Community Alliance Volunteer Strategy 2022-2025

Our Goal

To create a sustainable organisation that works across all communities, to improve people's quality of life.

This volunteer strategy for 2022-2025 demonstrates how we aim to continue as a successful volunteer-involving organisation as Community Alliance Broxbourne and East Herts continues to develop and grow.

We want to ensure that we have a range of roles that are attractive to prospective volunteers, that our volunteer team feels valued and that volunteers get the most from their experience at Community Alliance.

This strategy sets out how we will recruit, support, manage and retain volunteers over the next three years.

Benefits of being a volunteer-involving organisation for Community Alliance

Community Alliance recognises that volunteers bring specialist skills, expertise and knowledge that we may otherwise be unable to afford. In addition, it enables us to build stronger teams, and improve staff morale whilst improving our overall reputation and demonstrates the organisation's commitment to making a difference to society.

Benefits for individuals

Evaluation of volunteers shows these to be the most common benefits cited by people who have taken part in activities:
- enjoyment
- satisfaction
- achievement
- meeting people and making friends
- broadening life experience
- boosting confidence
- reducing stress
- improving physical health
- learning new skills
- reinforcing transferable skills

Where we are now

Volunteers play an integral role in supporting Community Alliance to work towards these goals.

We are committed to involving volunteers safely, responsibly, and effectively and to recognise and celebrate the contribution that volunteers make. We strive to involve a

diverse range of volunteers and to offer a variety of volunteer roles that reflect the needs of the organisation, whilst also providing opportunities for volunteers to share and develop a range of skills, knowledge, and experience.

Our Values

Excellence
We will work to the best of our ability, supporting our colleagues, members, partners and communities to achieve their aims. As an organisation we will recognise opportunities for improving our performance for the benefit of the groups we support.

Respect
We show consideration and respect for those within our organisation and the community. We respect and value everyone. We recognise value in ourselves and others.

Integrity
We are honest, open, ethical, and fair. People trust us to adhere to our word. We take ownership and responsibility for our decisions, working to achieve the highest standards of performance.

Community
We will work passionately to make a positive social impact on our local communities and member organisations, whilst working professionally and supportively with our colleagues and partners.

Our plan for the future

5 Goals to ensure Volunteer Excellence
Over the next 3 years we will work towards achieving the following 5 goals to ensure Volunteer Excellence. We will:

1. Develop new and exciting volunteer opportunities which attract a diverse range of volunteers.
2. Establish a robust recruitment process that reaches communities reflective of the demographic of service users and the general people living in our communities.
3. Ensure that Community Alliance volunteers enjoy an enriching volunteering experience and benefit from learning and development support.
4. Ensure a high rate of volunteer retention.
5. Demonstrate a commitment to evaluating and improving the Community Alliance volunteer programme.

Goal 1

Develop new and exciting volunteer opportunities which attract a diverse range of volunteers.

We commit to:
- A whole team approach to volunteering with all staff members committed to identifying areas of their work in which volunteers might support the work they do and liaising with the Volunteer Co-ordinator to create a robust role description for identified new roles.
- Working in a SMART way to ensure role descriptions are specific and measurable, that results and outcomes are achievable, relevant and timely.
- Making our volunteer roles motivating by ensuring that potential roles identified are attractive to volunteers.
- Inspiring people to become involved with flexible and accessible opportunities that suit different time commitments, motivations, interests, skills and experience.

Our benchmark for success will be:
- Evidence that new roles have been created and successfully recruited to.
- Recruiting a more diverse volunteer team.
- Increasing the number of volunteers in multiple roles.
- Identifying new volunteer roles.

Goal 2

Establish a robust recruitment process that reaches communities reflective of the demographic of service users and the general people of living in our communities

We commit to:
- Creating more volunteer roles, giving more people the opportunity to develop skills.
- Working with partner organisations, stakeholders and community groups to attract people from different backgrounds to the volunteer programme.
- Inviting existing volunteers from diverse backgrounds to help develop a fresh approach to recruiting new volunteers.
- Reviewing messaging and images used on recruitment materials and tailoring these to ensure a diversity of imagery.
- Reviewing volunteer application forms to ensure equal access to the application process for people from diverse backgrounds or for whom English is not their first language.
- Ensuring that the time between registering an interest in volunteering and becoming an active volunteer is no longer than four weeks.
- Ensuring that pages on the website relevant to volunteering and the volunteer application process are user friendly and easy to navigate.

Our benchmarks for success will be:
- New volunteers onboarded within 4 weeks.

- High percentage of volunteers report timely and supportive onboarding experience.
- Increased involvement, where necessary, of volunteers in the volunteer recruitment process.

Goal 3
Ensure that Community Alliance volunteers enjoy an enriching volunteering experience and benefit from learning and development support

We commit to:
- Ensuring that volunteers know how to access one-to-one supervision with the Volunteer Co-ordinator.
- Using one-to-one supervision sessions as an opportunity to revisit the volunteer's motivation for volunteering.
- Providing all new volunteers with a relevant, interactive, and inclusive initial induction course.
- Improving volunteer communication by creating and distributing a quarterly newsletter keeping volunteers up-to-date with any new roles and acknowledging the valuable contribution volunteers make.
- Providing wellbeing opportunities, as required.
- Ensuring that volunteer records are kept up to date so we can reach out to the right people when volunteering opportunities arise.

Our benchmarks for success will be:
- Volunteers report feeling supported.
- Increased numbers of volunteers reporting that they know how to access supervision from the volunteer co-ordinator.
- More volunteers fulfilling multiple roles.
- A comprehensive and up to date database reflective of volunteer activity, roles and status.
- 60% attendance figures for volunteer training events throughout the year.

Goal 4
Ensure a high rate of volunteer retention.

We commit to:
- Utilising a 'volunteer update' section in full staff team meetings to celebrate the achievements of volunteers.
- Organising two volunteer social events per year.
- Organising a volunteer recognition event once per year.
- Effectively supporting staff who have volunteer management responsibilities to recognise and reward volunteers in their team.

Our benchmarks for success will be:
- Evidencing increased numbers of volunteers staying with the organisation beyond one year.

- Bringing together a collection of positive volunteer stories to share on social media, within impact reports and on the website.
- Thanking volunteers by recognising individual and collective achievements at a recognition event.
- Proactively achieve volunteer recognition at a local and national level when opportunities arise.

Goal 5

Demonstrate a commitment to evaluating and improving the Community Alliance volunteer programme

We commit to:
- Gathering feedback after volunteer training, team meetings and events in order to gain a good understanding of the volunteer experience and to inform future activity planning.
- Investing in the *Investing in Volunteers* accreditation to demonstrate our commitment to being a volunteer-involving organisation.

Our benchmarks for success will be:
- Demonstrating to volunteers how the volunteer programme has adapted and changed in response to feedback.
- Case studies and impact statements about volunteering with Community Alliance.

Conclusion

We have set out 5 goals to ensure that we maintain excellence in volunteer management. We commit to regularly reviewing this strategy in line with our organisational values throughout the next three years.

We will measure the success of our volunteer programme through regular monitoring, and we will record data which allows us to properly assess the impact of our goals. With this strategic approach to volunteer management, we aim to ensure that volunteering at Community Alliance remains a meaningful and rewarding experience and that volunteers are recognised for the significant contribution they make.