government’s Volunteering Champion, Baroness Neuberger, published Volunteering across the Criminal Justice System. This review examined volunteer involvement across the agencies that make up the Criminal Justice System (CJS).

The findings revealed inconsistency, as some parts of the CJS were failing to take volunteer involvement seriously, whilst others were almost completely reliant on volunteers for their service delivery. Neuberger noted that where volunteers were engaged in meaningful activity, they were able to add value to the projects, services and organisations they were donating their time to.

Neuberger also recognised that there is an opportunity for users of the CJS (whether prisoners, offenders, ex-offenders or the victims of crime) to harness their experiences of the system by becoming volunteers.

For Neuberger:
“…volunteers are all too often able to add something that cannot be delivered by paid staff, who need to maintain a professional distance.”

Other resources such as time, training and support go a long way, and often volunteer programmes only succeed if they are embraced by and integrated within the whole organisation.

The Government’s positive response to Baroness Neuberger’s report signalled their focus on practical targeted action carefully balanced against budgetary constraints. One way in which the recommendations are being taken forward is through Ministry of Justice funding to Clinks, to play a strategic role in promoting and supporting the effective recruitment, management and support of a diverse range of volunteers and mentors working with offenders and ex-offenders.

The aim of this guide

This publication has been written to help those managing volunteers optimise the potential of their volunteer programme by following simple good practice guidelines. Although aimed at volunteer-involving organisations that provide services for offenders and ex-offenders, the guidance here could also be used and adapted for volunteer programmes within the wider Criminal Justice System (CJS), for instance organisations that deliver services to the victims of crime or involve volunteers in preventative work.

It should be noted that the terms ‘good practice’ and ‘best practice’ are often used interchangeably, but don’t necessarily mean the same thing. In the context of this document, ‘good practice’ means:

- Reasonably assessing situations, procedures and practices
- Considering the framework in which the volunteer programme will operate
- Exploring which legal obligations apply
Considering the above from the volunteer’s perspective

Identifying measures that organisations can take to go beyond the above to create a welcoming, accessible and inclusive environment for anyone that wants to volunteer.

In contrast, the term ‘best practice’ implies an ideal to strive for, which may be a longer-term aspiration for the organisation. It also raises the question ‘best for whom?’ It’s important to recognise that what works well within one organisation may not succeed in another, and that a flexible approach often works best.

Throughout the document there are references to volunteer managers, but there are other members of staff (and sometimes volunteers) who may have responsibility for managing and/or co-ordinating volunteers as part of their role. ‘Volunteer manager’ has been used in this guidance as a shorthand term for anyone managing volunteers.

Where the term ‘service user’ has been used, organisations may prefer to use their own terminology, such as ‘end user’, ‘client’, etc.

It should be noted that whilst work experience placements and training schemes can play a vital role in enabling offenders and ex-offenders to develop new skills and progress with their rehabilitation, this guidance excludes work experience and training schemes, as these have a specific context and function. Whilst such schemes may sit comfortably alongside a volunteer programme, participants will have different expectations and requirements from volunteers, and thus will need to be managed in a slightly different way to volunteers.

1.2 Identifying the need for volunteers and creating volunteer roles

Identifying the need for volunteers

For an organisation thinking of setting up a volunteer programme or developing their existing one, a key starting point would be to consider how it can potentially engage volunteers in its work. Whilst some volunteer roles may come to mind immediately, others may be less obvious, and only reveal themselves through an examination of how the organisation actually works.

Creating volunteer roles

Roles should be of value to volunteers, as well as adding value to the work of the organisation, whether through providing experience, offering rewarding opportunities or a chance to meet new people. Roles that are de-motivating will not keep people involved and engaged for very long.

For prisoners, offenders and ex-offenders, volunteering provides the opportunity to do something positive, help others, gain self-esteem and self-confidence, as well as developing skills and interests that may help with gaining employment.

Normally all volunteer roles should have an associated role or task description. This clarifies the organisation’s expectations and indicates the level of support it can offer to the volunteer. Where practical, role or task descriptions should be viewed as flexible and should reflect the volunteer’s abilities and capabilities, and the needs of the service.

When creating a volunteer role, the following questions should be considered in partnership...
with service users and staff who will be working alongside the volunteer:

☆ What tasks will the volunteer be expected to carry out?
☆ Who will provide support for the volunteer?
☆ Is there a valid role for the volunteer?
☆ What training will the volunteer need to perform the role and how will it be identified and provided?
☆ What other resources are required (space, equipment and so on)?
☆ Are these resources available?
☆ What ongoing feedback and support will be available to the volunteer?

Organisations should also consider the environment that the volunteers will be working in. In some settings, additional risk assessment may be needed, for instance, if the volunteer is a prisoner, offender or ex-offender, then depending on the nature of their conviction there may need to be greater safeguarding measures in place regarding the safety of other staff and volunteers. This could include more in-depth risk assessment of the particular volunteer or any personal safety training or protocols that other volunteers (and staff) may require.

In some settings, such as prisons, there may be other security issues to bear in mind when creating volunteer roles.

Engaging stakeholders

It’s also important to ensure that other stakeholders within the organisation recognise and support the need for a volunteer programme. If the volunteer programme is a fully integrated component of the organisation, and paid staff know and understand the reasons for volunteer involvement and support it, then the volunteer programme is more likely to succeed within the organisation.

Practical issues

There are also practical issues to consider, such as the resources that will be needed to implement the volunteer programme. For instance, a funding bid could include the following costs:

☆ A salaried post to manage the volunteers
☆ Training for the volunteer manager and the volunteers (where appropriate)
☆ Other staff time (for inductions, training, support and supervision etc)
☆ Volunteers’ expenses
☆ Any new equipment that may be needed (for instance, chairs, desks, telephones etc depending on the volunteers’ roles)
☆ Recruitment materials, such as flyers, posters, advertisements etc.
☆ Production of materials and resources in alternative formats and/ or other languages, where necessary
☆ Taking steps to help enable people to volunteer who might not otherwise be able to do so
☆ A ‘thank you’ event for the volunteers.

Further information can be found in the ‘Creating Volunteer Roles’ section of Volunteering England’s Good Practice Bank: www.volunteering.org.uk/goodpractice
Managing volunteers.

1.3 Writing volunteer policies and agreements

Setting the framework
A volunteer policy should provide the foundation for how the organisation engages volunteers in its work, giving cohesion and consistency to all the elements of the organisation’s life that affect volunteers. By having a volunteer policy in place, an organisation is able to:

* Demonstrate its commitment both to its volunteer programme and to the volunteers themselves
* Ensure that volunteers are managed in a fair, consistent and equitable manner, rather than making decisions on an ad hoc basis
* Ensure that volunteers know how they can expect to be treated, and who they can turn to if they feel that things are going wrong
* Explain to paid staff, senior management and trustees why volunteers are involved within the organisation, and the role they have to play.

The volunteer policy should establish the organisation's rationale for involving volunteers, as well as setting boundaries to prevent genuine volunteering roles becoming confused with the work undertaken by staff in paid positions. The policy should demonstrate to funders and partner organisations both the organisation’s commitment to involving volunteers and its procedures for achieving this.

Stakeholder involvement
The development of a volunteer policy should also include involvement from senior management where applicable, as this will help to ensure that the document is taken seriously within the organisation.

Where volunteering is occurring in prison, probation or police settings, the relevant prison, probation or police service should also play an active role, even if the project is being delivered by an external organisation. This will help with raising awareness of volunteering in these settings, and may even encourage volunteering programmes within other aspects of the prison, probation or police service.

Any staff that supervise or work with volunteers as part of their overall duties should be issued with a copy of the volunteer policy, as well as related policies and procedures, or similar guidance on working with volunteers, even if their involvement with volunteers is minimal. In some organisations this may even be linked to staff appraisal.

The policy should be approved by the board of trustees or management committee, and reviewed alongside other organisational policies. Again, a review of the volunteer policy can benefit greatly from the input of volunteers, staff and service users.

Where the volunteering is occurring in a specific setting such as a prison, or within the probation or police services, it would be good to try and get the volunteering policy approved by management if possible, to ensure a commitment to volunteering within that particular setting.

Accessibility
In order to demonstrate its commitment to equal opportunities and to develop a diverse volunteer base, it’s necessary for an organisation to be proactive when recruiting volunteers. Before beginning the recruitment process, though, the organisation should ensure that its volunteer policy is an accessible and understandable document.
Managing volunteers.

The volunteer policy should be:
* Developed with input from volunteers, staff, and service users, to ensure that it’s a relevant and working document that people can and will refer to for information
* Written in plain, volunteer-friendly language. Try to avoid jargon, and bear in mind that some volunteers may have learning difficulties or speak English as a second language.

Elements of a volunteer policy
There is no set format for volunteer policies, as each organisation will want to devise a policy to suit its own needs. Where some aspects of the policy link in with organisational documents that apply to everyone (such as Health and Safety), then some organisations may prefer just to refer to these other documents, rather than reproducing them in their entirety within the volunteer policy. This will also help to avoid overwhelming the volunteer with information, whilst enabling them to find and read the other documents as and when they choose.

Some organisations may prefer to regard the volunteer policy as a statement of intent, with the day-to-day operational procedures referred to in separate policies or a volunteer handbook.

The volunteer policy needs to promote consistency and good practice in managing volunteers. Opposite is a list of the key elements that should be included in a volunteer policy.

Code of conduct
It may also be useful to set out a code of conduct for volunteers. This should express in clear terms what the organisation considers to be inappropriate conduct. Examples include breaching confidentiality.

KEY ELEMENTS OF A VOLUNTEER POLICY

1. Introduction and policy statement
This should set out the organisation’s reasons for involving volunteers, the principles underpinning their involvement and how this helps to meet the organisation’s key objectives.

2. Staff-volunteer relations
This section should set out the nature and boundaries of volunteer involvement, ensuring that paid staff have a clear understanding of the remit of volunteers and the limitations on their involvement within the organisation. It could also state that volunteers will not be used to replace or displace paid staff.

3. Equal opportunities and diversity statement
This will help to put a volunteer’s mind at ease as some (especially those with a criminal record) may be concerned about possible discrimination whilst volunteering with the organisation.

See 1.16 ‘Equal opportunities and diversity’ for further information.

4. Recruitment and selection
This should summarise the organisation’s recruitment and selection process.

See 1.13 ‘Recruitment’ for further information.

5. Screening
Screening methods help to ensure that potential volunteers are suitable and able to work with specific client groups.

See 1.14 ‘Screening potential volunteers’ and 1.15 ‘Protection and Safeguarding’ for further information.
6. Induction and training
This should outline the induction process for the volunteer, and any training they will need, both when they begin their role and throughout their involvement with the organisation.

See 1.4 ‘Induction’ and 1.5 ‘Training’ for further information.

7. Support and supervision
This should set out support and supervision mechanisms available to the volunteer.

See 1.6 ‘Support and supervision’ for further information.

8. Problem solving procedures
This section should provide details of how the organisation deals with problems, complaints and issues raised by or about a volunteer.

See 1.7 ‘Dealing with problems, complaints and disputes’ for further information.

9. Confidentiality policy
Confidentiality policies are usually organisation-wide, so should refer to volunteers, paid staff and service users. A volunteer policy could either signpost volunteers to the organisation’s Confidentiality policy, or be included within the volunteer policy, to make it more accessible to volunteers.

10. Expenses policy
This should describe which expenses will be reimbursed and how.

See 1.12 ‘Expenses’ for further information.

11. Health and Safety
This section should refer volunteers to the organisation’s Health and Safety policy, and include a risk assessment for the volunteer role.

See 1.10 ‘Health and Safety, and insurance’ for further information.

12. Insurance
This should outline the insurance that the organisation has in place to protect its volunteers.

See 1.10 ‘Health and Safety, and insurance’ for further information.

13. Monitoring and evaluation
This should explain how the volunteer programme will be monitored and evaluated, and the contribution that volunteers can make to this.

See 1.8 ‘Monitoring and evaluation’ for further information. See also Charities Evaluation Services’ ‘A Guide to Demonstrating Effectiveness’.

14. Recognition of volunteers
This section should describe how the organisation recognises the contribution of its volunteers.

See 1.21 ‘Reward and recognition’ for further information.

15. Data protection statement
This should describe how the organisation collects, uses and stores the data it holds on volunteers.

See 1.11 ‘Data protection, Freedom of Information Act, Copyright’ for further information.
or entering into financial transactions such as lending money to service users. For organisations involving offenders and ex-offenders as volunteers, there may be more specific codes of behaviour that may need to be included in this.

The code may cross-reference with the organisation’s equal opportunities and zero tolerance to violence policies, but may also include guidance on accepting gifts from service users or their relatives, appropriate language and representation of the organisation.

Volunteer agreement
A volunteer agreement can enhance the bond between the volunteer and the organisation. It sets out the relationship with the volunteer, outlining mutual expectations. It is not intended to be a binding document. It can, however, be helpful to have a written agreement – one that specifically states that the document is not a contract of employment, or deemed to have any legal status as an employment arrangement.

Care should be taken to avoid setting out mutual obligations. The agreement should be framed in terms of hopes and expectations.

Sample volunteer agreements can be found in the ‘Volunteer Policies and Agreements’ section of Volunteering England’s ‘Good Practice Bank’: www.volunteering.org.uk/goodpractice

1.4 Induction
Preparing volunteers for their role
All volunteers should have an induction appropriate to their level of involvement. This may be fairly basic for volunteers engaged in short-term or one-off volunteering projects. For volunteers with more regular involvement, the induction should aim to prepare them fully for their role, and give them an understanding of the aspect of the criminal justice setting in which they’ll be volunteering. A well-structured induction programme ensures that the volunteer is fully informed of the tasks expected of them and is able to voice any doubts or concerns that they may have.

While the information given to the volunteer may vary according to their role, it could include the following elements:

∗ An introduction to the volunteering role and the organisational setting
∗ An introduction to working with the client group (for instance, prisoners, offenders, young offenders or ex-offenders)
∗ An introduction to the Criminal Justice System and how it works
∗ Information on other volunteering opportunities within the organisation, to demonstrate the scope of the volunteer programme
∗ An introduction to staff and other volunteers as appropriate
∗ An introduction to volunteer policies
∗ Health and Safety information, First Aid, fire procedures, manual handling, etc, as relevant to the volunteering role
∗ Expenses procedures (such as explaining how to fill in an expenses form)
∗ Confidentiality
∗ General information.
An induction checklist should be used to ensure that the volunteer receives all the relevant information that they will need prior to starting their role.

A volunteer handbook or induction pack could be produced as a handy reference guide for volunteers to use after their initial induction.

It should be noted that where volunteers are working off-site (for instance, in a prison or a probation or police setting) then an induction into the working practices of that particular setting will also be required. This could include a list of dos and don’ts when volunteering in these specific settings and any reporting requirements that may be in place.

Volunteers in these settings may also require information about escorting and supervision procedures, security issues and protocols, and knowing how to report accidents as well as dangerous or serious incidents.

Some organisations also have an introductory period, so that the volunteer can find out if they feel comfortable in their new role (or with the organisation) and the organisation can find out if the volunteer is suited to the role.


1.5 Training

Making volunteers feel valued

Training enhances status, provides vital information and guidance, and makes the volunteer feel valued.

Volunteers should receive adequate training to carry out their roles. Training needs should be assessed at the informal interview stage and during the volunteer’s induction. The style and content of the training will depend on the tasks the volunteer is being asked to carry out, but, as well as role-specific topics, training in areas such as volunteer/service user boundaries may also be appropriate.

Remember that everyone learns differently, so consider using a variety of learning styles, for instance, mixing talks with other activities such as quizzes or working in pairs. The training could also include informal learning, such as coaching from a more experienced volunteer, which will also provide development opportunities for both new and established volunteers.

An ongoing process

Also remember that training may be an ongoing process for many volunteers, depending on their roles. This is especially true if information, guidance or procedures change over time, or if the volunteer’s role changes. It’s a good idea to keep a list of the training courses that individual volunteers have attended (along with the dates), as this will help with identifying any training gaps or refresher courses that may be needed.

Potential legal issues and good practice

Any training provided must be intended to help the individual carry out their role. This should
also be the case where prisoners, offenders or ex-offenders are in volunteering roles. Training that is not relevant to the volunteer’s role may be regarded as a ‘perk’ (legally known as ‘consideration’), and could affect the legal status of the volunteer.

See 1.9 ‘The legal position of volunteers’ for further information.

Types of training
Depending on the organisational setting and client group, organisations may wish to offer volunteers training in areas such as:

- Drugs and alcohol
- Mental health
- Housing
- State benefits
- Mentoring and befriending
- Health and well-being
- Finance and debt
- Supporting offenders’ families and children
- Working with ‘high risk of harm’ offenders.

Training for staff
Staff working with or managing volunteers on a regular basis may benefit from additional guidance or training in this area, as recruiting, supporting and managing volunteers require different skills to managing paid staff. Further information can be found in the National Occupational Standards for Volunteer Managers.

The volunteer programme should also feature in the induction programme for paid staff, as this can help to clarify the reasons for involving volunteers within the organisation, and the contribution that they make to it.

Training costs
Training to help someone to carry out their role should be available and easily accessible throughout the volunteer’s involvement, and a budget should be set aside for this aspect of the volunteer programme. Any organisation setting up such a programme needs to be aware of the cost implications of induction and training for volunteers, and should factor such costs into the overall budget for the volunteer programme, as well as future funding bids. Volunteers are not a cost free resource; their induction and development must be properly invested in for the organisation to maximise the true potential of their volunteers.

Where volunteers in several organisations require similar training, organisations could explore the possibility of sharing training sessions and therefore the training costs.

If an organisation is working in liaison with another body such as a prison, the probation service or police service, it may be possible to share the training they hold for their staff, or at the very least ‘borrow’ their training materials and resources.

Clinks have produced two resource packs to support and train staff and volunteers working with offenders: ‘Volunteering with Offenders in the Community’ and ‘Volunteering in Prison’. 01904 673970 or info@clinks.org

Further information about the National Occupational Standards can be found at: www.ukworkforcehub.org.uk/nos
Managing volunteers.

For volunteers to perform their roles successfully, they need both support and feedback from the organisation they are giving their time to. Volunteers should also have the opportunity to feedback to the organisation any comments, suggestions, issues or concerns that they have.

1.6 Support and supervision

Support

All volunteers need support and supervision, although the form that this takes will vary considerably, and will depend on factors such as the nature of the volunteer’s involvement, who is most appropriate to provide the support, and the needs of the individual volunteer.

All volunteers should have a named person to offer them support and guidance, and to resolve any queries or concerns that they may have. Volunteers in prison, probation or police settings should also have a point of contact within that particular organisation if the volunteer programme is being delivered by a third party volunteer-involving organisation. This is especially important where there are additional health and safety and security issues to adhere to.

Some volunteers will require more help and support than others. In some cases, this may be due to a disability or mental health problem. The best way to find out if a volunteer has any support needs is to ask them.

Some people may need a little extra training or ‘on the job’ coaching. Other volunteers may lack confidence, and need reassurance that they are carrying out their roles correctly. Other types of support include:

- Volunteer meetings
- Peer support, mentoring and buddying schemes
- Group supervision.

Supervision

Whilst supervision meetings may not be appropriate for all models of volunteer involvement, for many volunteers it is the best way of ensuring that they get a chance to give and receive constructive feedback.

The Mentoring and Befriending Foundation have a national training programme for practitioners: www.mandbf.org.uk/news/events/training

Further information on training for volunteers and Volunteer managers can be found in the ‘Induction and Training’ section of Volunteering England’s ‘Good Practice Bank’: www.volunteering.org.uk/goodpractice
Managing volunteers.

Some volunteers may view supervision as an appraisal or performance review, so organisations should aim to deconstruct this workplace model and replace it with an informal, volunteer-friendly approach. Reassure volunteers that supervision provides an opportunity for both parties to talk in private, without disruption, and that it’s as much about the volunteer talking and being listened to as it is about the volunteer’s supervisor talking.

Arrange a private space for the supervision meeting, and try to ensure that there won't be any disruptions. Some questions to ask the volunteer are:

- What’s gone well?
- What hasn’t gone so well?
- Do they feel there is any support or training that they need?
- Is the volunteering role meeting their needs or fulfilling their motivations for volunteering?
- Are there any other tasks within the organisation they would like to do?

Encourage volunteers to raise problems or concerns, because it’s much easier to deal with a problem at an early stage than when it has had a chance to grow into a much bigger issue.

Ensure that the volunteer is given clear feedback, and that they know that the organisation is pleased with their work. If there are problems with a volunteer’s work, don’t be afraid to raise it with them.

See 1.7 ‘Dealing with problems, complaints and disputes’ for further information.

Communication

As well as providing individual feedback and support there should be communication from the organisation with the volunteer group as a whole. This could be via newsletters, email bulletins, online forums, etc. As well as providing news and information on the work of the organisation or the involvement of volunteers, it can also help to foster a sense of belonging among volunteers.

Further information can be found in the ‘Support and Supervision’ section of Volunteering England’s ‘Good Practice Bank’: www.volunteering.org.uk/goodpractice

The Mentoring and Befriending Foundation’s website contains a step-by-step guide to setting up a mentoring scheme: www.mandbf.org.uk

Other supervision models

Where regular formal supervision meetings aren’t appropriate, consider finding other ways of giving and receiving feedback. For instance, this could be through informal catch ups, or ringing home-based volunteers for a telephone supervision session. Remember that all volunteers should have a point of contact with whom they can raise any concerns that they may have.
1.7 Dealing with problems, complaints and disputes

Organisations working with statutory agencies
For organisations that are delivering services in prison, probation, police or other statutory settings, there should be procedures in place for dealing with issues that arise as a result of volunteering in the actual setting. For instance, where a volunteer has a complaint against a prisoner, the statutory body itself or a member of staff within the statutory body they will need to know how to take the complaint forward. Such procedures should also clarify how a member of staff, a prisoner, etc, can make a complaint against a volunteer.

It should be noted that Prison Service Order 4190 (at the time of writing this PSO is subject to change) requires Governors to have a straightforward procedure for raising concerns and complaints and for the resolution of disputes. This includes the procedure for referring on to a higher authority at either area or national level if the issue cannot be resolved locally.

Good practice
It is good practice to have procedures in place to deal with any issues, concerns or problems raised by or about volunteers. Not only does this demonstrate the organisation’s commitment to its volunteers; it also provides evidence of the organisation’s commitment to equal opportunities. By having such procedures in place, an organisation can deal with any problems or issues in a fair, consistent, equitable and open manner.

It should be noted that procedures for paid staff (such as grievance and disciplinary) should not be used for volunteers, as these form part of the staff terms and conditions of employment.

It is better to have separate problem solving procedures for volunteers, which should have a less formal tone, and use volunteer-friendly language. By keeping the procedures for paid staff and volunteers separate, this will also help to reduce the risk of confusion of volunteers being regarded as workers or employees.

Problems with volunteers
Generally, problems with a volunteer’s work, behaviour or attitude can be identified through good supervision. Most matters can be resolved simply and internally, through training or changes to the volunteer’s role for instance.

If this is not possible, then problem solving procedures should be used to ensure that such matters are dealt with consistently, effectively and in a timely manner.

Serious misconduct
Where a volunteer is accused of committing serious misconduct (this may include, but is not limited to, theft, acts of violence, harassment, malicious damage, serious breaches of the spirit of the equal opportunities policy), they may be asked to temporarily stop volunteering while the matter is internally investigated. There should be a timeframe on this, although in some cases this may be postponed pending the results of an external investigation (by the police, for instance).

The volunteer should have the opportunity to put their case. In some cases, the volunteer may be asked to permanently cease volunteering with the organisation.
Managing volunteers.

Monitoring and evaluation should be built into the volunteer programme from the very beginning, to enable the organisation to identify any problems or issues, as well as record what’s going well. The collection and evaluation of this information is vital for identifying the steps that can be taken to improve the volunteer programme and ultimately the volunteer experience.

Volunteers with problems
If a volunteer has a complaint against a member of staff, service user or another volunteer, there should be a procedure for them to follow to help resolve the situation.

Further information about problem solving procedures can be found in the ‘Dealing with problems, complaints and disputes’ section of Volunteering England’s ‘Good Practice Bank’: www.volunteering.org.uk/goodpractice

1.8 Monitoring and evaluation

Monitoring and evaluating a volunteer programme
There are numerous reasons for monitoring and evaluating a volunteer programme, including providing information to current and potential funders and measuring the impact that volunteers have on the organisation.

KEY TERMS

Monitoring the routine, systematic collection and recording of information about a project, mainly for the purpose of checking its progress against its plans.

Evaluation is using monitoring and other information you collect to make judgements about your project, such as, how well the volunteer programme is doing, and identifying any gaps and improvements that can be made.

Inputs are the time, money, and resources that enable the organisation to operate its volunteer programme.

Outputs are all the detailed activities, services and products you do or provide.

Outcomes are the changes, benefits, learning or other effects that happen as a result of your volunteer programme.
Managing volunteers.

Identifying outcomes and outputs to be measured
The first step in monitoring and evaluating a volunteer programme is to identify what needs to be measured, as this will determine how these elements can be measured. Over the course of its lifetime an organisation may change numerous times, so it may be necessary to re-evaluate if there is still a need for volunteers.

Gathering information to measure outputs and outcomes
To measure outputs it’s necessary to collect facts and figures, so when setting up the volunteer programme consider how the organisation will keep records and produce statistics and reports about the programme for this purpose.

Demographic information such as age, gender and ethnicity can provide a breakdown of the diversity of the current volunteer base, which can then be used to plan future recruitment campaigns that target under-represented sections of the local community. Such information can also be used to identify how accessible the volunteer programme is in accordance with the spirit of the Disability Discrimination Act 1998.

Outcomes are largely qualitative, so tend to rely on feedback from the volunteers, staff and service users within the organisation and external stakeholders. Ensure that people know why this information is being collected and the purpose it will be used for. Questionnaires are an obvious choice for gathering information but be aware that some volunteers will want to escape the bureaucracy that they may encounter elsewhere, and may not complete the forms. For some people, filling in forms is a daunting experience, so try to think of a way of recording information that doesn’t encroach on people’s time or goodwill too much.

Types of monitoring
* An informal group discussion
* Informal one-to-one reviews
* Feedback on volunteer training
* Questionnaire
* Exit interviews

Using the information to improve the volunteer programme
Once the information has been gathered, it will need to be analysed and interpreted. When interpreting information, consider if there are any other possible explanations for the findings. If any gaps are identified, focus on how to make improvements which are realistic, specific and achievable. This may also be a good opportunity to review targets for outputs and outcomes.

Also remember to evaluate the monitoring and evaluation procedure itself – did it provide the information needed to identify areas for improvement? Could the information have been collected more easily or efficiently? If so, adapt the monitoring and evaluation procedure for next time.

Reports to senior management and the trustee board
Remember that for a volunteer programme to be successfully integrated within the life of the organisation, everyone needs to be involved, including senior management and the trustee board or management committee. So, don’t forget to give them copies of the evaluation, as this will help them to make informed, strategic decisions about how the volunteer programme will evolve or operate in the future.
Managing volunteers.

Where volunteers don’t have legal protection, the organisation should reflect the spirit of legislation that will enable its volunteers to be treated in a fair, consistent and equitable manner.

1.9 The legal position of volunteers

Extent of legal protection

In UK law volunteers do not have a legal status as such. Put simply, they are not covered by employment legislation, unlike paid staff. Whilst paid staff have terms and conditions they need to abide by, such as grievance and disciplinary procedures, these do not apply to volunteers. This means that volunteers have no legal protection from unfair dismissal, and they are not covered by equal opportunities legislation.

However, there are some pieces of legislation that cover volunteers as members of the public. This includes Health and Safety and data protection legislation. (Further information on these topics can be found in sections 10 and 11).

Good practice

Volunteers should be afforded the same respect and care as employees, whilst making it clear that the organisation has a different, non-contractual relationship with them.

Volunteers should be included in organisation-wide policies such as equal opportunities, Health and Safety, and zero tolerance of violence, intimidation, bullying, harassment, threatening behaviour and whistleblowing.

Policies that relate directly to the volunteer’s relationship with the organisation, such as how the organisation deals with complaints raised by or about volunteers should be separate from the policies used for paid staff.

Monitoring and evaluating the volunteer policy

Remember that the volunteer policy itself should also be subject to regular review so that it can be updated to reflect changes in volunteer involvement within the organisation. It should be discussed with volunteers as part of their induction, to make sure that they are aware of it.

The Charities Evaluation Services have produced another guide as part of this series, ‘Demonstrating effectiveness’, which gives more in-depth information about monitoring and evaluation.

The Charities Evaluation Services website contains further information on monitoring and evaluation: www.ces-vol.org.uk

Further information about monitoring and evaluation can be found in the ‘Resources for Volunteer Managers and Co-ordinators’ section of Volunteering England’s ‘Good Practice Bank’: www.volunteering.org.uk/goodpractice
Contracts

It should be noted that volunteers can be seen as workers or employees in the eyes of the law if they can demonstrate that they are working under a contract. A contract is a description of a relationship and is not necessarily a written document. Care should be taken to avoid creating circumstances that imply an employment relationship.

In the area of employment, contracts may arise where there is ‘consideration’, which is the exchange or promise of something of material value in return for work.

Examples to consider include:

* Any money over and above actual out-of-pocket expenses
* A perk with a substantial financial value, such as vouchers, tokens or other gifts of appreciable value
* Training that is not necessary for the volunteer’s role (for instance, offering IT training to befrienders simply to enable volunteers to improve their employment prospects).

See 1.12 ‘Expenses’ for further information on how to avoid the main areas of ‘consideration’.

There also has to be an intention to create a binding relationship, but this can be inferred by tribunals or similar bodies from the relationship itself. To summarise, there are two key parts to creating a contract:

* Consideration (money or something of value)
* Intention (does it feel like a binding agreement?).

Depending on the nature of the contract, the individual may be eligible to receive the minimum wage and protection from the employment provisions of equal opportunities legislation, and even from unfair dismissal.

Further information can be found in the ‘Legal Issues and Volunteering’ section of Volunteering England’s ‘Good Practice Bank’: www.volunteering.org.uk/goodpractice
Volunteers should be reassured that the organisation has a duty of care towards them, and that procedures are in place to protect them whilst carrying out their volunteering activities.

1.10 Health and safety, and insurance

Organisations working with statutory agencies
It should be noted that for those volunteering in prison settings that under Prison Service Order 4190, (at the time of writing this PSO is subject to change) Governors must issue formal agreements between the prison and voluntary and community groups as part of the induction pack. This should clearly state where the responsibility lies for health and safety issues, reporting procedures, insurance and other related matters.

Duty of care
Health and Safety legislation places duties on employers towards their employees.
While volunteers fall outside the definition of ‘employee’; they are still protected by the duty of care and legal responsibilities on organisations towards people they don’t employ, but who may be affected by their activities.

The duty of care is a common law duty to take reasonable care to avoid causing harm to others. Organisations have a duty of care towards their volunteers – and, equally, volunteers have a duty of care to those around them, such as service users, colleagues and members of the public.

Section 3 of the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 imposes a duty on every employer:
“...to ensure, as far as reasonably practicable, that persons not in their employment, who may be affected by their undertaking, are not exposed to risks to their health or safety.”

In other words, while volunteers are not included in Health and Safety legislation in the same way as paid staff, the organisation has clear responsibilities towards them.

Risk assessment
The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 compels employers to assess risk not only to employees, but to anyone who might be affected by their activities. Where the organisation has more than five employees, there should be written risk assessments in place. Even where an organisation has fewer than five employees, it is still good practice to have a written Health and Safety policy and risk assessments in place, to help demonstrate its duty of care towards those that come into contact with it.

The risk assessments should cover not only the premises that the volunteers will be working in, but also the different volunteer roles that the organisation offers. If a risk assessment reveals an unacceptable level of risk for a volunteering activity or a place where the volunteering will take place, then action should be taken to reduce the risk to an acceptable level. Risks can typically be lowered through providing information, training, further supervision and any necessary safety protection that may be required.

It should be noted that the aim of a risk assessment isn’t to remove all elements of risk entirely, as this would be impossible. Instead, a common sense approach is needed to reduce risks to a level that the organisation considers to be acceptable.
Managing volunteers.

Where organisations are delivering services in prisons, probation and police settings, they should ensure that these obligations are suitably met within the agency’s own health and safety policy and risk assessments. Therefore, liaison with staff within the particular setting will be necessary.

The Health and Safety Executive’s website contains further information on health and safety and risk assessments: www.hse.gov.uk

Lone working
For volunteers involved in lone working or one-to-one work with offenders and ex-offenders, there need to be additional safety measures in place to protect their safety. Lone working can occur both on and off-site, for instance some volunteer mentors will meet their mentees in public, whilst other volunteers may do so in a prison or probation setting. Where volunteers are working alone this must be recognised within the risk assessment of the volunteer’s role, and lone working practices developed accordingly. Where lone working may occur within a statutory agency such as a prison, probation or a police setting, then organisations are advised to consult with the relevant agency to ensure that robust safety measures are in place to protect volunteers.

The Suzy Lamplugh Trust website contains further information on personal safety and lone working: www.suzylamplugh.org/index.asp

Further information on Health and Safety, risk assessments and lone working can be found in the ‘Health and Safety and Insurance’ section of Volunteering England’s ‘Good Practice Bank’: www.volunteering.org.uk/goodpractice

Induction, training and guidance
Volunteer inductions should include relevant Health and Safety and First Aid information, as well as details of how the Health and Safety policy affects them, and where they can find a copy of it. Volunteers should also be informed of their Health and Safety duties to the people around them.

It’s also a good idea to go through the risk assessment for the particular role that the volunteer will be performing, so that they are aware of the potential risks and can take appropriate action as necessary. For instance, some volunteers (such as mentors or befrienders) may visit a service user off-site, so will need to familiarise themselves with the organisation’s policy on lone and off-site working.

Being inclusive
Remember that some volunteers may have impairments, disabilities or learning difficulties. In these cases, alternative formats of the organisation’s Health and Safety policy may be required. Also, the organisation may need to factor in how such volunteers are managed in an emergency, and this can be incorporated into an evacuation procedure.

It should inform them that they will be indemnified through the organisation’s insurance, provided that they are carrying out activities with the agreement of their supervisor and within any guidelines or codes of conduct that have been issued to them.

Insurance
All organisations that ‘employ’ volunteers (as may be phrased in an insurance policy) are responsible for ensuring that their contract of insurance provides appropriate indemnity cover should a volunteer be injured in the course of their duties as a result of the organisation’s negligence.
Charity and ‘not-for-profit’ organisations that insure with specialist insurers will more than likely find that the definition of ‘employee’ under the Employer’s Liability section includes ‘Volunteers’.

Private and Public Sector organisations may need to specifically request that their insurance policy is endorsed to include volunteers if they are not already included within the definition of Employee or Third Party. This would be acceptable under either the Employers’ Liability or Public Liability Sections of the insurance document.

The main types of insurance for volunteers include:

* Employer’s Liability Insurance
* Public Liability Insurance
* Professional Liability Insurance
* Personal Accident Insurance.

As a matter of good practice, organisations should follow these pointers, to ensure that the appropriate insurance is in place to cover volunteers:

* Ensure that insurance policies explicitly mention volunteers because they may not be automatically included in the organisation’s insurance cover.
* Check with the insurer if there are upper and lower age limits for volunteers before recruiting younger or older volunteers.
* As a policyholder the organisation has a duty to disclose all facts that are material to the cover being afforded by the insurer; more commonly known as a ‘Material Fact’. A material fact is information that would influence an underwriters decision as to whether to accept a proposed ‘risk’, and, if so, on what terms. Such information would be details of the activities that the organisation is asking the volunteers to undertake. If the activity is of a ‘high-risk’ nature then underwriters may impose special terms or conditions for the organisation to comply with in order for indemnity to attach should a claim arise.

* All organisations should have a robust Risk Management Policy that treats both employees and volunteers in the same manner and is used in the daily running of the organisation. This Policy should include Risk Assessments for the activities to be undertaken, training requirements and supervision needs, all of which will need to be documented. This will demonstrate to insurers that the risk the organisation poses is well managed and should lead to more favourable terms and premiums.

It should be noted that offenders and ex-offenders that are volunteering would be included under the definition of an ‘employee’ as a ‘volunteer’. The fact that these individuals have broken the law needs to be disclosed to underwriters as a Material Fact to the risk being proposed. This will need to be supported with details of how this risk (which is more of a moral one) will be managed i.e. identifying suitable roles, providing suitable training and supervision, again, all of which will need to be recorded.

For organisations that exist to serve offenders (such as prisons), offenders should be included under ‘Third Party’ in the Public Liability Section of the document.

**Insurance for volunteer drivers**

If an organisation owns the vehicle being used, then it is responsible for arranging insurance for the vehicle. If the volunteer owns the vehicle, then he or she is responsible for arranging insurance and informing the insurer about their volunteer driving. The volunteer should also notify the insurer of the nature of the organisation’s business.
Organisations accepting the use of privately owned vehicles by volunteers (and even employees) should request to see:

- The individual’s current insurance policy and certificate that states that the vehicle can be used for ‘business use’ – annually (‘business use’ refers to the business of the organisation that the person is volunteering with; the volunteering activity itself could fall under ‘Social, Domestic and Pleasure’ or ‘Business’, depending on the insurer)
- The current MOT certificate to confirm that the vehicle is maintained in a roadworthy condition – annually
- The individual’s driving licence to ensure that they are not disqualified or that they do not have an adverse conviction history – every 6 months.

If a driver has an accident during their volunteering and there is a problem with the insurance for that vehicle, the organisation could be held responsible, whether or not it owns the vehicle involved. The organisation can take out a Contingent Liability Policy to protect it from this risk. It should be noted that the majority of Public Liability Policy wordings include ‘Motor Contingent Liability’ as an automatic extension.

For organisations that depend on volunteers or employees using their own vehicles, insurance can be purchased to protect the individuals against the loss of ‘No Claims Bonus’ or the payment of an ‘excess’ should they be involved in an accident in the course of their duty.

Volunteers using their own vehicles as part of their volunteering must confirm that their own vehicle insurance policy covers this activity. Both Volunteering England and the Community Transport Association provide a standard form which volunteers can use to inform their insurance company that they are using the vehicle during their voluntary activities.

A template of the volunteer drivers’ insurance form can be found in the ‘Health and Safety and Insurance’ section of Volunteering England’s ‘Good Practice Bank’: www.volunteering.org.uk/goodpractice or visit: www.ctauk.org

Further information on insurance and volunteer drivers can be found in the ‘Health and Safety and Insurance’ section of Volunteering England’s ‘Good Practice Bank’: www.volunteering.org.uk/goodpractice
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**Volunteers should be reassured that the organisation only asks for information that it needs, and that it will keep the information securely, limit access to it, and will not pass their details on without consent unless legally obliged to do so.**

### 1.11 Data protection, Freedom of Information Act and copyright

**Good practice in data collection and storage**

The reason for requesting information about volunteers should be fully explained to them. The only data held should be that which is necessary for the volunteer’s involvement with the organisation. Care is needed to ensure that the information collected is adequate and up to date. It should only be used for the purposes for which it was collected. Volunteers should be aware of what information is held, and why. Explicit consent should be asked for the collection, use and storage of sensitive personal information, such as ethnic or racial origin, and physical or mental health.

Information must be kept securely, and access to personal information should be restricted to relevant parties only. Information should only be kept for as long as its original purpose is valid, and in line with data protection and internal human resources guidelines.

When no longer required, information should be destroyed by being shredded by the organisation, or returned to the volunteer. Volunteers should be made aware of their rights to view information held by the organisation under the Freedom of Information Act.

**Designs and Patents Act 1988** states that material produced by employees belongs to their employer, it doesn’t refer to volunteers. Consequently, the copyright of a volunteer’s work remains with them and not with the organisation. Organisations requiring copyright of works produced by volunteers should ask the volunteers to assign or transfer copyright to them, or even agree a licence to use the work in certain situations or publications.

**Further information can be sought from the Intellectual Property Office:** [www.ipo.gov.uk](http://www.ipo.gov.uk)

**Further information can be found in the ‘Legal Issues and Volunteering’ section of Volunteering England’s ‘Good Practice Bank’:** [www.volunteering.org.uk/goodpractice](http://www.volunteering.org.uk/goodpractice)

**Copyright**

Copyright normally belongs to the person or persons who created the work. While the Copyright,
Managing volunteers.

Volunteering is an activity that is undertaken as an act of free will, without concern for financial gain. At the same time, it is good practice for volunteers to be reimbursed for their out-of-pocket expenses.

1.12 Expenses

Making the case for reimbursing expenses

There are a number of reasons why it’s good practice to offer and encourage volunteers to claim reimbursement of their expenses:

- Volunteers give their time for free, and it’s unfair to expect them to be left out-of-pocket as well
- It demonstrates that the organisation values the volunteers’ time, and doesn’t want them to be ‘out of pocket’ for this contribution
- By reimbursing volunteer expenses, the organisation is helping to reduce barriers to volunteering by enabling those on low incomes and state benefits to participate
- This in turn could help the organisation to recruit a new source of valuable and committed volunteers
- The reimbursement of expenses is an equal opportunities issue, because failing to do so excludes a number of potential volunteers who wouldn’t be able to afford to take part otherwise
- By encouraging volunteers to claim their expenses, this gives the organisation an idea of the true cost of this aspect of their volunteer involvement, which they can factor in to future funding bids for their volunteer programme.

If volunteers don’t want to be reimbursed for their expenses, then still encourage them to submit an expenses form, and tell them that they can donate the money back to the organisation if they wish to do so. Another option is to include a box on the expenses form that volunteers can tick if they prefer to donate their expenses to the organisation. Do bear in mind that this shouldn’t cause any peer pressure amongst the volunteers, especially for those that do need reimbursement.

Types of expenses that could be reimbursed

Typical expenses may include (but are not necessarily restricted to):

- Travel to and from the place where the volunteering is taking place
- Travel whilst volunteering
- Meals taken whilst volunteering where reasonable
- Parking
- Supply of protective clothing
- Supply of special equipment (for example, an induction loop) to enable someone to volunteer
- Reimbursement of clothing or property damaged while volunteering
- Post and phone/internet costs
- Care of dependents (for example, children or elderly parents) while volunteering.

Additional out-of-pocket expenses may be determined by the organisation where appropriate. The organisation may also determine where expenses would not be paid, for example parking fines or reimbursement for loss of personal possessions.

Mileage rates

Where volunteers use their own vehicles to travel to and from their place of volunteering, or to transport goods or people as part of their volunteering role, it is important to have a consistent mileage rate. As the costs of running a vehicle are the same for staff and volunteers, it is recommended that volunteers are reimbursed for their mileage at the rates set by HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC).

At the time of writing (August 2009) these rates are:

- Cars and vans – 40p per mile for the first 10,000 miles; 25p per mile over 10,000
Motorcycles – 24p per mile
Bicycles – 20p per mile.

These rates can be checked on the HMRC website at: www.hmrc.gov.uk/rates/travel.htm

It should be noted that reimbursement of mileage above the HMRC rates could be regarded as taxable income for volunteers (and staff).

Transport
Volunteers should normally be expected to use the cheapest practical form of transport available to them to get to where they volunteer. An agreement on taxi use may be appropriate where volunteers have limited mobility or will be working in situations where they may be vulnerable, such as volunteering late at night. Volunteers should be informed of which recommended and reputable taxi companies to use. Some organisations may even make arrangements with private hire companies if using them on a regular basis. Some volunteers cannot use public transport, so a policy on taxi usage shows that they are valued, irrespective of their capacity, circumstances or disability.

How to reimburse expenses
Volunteers should be given a simple expenses claim form to fill in, which they should submit along with any relevant receipts, travel tickets etc.

Volunteers should be encouraged to claim their expenses which should be reimbursed as promptly as possible. Ideally, this should be on the same day in cash if possible, to ensure that those on low incomes or state benefits are not left out-of-pocket for too long.

It is also possible to give volunteers an advance, which can be helpful for volunteers requiring the costs of their travel before actually travelling, or for volunteers who may need to purchase special equipment, clothing or other items as part of their volunteering. Once the volunteer submits their expenses form with their receipts, then the amount can be deducted from the advance, or additional reimbursement can be given to the volunteer as appropriate.

Implications for giving flat rate expenses
Reimbursement, if rounded up so it is more than the actual expense, can be classed as earnings and as such can affect a volunteer’s state benefits, be subject to tax, and could affect the employment status of volunteers, making the service provider liable to pay the National Minimum Wage and other employment rights. Expenses should therefore be reimbursed against receipts and public transport tickets.

Further information can be found in the ‘Expenses and State Benefits’ section of Volunteering England’s ‘Good Practice Bank’: www.volunteering.org.uk/goodpractice
Recruiting volunteers.

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Volunteers reflect the diversity of the local community and create links with it.

2.1 Recruitment

Recruitment methods
Recruitment methods may depend on the nature of specific roles, but typical options are:

- Local Volunteer Centres
- Posters, leaflets, talks
- Advertising in local media (press and radio), including media which target specific communities and age groups, etc
- Local community events and open days
- Volunteering open days, to explain more about the organisation
- Local business and statutory sector pre-retirement courses
- Student community volunteering, based within local students’ unions.

If someone wants to volunteer, make it easy for them to do so. Be aware that their first contact with the organisation is very important. Make sure that potential volunteers have a named contact to speak to, or can leave an answerphone message if no-one is available to take their call. Ensure that all members of staff and volunteers are able to respond to enquiries from potential volunteers, and can signpost them on to the appropriate point of contact within the organisation. All enquiries should be responded to promptly, to avoid potential volunteers losing interest or changing their minds.

Word of mouth can be a powerful tool for volunteer recruitment, but it should not be relied on as the sole method of recruitment, as it tends to reinforce the demographic profile of current volunteers. People tend to know people like themselves, so the word of mouth approach is unlikely to reach out to currently untapped sections of the community.

Details of local Volunteer Centres can be found at: www.volunteering.org.uk/finder

Being inclusive
Recruitment material should take diversity into account. The images and language used in the organisation’s publicity materials should be inclusive. Try to ensure that materials are suitable for those who are colour blind or visually impaired. If the organisation is targeting a specific section of the community, then recruitment materials may be needed in alternative formats or other languages, depending on the requirements of the group the organisation is targeting. Remember that the locations chosen to display recruitment material should be selected to reflect the local community.

Remember that some people may have preconceptions about the various aspects of the CJS, specific client groups or volunteering in general, so aim to tackle these perceptions by presenting an alternative to possible perceived stereotypes. It’s important that potential volunteers understand the challenges that are presented by working with prisoners, offenders and ex-offenders. Equally, the recruitment message should emphasise how satisfying and rewarding it can be to discover what a difference it can make to clients in terms of the progress they make. Where volunteering roles will be based in prison, probation or police settings, then potential volunteers should be made aware of the implications of volunteering in such settings.

Application forms
When dealing with a large number of requests from potential volunteers, application forms are usually
the best way to manage the process. However, complex application forms have the potential to be off-putting for potential volunteers. They can also present a barrier to many people, such as people with English as a second language, learning difficulties, dyslexia, poor literacy skills, visual impairments and so on. Application forms should be as simple and easy to use as possible, asking only for the information that is needed for the recruitment process.

An alternative option could be to work through the form with the potential volunteer during an informal interview or chat. The benefit of this is that some people may be able to express themselves far better verbally than they would when conveying themselves in writing. Remember to explain why the information is being gathered, how it will be used, how long it will be stored for and how it will be disposed of.

If using a formal application form, the organisation may ask the potential volunteer to declare any ‘unspent’ convictions. The application form should clearly state that a criminal record is not necessarily a bar to volunteering. If a CRB Disclosure is required, then the form must state why the role is exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974. The organisation must also have a statement on its recruitment of ex-offenders.


Informal interviews or chats
Informal interviews or chats should offer potential volunteers the chance to find out more about the role, and what it is like to work with the organisation’s service users.

It’s good practice to hold the interview in a comfortable and friendly environment, without interruption, if possible. Prepare a set of questions to ask the applicant, but make sure it’s a two-way process so that the potential volunteer has the opportunity to ask questions as well. Prepare a checklist of information to give to potential volunteers, including literature on the organisation. This will help to answer questions that potential volunteers may think of after the interview. It is important to tell them about:

* The organisation and the role of volunteers within it or connected to it
* The service user group
* The training and support offered to volunteers
* The organisation’s expectations of volunteers (including a brief outline of the policies that are relevant to volunteers)
* The commitment needed for the role (how often the person should ideally volunteer for and for how long, in order for them to get the most out of the volunteering experience)
* The resources available to volunteers, such as reimbursement of out-of-pocket expenses, support and supervision, volunteer meetings, etc.

Some topics for the informal interview include:

* What they like about the idea of volunteering with the organisation or doing this type of volunteering
* What they hope to gain from their volunteering experience
* Their relevant skills, interests and experience
* Their understanding of relevant issues or service user groups
* The times and days they are available
* Any resources they will need (for instance, an induction loop, reimbursement of care costs, support from outside the organisation)
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- The names of potential referees
- Other commitments they may already have within the organisation (for instance, if they’re a member of staff or a service user)
- Any concerns they may have about volunteering in this particular setting
- Any health concerns that may be relevant to the applicant’s volunteering.

Applicants should be given a clear timescale for a decision. If they will need a CRB Disclosure before commencing the role, then let them know that a decision cannot be made until the Disclosure has been received. If the organisation requires references, then state that this may be another cause of delay. Remember to keep in contact with the applicant whilst waiting for the results of a CRB Disclosure or references, as this will help them to feel that they are becoming a part of the organisation which will help to keep them interested in volunteering with it.

Bear in mind that from July 2010 people wishing to begin volunteering with vulnerable clients will need to be registered with the new Vetting and Barring Scheme, although registration for this scheme will be through the Criminal Records Bureau.

See 2.3 ‘Protection and Safeguarding’ for further information.

References
Given the vulnerability of the organisation’s client group (whether prisoners, offenders or ex-offenders), it is recommended that references are taken up where possible. Where an organisation does ask for references, these should be fresh references rather than pre-prepared letters. Generally, family members are not appropriate as referees, although friends can be a good source for character references.

While it is useful for one referee to be a previous employer or volunteer supervisor, it is important to remember that not all volunteers will have such a referee. There should be a degree of flexibility and potential referees should be discussed with the volunteer.

Remember that some volunteers will have particularly limited options in seeking references. For instance:
- Asylum seekers and other people who have not been in the country for very long
- People who have never had a paid position, or haven’t been in employment for a long time.

Other suggestions for referees include religious or cultural leaders, teachers or tutors, case workers, social workers or community leaders.

Health screening
When recruiting volunteers, some organisations like to ask potential volunteers if they have any health conditions or disabilities. It should be made clear to the potential volunteer that this information is sought purely so that the organisation can work out if someone is suitable for a particular volunteer role, whether the role needs to be adapted or whether the applicant will require additional support to carry out the role. If asking for this information on an application form, use a statement that clarifies why it is being asked for.

For example, an application form could state: “Do you have any health conditions and/or disabilities that may affect your volunteering? Any information that you provide will help
us to ensure that the volunteering role is right for you, and tailored appropriately."

In some cases, experience of health conditions or of drug or alcohol addiction may enhance what the potential volunteer can bring to the service, as they may be able to draw on their experiences when helping service users with similar issues.

Introductory period
It is good practice to have a clearly defined introductory period. This gives volunteers the chance to try out their volunteer role, gives them the opportunity to change tasks (or locations if appropriate), and also allows them to not continue in the role if they feel it is not appropriate. An introductory period also means that the volunteer manager can monitor the volunteer in action, so can decide if they are suitable for the volunteering role.

Introductory periods will vary depending on the nature of the volunteering role and how much contact the volunteer has with the organisation.

A review meeting should be held at the end of the introductory period.

Unsuccessful applicants
If an applicant is not suitable for volunteering with the organisation, then provide them with honest feedback without hurting their feelings. Offer support to identify alternative forms of volunteering, such as signposting the person to the local Volunteer Centre.

Too many applicants?
If the organisation’s recruitment campaign has been so successful that there are now more potential volunteers than there are volunteering opportunities, be ready to signpost unsuccessful applicants to other organisations that are also looking for volunteers. This could include other organisations within the CJS, or wider voluntary and community organisations. The local Volunteer Centre may also be able to help potential volunteers find suitable volunteering roles.

Contact details for Volunteer Centres can be found at: www.volunteering.org.uk/finder

Further information can be found in the ‘Recruitment’ section of Volunteering England’s ‘Good Practice Bank’: www.volunteering.org.uk/goodpractice
Screening potential volunteers helps to ensure that the appropriate people are recruited for the appropriate projects.

2.2 Screening potential volunteers

The importance of having a screening process

Essentially, the screening process is used to answer two questions:

★ Is the potential volunteer suitable for the project/service user group?
★ Is the project suitable for the volunteer and will it meet their expectations?

Screening forms an important part of the risk assessment process. Volunteer managers should always make every effort to place a new volunteer in a role which would be suitable and safe for them and for anyone else coming into contact with them, (such as other volunteers, paid staff, service users or members of the public).

There may be some occasions where the volunteer manager is unsure whether a particular role is suitable for a new volunteer. In some cases, it might be wiser to suggest a different volunteer role for them. In other cases, the organisation may decide to give the volunteer a chance to try out the role and offer them extra support or training as necessary.

Organisations will be aware of the different challenges that come with working with their particular client group. For instance, organisations working with particularly dangerous clients would probably prefer to involve volunteers with previous experience of similar service user groups, rather than placing someone who is new to volunteering in a potentially volatile situation. The key is to ensure that potential volunteers are matched with suitable volunteering roles that enable them to give the best of themselves, gain essential knowledge and experience whilst not putting themselves at unnecessary risk.

Screening should also be a continuous process. Supervision and other feedback methods can also be used to check whether a particular role is still suitable for a volunteer, or whether anything has changed their ability to perform the role. For organisations that are delivering services in prisons, police or probation settings, the statutory agency may have additional screening methods that volunteers are required to comply with.

Tools and methods of screening

There are various ways of screening volunteers, including:

★ Having clear recruitment policies and procedures in place, including how to say no to an applicant
★ Having effective application forms that ask relevant questions
★ Interviewing potential volunteers
★ Taking references
★ Carrying out a Criminal Record Bureau Disclosure check where applicable (remember that these alone are not sufficient screening measures)
★ Providing clear role descriptions to ensure that potential volunteers know what is expected of them
★ Having an introductory period
★ Providing full induction and training (including ongoing training)
★ Conducting regular performance assessments and supervision
★ Conducting exit interviews.
Remember that when placing volunteers on projects the organisation has a legal duty of care to ensure the volunteer is suitable for that project and must act reasonably when making that decision. Making a mistake does not necessarily mean that the organisation has not acted reasonably.

Reasonable steps to take
- Do not rely on ‘gut instinct’
- Ensure that policies and procedures have been followed correctly, and that there is written evidence of this
- Where appropriate, seek advice from other advisory or regulatory bodies
- Talk to the volunteer if there are any concerns
- If in doubt, re-consider the risk assessment for the project, and where necessary adapt the activities so that potential risks can be reduced to more acceptable levels
- If a potential volunteer is unsuitable for a role, explain the reasons with honesty and sensitivity
- Suggest alternative roles within the organisation or signpost the applicant to a Volunteer Centre which can help them to find other local volunteering opportunities.

Further information can be found in the ‘Recruitment’ section of Volunteering England’s ‘Good Practice Bank’: www.volunteering.org.uk/goodpractice

2.3 Protection and safeguarding

Spent convictions
The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act (ROA) 1974 aims to ensure that ex-offenders who have not re-offended for a period of time since the date of their conviction are not discriminated against when applying for work (whether paid or unpaid). The Act applies to ex-offenders who have received a sentence of less than two and a half years in prison. If they have not committed an offence during the rehabilitation period for their particular sentence, they may afterwards be regarded as a ‘rehabilitated person’ and the conviction will be ‘spent’.

When a conviction is spent, an individual doesn’t usually have to declare it when applying to work or volunteer. However, an organisation is entitled to ask about ‘unspent’ convictions if a person wishes to work or volunteer with children or vulnerable adults. It should be noted that the definition of ‘vulnerable adult’ now extends to people:
- Detained in a prison, remand centre, young offender institution, secure training centre or attendance centre
- Under the supervision of probation services.

A full definition of ‘Vulnerable Adult’ can be found on the CRB website at: www.crb.gov.uk/faqs/definitions.aspx
Managing volunteers.

IMPLICATIONS FOR ORGANISATIONS

This means that organisations working with clients within these settings will now be entitled to ask for a CRB Disclosure for both paid staff and volunteers. It also means that paid staff and volunteers working in these settings will need to become registered with the Independent Safeguarding Authority’s new Vetting and Barring Scheme (further information below).

Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) Disclosures

The Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) was set up as a ‘one stop shop’ for Criminal Record Bureau Disclosure checks. It aims to help organisations in the private, public and voluntary sectors by identifying applicants who may be unsuitable to work with children or other vulnerable members of society.

A Criminal Records Bureau Disclosure certificate will tell the organisation whether a volunteer or staff member has a criminal record. It is one way of reducing the risk of recruiting volunteers who may be unsuitable to work with children or other vulnerable people. But remember that it is not foolproof because it only provides information on people with an existing record.

A CRB Disclosure check is a process for gathering information about an applicant’s possible criminal activity. This includes spent and unspent convictions and other cautions, reprimands and final warnings given by the Police. The results of a check are printed on a document officially known as a “Disclosure”, and copies are posted to the individual and to the organisation which they have applied to volunteer for. CRB Disclosure checks can be obtained directly through the CRB if the organisation is a Registered Body. If the organisation is not a Registered Body with the CRB, then a CRB Disclosure check can be obtained via an Umbrella Body.

The CRB’s list of Umbrella Bodies can be found at: www.crb.gov.uk/ubsearch

Other considerations

Organisations requesting CRB Disclosures are required to comply with the CRB’s Code of Practice, which is intended to ensure that any information received through a CRB Disclosure will be used fairly. This includes having an Equal Opportunities policy statement on how the organisation will not discriminate against people with criminal convictions, but will take into account their individual circumstances.

The CRB’s ‘Code of Practice’ can be found at: www.crb.gov.uk/code


In addition, under the Data Protection Act information must be held sensitively and securely, and be accurate, relevant and only disclosed where necessary. It must not be held for longer than necessary.


The Information Commissioner’s Office can provide more guidance on this aspect of complying with the CRB Code of Practice.
Visit the Information Commissioner’s Office website at: www.ico.gov.uk

CRB Disclosures are free for volunteers. This exemption does not apply to individuals on work experience or students on work placements.

The Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA)
The ISA was set up following the recommendations of the Bichard Enquiry, in response to the Soham murders in 2002. The recommendations included the setting up of a new Vetting and Barring Scheme, which both employees and volunteers will need to join if they wish to work or volunteer with children or vulnerable adults. The ISA is responsible for making barring decisions on the individuals who apply for membership of the new Vetting and Barring Scheme.

**IMPLICATIONS FOR ORGANISATIONS**

As outlined above, organisations working with vulnerable clients will be under a **legal obligation** to carry out an ISA check if their employees or volunteers will be working or volunteering with vulnerable people.

An ISA check will confirm whether someone is a member of the Vetting and Barring Scheme.

An organisation will not be allowed to recruit either paid staff or volunteers until they have confirmed that the person is a member of the Vetting and Barring Scheme.

Organisations will also be under an **increased duty to disclose** any information received about a volunteer to the scheme, even if the volunteer has left.

It should be noted that membership of the Vetting and Barring Scheme will only indicate that there is no known reason why a person cannot work or volunteer with vulnerable people.

There may still be a need for Enhanced CRB Disclosures, as these will help to assess if someone presents other types of risk to the organisation and is suitable for a particular role working or volunteering with children and/or vulnerable adults.

The volunteer will also be ‘subject to monitoring’, so if their ISA registration status changes the organisation will be notified.

Membership of the Vetting and Barring Scheme will be free for volunteers. If they later move into employment working with vulnerable people, they will then be required to pay the membership fee.

**Implications of the new scheme for offenders and ex-offenders**

Any activity that is defined as a ‘regulated activity’ or a ‘controlled activity’ will be affected by the new Vetting and Barring Scheme. This means that people who are included on the new barred lists will be barred from a much wider range of jobs and activities (including some volunteering roles) than before, particularly in areas of work with vulnerable adults such as the NHS, the Prison Service, and the probation service.

Whilst not all offenders and ex-offenders will be barred from joining the scheme, it should be noted that those on the barred lists may no longer be able to volunteer with vulnerable people, such as other prisoners, offenders or ex-offenders. This could potentially have a significant impact on some volunteering schemes, such as peer to peer mentors in prisons.
Managing volunteers.

A full definition of ‘regulated activity’ can be found on the CRB website at: www.crb.gov.uk/faqs/definitions.aspx

More information on the Independent Safeguarding Authority and the Vetting and Barring Scheme can be found at: www.isa-gov.org.uk

Other safeguarding measures
Prisons need to ensure that external volunteers are security cleared in line with Prison Service Order 8100, though this will be subject to change with the introduction of the Independent Safeguarding Authority. The level of security clearance required will depend on the length of time they will be volunteering in the prison, the type of work they will be doing and the category of prison.

Protecting volunteers
Organisations working with ‘high risk of harm’ offenders will need to ensure that sufficient measures are in place to protect the safety and well-being of their volunteers. This should include

* A thorough health and safety induction for volunteers, focusing on the volunteering role, the volunteering setting and the client group
* Training for volunteers, including personal safety, lone working, dealing with difficult situations and conflict management
* Working with staff (either within the organisation or in the statutory agency) who are trained in risk management to help reduce the levels of risk
* Working in close partnership with the relevant statutory agencies, for example, under the Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA) when appropriate
* Appropriate guidance for mentors.

Further information can be found in the ‘Protection and Safeguarding’ section of Volunteering England’s ‘Good Practice Bank’: www.volunteering.org.uk/goodpractice
The very act of volunteering can be an excellent way of bringing people together, whatever their background or culture. This can also be a real benefit to the organisation; the more diverse the range of people that it engages with, the more people it is likely to reach out to.

2.4 Equal opportunities and diversity

The legal position
It should be noted that volunteers are generally not covered by equal opportunities legislation, unlike paid staff and those in receipt of goods and services provided by the organisation.

To clarify the situation, where volunteers are helping an organisation to deliver services to its clients, but aren’t themselves clients of the organisation’s service, then they would not be covered by equal opportunities legislation.

If, however, an organisation is providing volunteering opportunities to its client group as part of its service delivery, then those volunteers may be covered by equal opportunities legislation through being recipients of the organisation’s service.

Representing and reflecting the community
Even though equal opportunities legislation doesn’t generally apply to volunteers, it is good practice to include them in the organisation’s equal opportunities and/or diversity policy because this demonstrates that the organisation takes this issue seriously.

A diverse group of volunteers makes the organisation both more welcoming to and representative of the local community, and also helps generate new ideas and fresh approaches.

The organisation’s approach to equal opportunities and diversity should be explained as part of the volunteers’ induction, and volunteers should be made aware of their responsibility to follow the spirit of such policies. It should also be made clear that, even though equal opportunities legislation doesn’t protect volunteers, other members of staff and service users should treat the volunteers with the same courtesy and respect that they would treat each other.

The organisation should have a clear equal opportunities and managing diversity statement, which includes reference to volunteers as well as paid staff and service users. This statement can either be included in the volunteer policy, to make it more accessible to volunteers, or volunteers could be signposted to where they can find a copy of the organisation’s Equal Opportunities and Diversity policy.

Organisations working within statutory settings
For organisations working in prisons, it should be noted that Prison Service Order 4190 (at the time of writing this PSO is subject to change) encourages and welcomes diversity and requires Governors to explore ways of building and developing contacts with under-represented groups, address attitudes in establishments through training and policy implementation and take action against anyone who is found to discriminate unfairly against voluntary and community sector staff or volunteers working in establishments.

The Probation Service will also have similar diversity and community representation statements in place.

Being proactive
Whilst many organisations would consider themselves to be following equal opportunities by operating services that are open to anyone that
needs them, the reality is that they may remain inaccessible to some people if the organisation fails to engage with specific sections of the community. The same is true of volunteering, so a proactive approach is needed when designing a recruitment drive for a volunteer programme.

See 2.5, 2.6 and 2.7 for further information on how to include specific sections of the community.

Children and young people
While there are legal restrictions on employing young people, they do not apply to volunteers. However, it is worth being aware of the legislation, and remembering that young people have other demands on their time outside volunteering, such as homework and socialising.

People aged 16-25
Local “vinvolved teams” can provide advice on working with volunteers aged 16-25, as well as advertise volunteering opportunities to this age group.

Details of local vinvolved teams can be found at: www.vinspired.com/opportunities/vinvolvedsearch

Further information can be found in the ‘Youth Volunteering’ section of Volunteering England’s ‘Good Practice Bank’: www.volunteering.org.uk/goodpractice

Older people
Firstly, it’s worth noting that the Employment Equality (Age) Regulations 2006 don’t apply to volunteers, as they only apply to paid employees. Ideally, there should be no upper age limit on volunteering. Volunteers should be treated as individuals, with the only measure of suitability being their capability to carry out duties in a safe manner and in line with the organisation’s policies.

Having said this, sometimes the nature of the volunteering role may mean that the organisation is unable to insure volunteers beyond a certain age. Where this is the case, the organisation can either shop around to find an insurance policy that will cover older volunteers, or they may be able to find or create a more suitable volunteer role.

People aged 50+
RSVP, the Retired and Senior Volunteer Programme, is coordinated by CSV and can help organisations to recruit volunteers over the age of 50.

More information can be found on CSV’s website at: www.csv-rsvp.org.uk

Further information can be found in the ‘Older Volunteering’ and ‘Retention’ sections of Volunteering England’s ‘Good Practice Bank’: www.volunteering.org.uk/goodpractice

Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual or Transgender people (LGBT)
Whilst some groups in society are easily identifiable in terms of their age, gender or ethnicity, other groups are harder to identify, so may be inadvertently forgotten about when organisations consider their commitment to equal opportunities and diversity. This is true of groups such as students, offenders and ex-offenders, people from overseas and people who are lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender.
When targeting potential LGBT volunteers, it’s best to consider the organisation’s approach to LGBT involvement across the board – from staff and trustee recruitment to service user engagement. The reason for this is that the more LGBT-friendly the organisation is, the easier it will be to recruit LGBT volunteers, as they’ll feel more comfortable in a safe environment that welcomes LGBT people to become part of the organisation’s fabric.

Further information can be found on LGBT Consortium’s website at: http://lgbtconsortium.org.uk/c1

Vulnerable people

Some adult volunteers may be vulnerable or require additional support, for example if they have a substantial physical or learning disability, have mental health problems or are recovering from addictions. Other vulnerable people could include homeless volunteers, and non-English speakers.

It is important to remember the organisation’s commitment to equal opportunities and diversity. By refusing to take on anyone who is vulnerable the organisation could be losing out on good volunteers as well as preventing people who are often at risk of social exclusion from taking an active role in the community.

However, just as when working with young people, care is needed to make sure that vulnerable people are not at risk and are adequately supported to carry out their role. It is important to remember that different people have different support needs and that individuals are usually the best judges of what they can and cannot do, and of the types of help that they need.

Further information can be found in the ‘Supported Volunteering’ and ‘Disabled People as Volunteers’ sections of Volunteering England’s ‘Good Practice Bank’: www.volunteering.org.uk/goodpractice

Student volunteers

Most Higher and Further Education institutions, such as universities and colleges, have volunteering offices for their students and staff. These are usually based within the students’ union or careers centre.

Contact details for local higher education institutions can be found at: www.ucas.ac.uk/instit/index.html

More information on student volunteering is available at: www.volunteering.org.uk/sv

Further information can be found in the ‘Student Volunteering’ section of Volunteering England’s ‘Good Practice Bank’: www.volunteering.org.uk/goodpractice

Offenders and ex-offenders

Offenders and ex-offenders may often regard volunteering as part of their rehabilitation, or a means of gaining experience in a particular area that may help them to secure paid employment. It should be noted that just because someone has a criminal record, this isn’t necessarily a bar to them...
volunteering. Organisations requiring CRB Disclosures will be required to have a written statement on how they involve ex-offenders in their work.


See 2.6 for further information on how to involve offenders and ex-offenders as volunteers.

Virtual, online or remote volunteers
Virtual volunteering is a way for people to make an impact on their communities via the internet, a computer, or any other digital platform. Although relatively recent, this rapidly growing form of volunteering allows people to have the flexibility to complete tasks at a time and place that suits them best. Participants are also sometimes described as online or remote volunteers.

There are numerous ways in which people can support an organisation through virtual volunteering:

- Moderating online forums or chat rooms
- Setting up and maintaining databases and other electronic records
- Designing recruitment materials for the volunteer programme, or publicity materials to raise awareness of the organisation’s work
- Writing and editing an online magazine or newsletter
- Maintaining an organisation’s website
- Fundraising campaigns
- E-mentoring for prisoners or young offenders


* Providing online help, advice, guidance and support for offenders, ex-offenders and their families, as well as the victims of crime.

Further information can be found in the ‘Virtual or Online Volunteering’ section of Volunteering England’s ‘Good Practice Bank’: www.volunteering.org.uk/goodpractice
Managing volunteers.

Some groups in society have to follow certain rules about whether or not they can volunteer. By keeping up to date with the latest guidance, organisations can build their volunteer base and avoid falling foul of the law.

2.5 State Benefits, refugees, asylum seekers and people from overseas

State benefits

Jobseeker’s Allowance (JSA): Jobseeker’s Allowance claimants can do as much volunteering as they like providing that they remain available for and are actively seeking work. This means that they will have to show that they are looking for work and applying for jobs where appropriate.

If an individual is volunteering, then they are entitled to 48 hours’ notice if they have to attend an interview and a week’s notice before starting work. These are concessions to the 24-hour notice normally allowed.

Volunteer involvement should be flexible enough to accommodate volunteers having to attend Job Centre Plus for meetings and to sign on, and the possibility of interviews being arranged at short notice.

Income Support (IS): Income Support should not be affected by volunteering, as long as the claimant does not receive anything apart from reimbursement of out-of-pocket expenses. There is no hour limit on volunteering.

Incapacity Benefit (IB): There used to be a ‘16 hour rule’ which set a maximum time limit on the amount of volunteering that could be done by someone in receipt of this benefit. However, this was removed in 1998, so there is no longer a limit on the amount or type of volunteering that someone can do while claiming Incapacity Benefit.

Sometimes there is confusion about volunteering and ‘permitted work’, which is similar to the old ‘therapeutic earnings’. The permitted work rule applies only to paid work and should not affect volunteers. Claimants should be entitled to volunteer without it being recognised as permitted work.

Disability Living Allowance (DLA): DLA is an allowance paid in acknowledgement of the fact that life for someone with a disability may be more expensive. For instance, someone with mobility problems may be reliant on taxis. Volunteering will not affect whether an individual receives this benefit or not.

Housing Benefit/Local Authority Housing Allowance: This is usually paid to people receiving JSA, Income Support, Pension Credit or who have a low income. It should not be affected by volunteering but claimants should inform their local authority about any volunteer expenses they receive.

Employment Support Allowance (ESA): This is a new benefit which was introduced in October 2008. The ESA will gradually replace both Incapacity Benefit and Income Support paid because of disability or incapacity. Incapacity Benefit and Income Support will continue to be paid to existing claimants, although new claimants will receive ESA.

The new regulations on Employment Support Allowance clearly state that claimants will be allowed to volunteer. The regulations also recognise that reasonable expenses can be reimbursed to claimants who volunteer.

Further information can be found in ‘Volunteering while receiving benefits’, published by DWP/Jobcentre Plus:
Managing volunteers.

Informing Jobcentre Plus
It is a mandatory requirement for volunteers in receipt of benefits to declare their volunteering activities to JobCentre Plus staff. Volunteer managers should make volunteers aware of this requirement, although the decision to inform JobCentre Plus staff rests with the volunteer – there is no onus on the organisation to do this.

Volunteer managers can help benefits claimants to feel more confident about explaining their volunteer role to JobCentre Plus staff. This could include providing publicity leaflets about the organisation’s work and a simple volunteer role description to clarify the types of activities the volunteer usually carries out.

Sample letters to send to Job Centre Plus can be found in the ‘Expenses and State Benefits’ section of Volunteering England’s ‘Good Practice Bank’: www.volunteering.org.uk/goodpractice

People from overseas

Refugees
People who have refugee status or who have exceptional leave to remain, and their family members, are allowed to do any type of work including volunteering.

Asylum seekers
Since April 2000, asylum seekers (people in the process of applying for refugee status) have been allowed to volunteer in certain types of organisation. Asylum seekers generally receive a document which states that they cannot take up paid or unpaid employment, but this does not apply to volunteering.


Further information can be found in the ‘Refugees, Asylum Seekers and Migrants as Volunteers’ section of Volunteering England’s ‘Good Practice Bank’: www.volunteering.org.uk/goodpractice

VOLUNTEERS FROM WITHIN THE EUROPEAN UNION (EU) AND THE EUROPEAN ECONOMIC AREA (EEA)

People from European Union (EU) member countries (pre-2005): There are no restrictions on volunteering by people from Austria, Belgium, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, France, Finland, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain and Sweden (members of the European Union).

People from the European Economic Area (EEA): The same freedom to volunteer is extended to nationals of Iceland, Norway, Liechtenstein and Switzerland which are members of the European Economic Area.

Recent accessions to the European Union (after 2005): Romania and Bulgaria joined the European Union in 2007. At the time of writing, freedom of movement and work has not been extended fully to citizens of these countries. Therefore, potential volunteers from Bulgaria or Romania will need to contact the UK Border Agency for further information.
Managing volunteers.

People applying to come to the UK with the main intention of working for a charity on an unpaid basis: In November 2008, the UK Border Agency launched a new immigration category for migrants who wish to visit the UK in order to work on an unpaid basis for a charity. It is known as the 'charity workers' sub category and replaces the previous category for 'voluntary worker visas'.

Further information can be found on the UK Border Agency website: www.bia.homeoffice.gov.uk/workingintheuk/tier5

People who wish to volunteer in addition to the central purpose of their stay in the UK: People from outside the EU or EEA come to the United Kingdom for a wide variety of reasons and therefore might be granted one of a number of visas or types of entry clearance.

If an organisation is approached by a potential volunteer from outside the EU/EEA, the volunteer manager should explain that the individual must check their own visa or entry clearance conditions, to ensure that they are allowed to volunteer in addition to their main purpose for entering the country. If the applicant is unsure whether they are allowed to volunteer, then they will need to contact the UK Border Agency for clarification.

Volunteering. Individuals are therefore advised to check with the UK Border Agency.

Students from overseas
A person with a genuine 'student visa' should not need permission to take part-time or holiday work, including volunteering. Some restrictions remain in place, however, including a limit of 20 hours per week during term time, unless the college agrees otherwise.

A new short-term category of 'student visitor visa' was introduced in 2007, which differs from a 'student visa', and has the same rules as visitor visas. Further information can be sought from the UK Border Agency.

Further information can be found on the UK Border Agency website: www.bia.homeoffice.gov.uk

Visitors
Anyone holding a 'visitor visa' is not allowed to take up paid or unpaid work during their stay in the UK, which would seem to include
2.6 Offenders and ex-offenders as volunteers

Challenges and rewards

Organisations that proactively seek to involve prisoners, offenders and ex-offenders as volunteers often find that they face many challenges in doing so. Not only do they need to ensure that they follow any statutory procedures that may be in place, but they also need to have sufficient safeguards to protect others where they will be in contact with offenders or ex-offenders that pose a high risk of harm.

Other challenges include tackling perceptions of offenders and ex-offenders that are held by both the general public and by funders. Some funders may not be supportive of projects that involve prisoners, offenders or ex-offenders as volunteers, especially where the project may be focusing on issues such as drug addiction. Other funders may require volunteers to have no outstanding unspent convictions, or to have been free of offending for a specific period of time.

However, overcoming such challenges can lead to substantial rewards for both the organisation and the volunteer. Volunteering can help provide stability and routine, as well as boosting confidence and increasing self-esteem. By volunteering a person can also gain new skills, interests and experiences, which will improve their quality of life and may even lead to employment. A substantial period of volunteering activity that proves their commitment, capabilities and honesty can result in a reference that may prove invaluable for future job applications.

Not only can organisations and their service users benefit from the volunteer’s contribution, but they will also notice the change within the volunteer. By giving an offender or ex-offender the chance to volunteer, the organisation is effectively enabling them to empower themselves.

Prisoners as volunteers

The number of opportunities for people to volunteer whilst in prison is increasing, with roles covering a wide range of peer support. Such roles include becoming a listener, an ‘Insider’ (a supervised prisoner who helps provide first night support to new prisoners), and advisors for joint initiatives with other organisations such as the Citizens Advice Bureau and Shelter. In addition to peer support roles, there are various other volunteering opportunities for prisoners to participate in.

If the organisation recruits prisoners as volunteers, then the volunteer policy will need to reflect this, to ensure that prisoner volunteers are treated fairly and consistently. Also, because prisoners are classed as ‘vulnerable’, this will have safeguarding implications on staff and other volunteers working with them.

See 2.3 for further information on safeguarding issues.

Offenders

Encouraging offenders to volunteer can provide enormous benefits to the individual in terms of both their personal development and their opportunities for further progression. For instance, if an offender is able to volunteer and gain accreditation for their volunteering, this may help them to secure future employment. Where an offender has previously volunteered whilst in prison, it may be possible for them to gain a reference from the prison Governor or the organisation they volunteered for.
Ex-offenders
Recruiting ex-offenders enables the organisation to recruit from a wider pool of potential volunteers, which can help to increase the volunteer base. According to figures from crime prevention charity Nacro, almost a quarter of men and women of working age has a criminal record. So, if organisations exclude people with criminal records they will automatically lose access to a significant proportion of potential volunteers.

By proactively targeting ex-offenders as part of a recruitment campaign, an organisation is also able to demonstrate its commitment to equal opportunities and diversity. Where an organisation refuses to treat people as individuals by assessing each case on its own merit they will be operating on the basis of ill-informed prejudice, which can have a detrimental effect on the organisation’s reputation in the wider community.

Finding suitable roles
Some offenders and ex-offenders can offer a wealth of skills and experience to an organisation that other volunteers wouldn’t necessarily have. For instance, a former drug misuser may wish to volunteer as a mentor or befriender to a young person with a drug addiction, or give talks in schools on substance misuse. By drawing on their own experience, a volunteer can ‘make it real’ for the service user, which may have a far bigger impact than other staff or volunteers.

However, it’s important to be mindful of that fact that just because someone has committed an offence and wants to reform themselves, they won’t necessarily want to draw on their previous experiences to help others in similar situations. Some people will be keen to put the past behind them and move on. They may simply regard volunteering as a way of gaining new skills that may help them to find paid work.

Recruiting someone with a criminal record
There are many factors that an organisation needs to consider when deciding whether to recruit someone with a criminal record. These include:

- The potential volunteer’s suitability for the role
- The relevance of the offence
- The level of risk they pose (to the organisation and those that come into contact with it)
- The setting in which the volunteering activity will take place.

SUITABILITY FOR THE VOLUNTEERING ROLE

One starting point for making a decision on whether to recruit someone would be to work out their suitability for the role:

- Can the person undertake the task that is required of them?
- Do they have the essential skills or experience needed for the role?
- If not, do they have the ability to develop them?

If the answer is yes, only then should criminal convictions be taken into account when weighing up someone’s suitability for the volunteering role.
Managing volunteers.

THE RELEVANCE OF THE OFFENCE

In some cases, it may be necessary to hold a second meeting with the potential volunteer to find out more about the circumstances in which the offence occurred. Factors to consider when making a recruitment decision include:

- Whether or not the conviction is relevant to the volunteering opportunity
- The nature and seriousness of the offence
- The circumstances surrounding the offence and the explanation offered by the applicant
- How old the applicant was when the offence was committed
- The length of time since the offence occurred
- Whether the behaviour that constituted the offence is still a cause for concern
- Whether the context behind that behaviour is still a cause for concern
- Whether the applicant has a pattern of offending behaviour
- Whether the applicant’s circumstances have changed
- The applicant’s attitude to the offence. Is it one of remorse? Does the applicant take responsibility for it and recognise the harm they caused?
- Has the offence been decriminalised?

If the answers to most of these questions are reassuring, then the presumption may be that the potential volunteer does not pose a risk. References can be taken and referees can be questioned where necessary to aid the volunteer manager in the decision-making process.

MANAGING RISK

Organisations interact with offenders and ex-offenders at different stages of their ‘journey’ through the CJS, and this will inevitably have an impact on the level of risk management that is required.

Whilst some organisations will find the above checklist helpful, those working with prisoner and offender volunteers may need a different set of criteria when assessing the risk posed by an individual. This is especially true of organisations that enable serious or high risk offenders to participate in volunteering roles.

Some ways in which organisations manage risk include:

- Requiring an offender or ex-offender to be ‘clean’ of offending for a specific period of time before they are able to volunteer
- Asking more probing questions of certain types of prisoner during an informal interview
- Adapting the volunteering role to reduce levels of risk
- Providing additional levels of supervision for the volunteer
- Identifying if staff or other volunteers need to be aware of any health and safety or personal security issues when working alongside a particular volunteer or a particular type of offender
- Adapting existing risk management policies and procedures to accommodate offender and ex-offender volunteers
- Having a specific policy in place to demonstrate how the risk of harm by the individual will be reduced when working with serious offenders as volunteers
Taking the view that if an offence is spent then the ex-offender should be given the same equal opportunities as other volunteers.

For some organisations there may be questions about the point at which an offender becomes an ex-offender, and whether they can be certain that the person no longer poses a risk of re-offending. If an ex-offender does re-offend, then the organisation needs to have guidelines in place for how it will deal with such situations.

THE VOLUNTEERING SETTING

Where the volunteering actually takes place may be another factor in deciding whether or not to recruit an offender or ex-offender as a volunteer.

For instance, in the case of prisoner volunteers, the volunteering may happen in the prison or in the community whilst the prisoner is on day release. Where the volunteering has been arranged in conjunction with a statutory agency such as a prison, the organisation will need to ensure that it complies with any protocols or restrictions that the statutory body has in place.

Equal opportunities

It could be argued that to have such a process of risk assessment may seem unfair, and that all potential volunteers should be treated equally. Whilst organisations should aim to avoid treating offenders and ex-offenders differently from other volunteers, it must also be recognised that the organisation has a duty of care to those that come into contact with it, so the issue of equal opportunities and risk management needs to be finely balanced.

Engaging prisoners, offenders and ex-offenders as volunteers

Once the organisation has made the commitment to involve offenders and ex-offenders as volunteers, it’s a good idea to ask them how they would like to be engaged within the life of the organisation. Ideas generated by service users and volunteers and then put into practice can be really empowering, so do remember to communicate with all the volunteers to gather their thoughts, comments and opinions about the organisation.

Further information can be found in the ‘Ex-offenders, Offenders and Prisoners as Volunteers’ section of Volunteering England’s ‘Good Practice Bank’: www.volunteering.org.uk/goodpractice
Volunteering is central to active citizenship, inclusion and democracy. Employer-Supported Volunteering schemes can offer employees an opportunity to participate in the local community, as well as an insight into how their work can affect the lives of others.

2.7 Employees as volunteers

Employer-Supported Volunteering

For larger companies, Employer-Supported Volunteering (ESV) often forms part of an organisation’s Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) policy. However, in recent years there has been a push to encourage small and medium-sized organisations to set up ESV schemes as well, as these can often reap huge benefits for all involved:

- The employee is able to participate in the local community, which they may not otherwise have time to do. For employees offering their skills and expertise on a pro bono basis, an ESV scheme can provide the opportunity to see how they can benefit the wider community.
- By working in partnership with host volunteer-involving organisations, the employer is able to raise their profile within the community. Also, by enabling employees to have time to volunteer, this can enhance staff motivation and boost retention levels.
- The host volunteer-involving organisation is the main recipient of the employee volunteer’s time and effort, which benefits not only the organisation’s service user group, but also the wider community in turn.

For an ESV scheme to be truly inclusive, it needs to proactively encourage all employees to participate, from junior staff through to senior managers, directors and chief executives.

Generally, there are three main ways in which employers promote community involvement amongst their staff:

- Companies operate an ESV scheme in which a dedicated member of staff proactively identifies and develops volunteering opportunities with local voluntary and community organisations. Employees can volunteer during working hours, whilst not incurring any financial penalties.
- Employees are encouraged to find their own volunteering opportunities within the community, and are given the flexibility to fit their work around the volunteering opportunity. In some schemes, employees can take sabbaticals, whilst others volunteer on an ongoing, regular basis.
- Employees enable voluntary and community organisations to benefit from their business skills and experience. Such employees may undertake pro bono work, provide voluntary consultancy services, or serve as trustees.

Setting up an Employer-Supported Volunteering scheme for staff

As outlined above, there are various ways in which employers can get involved in ESV. If an organisation would like to set up a scheme for its staff, there are numerous resources and organisations that can help. Organisations will also find it helpful to have an Employee Volunteering policy in place, setting out important information such as:

- How much time the organisation will let the employee volunteer for
- Whether this time needs to be matched by the employee’s own time
- Whether employees can find their own volunteering opportunities, or whether these will be arranged/ approved by the organisation
- Whether employees can volunteer with any organisation they choose, or whether the host volunteer-involving organisation needs to be relevant to the employees area of work.
More information on Employer-Supported Volunteering is available at: www.volunteering.org.uk/esv

Becoming a host volunteer-involving organisation
Another good way of increasing the diversity of the volunteer base is to consider becoming a host volunteer-involving organisation. If there are any tasks or volunteer roles that would lend themselves to such a scheme, then it would be worth contacting a broker to help find an employer that is looking for suitable volunteering opportunities for their staff. This may also provide a good opportunity for forging links with local employers that may be prepared to offer the organisation further support in the future, such as free meeting room hire, or fundraising opportunities.

More information about ESV brokers can be found at: www.volunteering.org.uk/esvbrokers

Civil servants within the CJS
Baroness Neuberger’s third report “Employer-supported volunteering in the civil service”, published July 2009, made several recommendations, including giving all civil servants 5 days a year to volunteer. For Neuberger, volunteering could also be encouraged as part of an employees’ personal development plan. Whilst many civil servants support causes outside of their professional remit, an ESV scheme in every government department would provide staff with the opportunity to learn more about how volunteering relates to their particular area of work.

In effect, Employer-Supported Volunteering can be a good way for civil servants within the Criminal Justice System to find out more about how government decisions and policies can impact on organisations that fall under the CJS umbrella. Enabling civil servants to engage with such organisations can help to foster a closer link between both parties, thus strengthening their relationship and creating more understanding of the roles, aims and limitations of each party. For organisations considering becoming a host for employee volunteers, providing volunteering opportunities for CJS civil servants may have longer-term impacts and benefits.

‘Employer-supported volunteering in the civil service – A review by Baroness Neuberger, the Prime Minister’s Volunteering Champion’ can be found at: www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/media/218600/neuberger%20civil%20service.pdf

Further information can be found in the ‘Employer-Supported Volunteering’ section of Volunteering England’s ‘Good Practice Bank’: www.volunteering.org.uk/goodpractice
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Rewarding, recognising and retaining volunteers.

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Formally recognising a volunteer’s achievements can have long-lasting benefits for both the volunteer and the organisation.

### 3.1 Accreditation of volunteering

This may include certificates or an annual award ceremony, or small ‘thank you’ gifts that recognise and thank volunteers for their contribution to the organisation.

The contribution of volunteers may be highlighted in publicity and press releases; where the organisation would like to feature volunteers as case studies it will be necessary to seek their permission first.

The organisation could set up an internal award scheme, or nominate people for external volunteer awards, although the individual volunteer’s permission should be sought before nominations are made.

The benefits of accreditation

Accreditation is the formal recognition of the achievements of an individual, which are linked up to an internal or external standard. Formally recognising a person’s achievements through their volunteering has benefits for both volunteers and the organisation:

For volunteers:
* Motivation
* Increased skills
* Increased likelihood of gaining paid work after their experience of volunteering
* Personal development
* Recognition of their contribution to the organisation.

For the organisation:
* Volunteers who are more effective and skilled in their tasks
* Improved retention of volunteers
* Easier recruitment of volunteers
* Improved service/results of volunteering.

Key issues

When thinking about introducing an accreditation scheme for volunteers, the organisation should consider what it hopes to gain from doing so, as this will help to identify the most appropriate accreditation programme for the organisation's needs.

There are some key issues to consider before going ahead:
* Offering accreditation of volunteering can result in attracting volunteers who may be better educated and/or who are participating in volunteering as a step towards paid employment. It should be made clear to volunteers that accreditation is for anyone, and shouldn’t be equated with formal or written examinations. It needs to be properly presented and explained to avoid deterring people who may have had previous bad experiences in education or who are not very confident of their own abilities. If it is handled properly, accreditation can make a positive contribution to equal opportunities by enabling people who may have no or few qualifications to gain in confidence and skills.
* Accreditation can bring assessment and possible success or failure into volunteering. Some people volunteer to escape these pressures.
* For accreditation to succeed, the volunteer must be performing specific tasks which demonstrate particular skills. This demands a clear role description for the volunteer and may reduce the flexibility of their volunteering role. The organisation will also need to keep proper
Managing volunteers.

Rewarding and recognising volunteers is an ongoing process; even the simplest gestures can make a big impact on a volunteer loyalty to the organisation.

3.2 Reward and recognition

Saying ‘thank you’

Saying ‘thank you’ to volunteers is easy, especially if staff get into the habit of saying it at the end of every session that a volunteer attends. Thanking volunteers individually is a way of acknowledging their contribution and recognising that they are making a difference, not just to the organisation, but to the service users as well.

Events

Some organisations thank their volunteers by arranging special events that may be specifically for volunteers, or may also include staff. Such activities can include meals, lunches, coffee mornings, fun days, champagne receptions, sporting activities such as bowling, or maybe a visit to the organisation’s head office, so that volunteers can get a sense of how they fit in to the overall structure of the organisation. Funding for such events should be included in the budget for the volunteer programme. Remember that volunteers give their time for free, and the least an organisation can do is to recognise this by demonstrating how much their volunteers are appreciated.

See 1.9 ‘The legal position of volunteers’ for further information.

Further information can be found in the ‘Induction and Training’ section of Volunteering England’s ‘Good Practice Bank’: www.volunteering.org.uk/goodpractice

Volunteers’ Week (1-7 June): www.volunteersweek.org.uk

Student Volunteering Week: www.volunteering.org.uk/sv

Count Me In calendar: www.countmeincalendar.info

Interfaith calendar: www.interfaithcalendar.org
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Other ideas

* ‘Thank you’ cards from service users to volunteers
* A ‘Thank you’ noticeboard for service users and staff to show their appreciation
* Informing a volunteer if they’ve inspired a service user to become a volunteer, or helped change their life in some other way.

Award schemes

Award schemes are also a popular method for recognising the achievements and commitment of volunteers. There are some award schemes which specifically focus on voluntary groups and others which recognise individual volunteers.

- **Justice Awards** (organised by the Office for Criminal Justice Reform): [www.cjsonline.gov.uk/justiceawards](http://www.cjsonline.gov.uk/justiceawards)
- **Queen’s Award for Voluntary Service**: [www.queensawardvoluntary.gov.uk](http://www.queensawardvoluntary.gov.uk)
- **The Guardian Public Services Awards**: [www.guardian.co.uk/publicservicesawards](http://www.guardian.co.uk/publicservicesawards)

When considering whether to nominate an individual or group of volunteers for an award, remember to check in advance whether that person is happy to be nominated and wouldn’t object to any media attention as a winner or runner-up. Also bear in mind that other volunteers may feel left out, so don’t forget to find other ways to thank or praise them.

Other methods of retaining volunteers

Providing support and supervision, relevant training and offering extra responsibility demonstrate that the organisation is committed to its volunteers.

and these tasks usually form part of a volunteer management strategy that takes place all year round.

Further information can be found in the ‘Reward, Recognition and Retention’ section of Volunteering England’s ‘Good Practice Bank’: [www.volunteering.org.uk/goodpractice](http://www.volunteering.org.uk/goodpractice)
3.3 Moving on

Volunteering can help people to gain new skills and experience, and for some it can provide a stepping stone into paid employment.

Supporting prisoners, offenders and ex-offenders to move on

Some organisations that recruit offenders and ex-offenders as volunteers may devise their volunteering opportunities in such a way as to enable people to develop new skills, build up social networks and gain confidence and self-esteem. Some may even take a proactive approach to helping volunteers find paid employment when the time comes for them to move on. Where organisations do commit to offering this extra layer of support, they should ensure that there are sufficient resources to do so, so that all volunteers are treated fairly, consistently and equitably.

Where organisations are supporting prisoners who are volunteering, it would be helpful to try and ensure that the prisoner has a point of contact for further volunteering opportunities once they have been released. When prisoners are released they are often unable to continue in their volunteering role within the prison. By helping prisoners find new volunteering opportunities either just before they are released or soon afterwards helps to maintain some consistency as well as a sense of moving on. If organisations working with prisoner volunteers are unable to find suitable volunteering opportunities, then at the very least they should signpost the person to the local Volunteer Centre.

Volunteers who stay too long

In some cases, a volunteer may join an organisation and remain with them for a number of years. Whilst this isn’t necessarily a bad thing, some volunteers can become institutionalised, and may feel that their authority extends beyond their volunteering role.

Where possible, such behaviour or attitudes should be dealt with during supervision sessions. If the behaviour persists, but isn’t enough to raise a complaint about the volunteer, then some options could include changing or adapting the volunteer’s role, developing a new role for them, or maybe placing them within a different part of the organisation.

Finally, if all else fails, the volunteer manager may decide to encourage the volunteer to move on from the organisation. This needs to be dealt with tactfully, and may involve the volunteer manager arranging a supervision session or a review with the volunteer to discuss the following:

- The volunteer’s achievements during their time with the organisation
- What the volunteer might expect to gain from their volunteering in the future
- What the organisation can realistically offer the volunteer in the future
- How the volunteer’s needs may be better met elsewhere.

Ideally, the volunteer will recognise that if they’ve fulfilled their motivations for volunteering then it may be time for them to move on. If, however, this doesn’t happen then the volunteer manager may need to emphasise that the organisation can no longer offer the volunteer anything new

Details of local Volunteer Centres can be found at: www.volunteering.org.uk/finder
or exciting, but that the volunteer has a wealth of knowledge and experience that would benefit another organisation. If there are local organisations that would really appreciate the volunteer’s help, then give the volunteer their details. Alternatively, give the volunteer the contact details for the local Volunteer Centre. Above all, remember to be kind, firm and polite when dealing with a delicate situation.

Details of local Volunteer Centres can be found at: www.volunteering.org.uk/finder

When volunteers leave
It’s a good idea to have a written policy on how to say ‘thank you’ to volunteers when they leave the organisation, to ensure that all volunteers are treated fairly, equally and consistently. This will be especially helpful for other members of staff if a volunteer leaves whilst the volunteer manager is away for any reason.

For instance, the organisation may decide to give the volunteer a ‘thank you’ card that other members of the organisation can sign, and/or a small commemorative gift. The volunteer could also be presented with a certificate to acknowledge their volunteering contribution. Some people may regard this as a souvenir of the time they’ve spent with the organisation, whilst others may find a certificate a useful way of demonstrating the skills that they’ve learnt and developed whilst volunteering for the organisation.

Giving references
Volunteering can be a valuable source of experience, and is often a route into employment for many volunteers. One way of recognising a volunteer’s contribution to the organisation is to offer to give them a reference. This may be more applicable for volunteers who have been with the organisation long enough to understand their volunteering role and get the most out of it.

Exit interviews
It is good practice to conduct an exit interview when a volunteer decides to leave the organisation, as it is an opportunity for them to reflect on their role, what they have enjoyed, what has gone well and whether they would recommend any changes to the role. When volunteers announce that they intend to leave the organisation, remember that they are free to come and go as they choose; unlike paid employees, volunteers do not have to serve a notice period. Depending on the circumstances, some volunteers may simply telephone to say that they’re unable to continue volunteering. Others may give a date that they intend to stop volunteering.

See 1.8 ‘Monitoring and evaluation’ for further information.
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4.1 Other guides in this series

**Demonstrating effectiveness**
Clinks / Charities Evaluation Service (2009)

**Setting up a project**
Clinks / Mentoring and Befriending Foundation (2009)

**Quality standards**
Clinks / Mentoring and Befriending Foundation (2009)

4.2 Useful government agencies

**Ministry of Justice**
www.justice.gov.uk

**Prison Service**
www.hmprisonservice.gov.uk

**Probation Service**
www.probation.homeoffice.gov.uk

**Criminal Records Bureau**
www.crb.gov.uk

**Independent Safeguarding Authority**
www.isa-gov.org.uk

**Health and Safety Executive**
www.hse.gov.uk

**UK Border Agency**
www.ukba.homeoffice.gov.uk

**HMRC**
www.hmrc.gov.uk/rates/travel.htm

**Information Commissioner’s Office**
www.ico.gov.uk

**Intellectual Property Office**
www.ipo.gov.uk

4.3 Voluntary organisations

**Clinks**
Clinks works to support voluntary organisations that work with offenders and their families.
www.clinks.org

**Mentoring and Befriending Foundation (MBF)**
The Mentoring and Befriending Foundation is the national strategic body for mentoring and befriending.
www.mandbf.org.uk

**Volunteering England**
Volunteering England is the national development agency for promoting good practice in volunteer management
www.volunteering.org.uk

Volunteering England resources:
Good Practice Bank – www.volunteering.org.uk/goodpractice
Information Sheets – www.volunteering.org.uk/informationsheets
Frequently Asked Questions – www.volunteering.org.uk/faqs
Publications – www.volunteering.org.uk/publications
Volunteer Centre Finder – www.volunteering.org.uk/finder

4.4 National Standards

**Investing in Volunteers** is the UK quality standard for all organisations that involve volunteers in their work.
www.investinginvolunteers.org.uk

**National Occupational Standards in Volunteer Management** provide a clear description of what Volunteer Managers need to know and what they need to be able to do to perform a job successfully.
www.ukworkforcehub.org.uk/nos
4.5 Baroness Neuberger reports

Volunteering across the criminal justice system
Baroness Neuberger’s review as the Government’s Volunteering Champion (March 2009)
www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/media/124076/volunteers%20in%20cjs.pdf

Employer-supported volunteering in the civil service - A review
Baroness Neuberger, the Prime Minister’s Volunteering Champion (July 2009)
www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/media/218600/neuberger%20civil%20service.pdf