

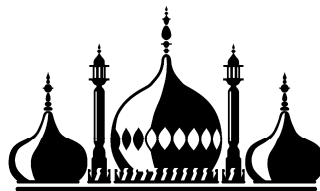
# Double Impact – The volunteering strategy for the City of Brighton & Hove

July 2009



**Volunteer** Centre

Brighton & Hove



**Brighton & Hove**



## Executive Summary

### Main Findings

- Volunteering improves quality of life both for volunteers and for the City. It is an excellent tool for helping the City hit key strategic targets in the areas of social inclusion, mental and physical health, community safety and employability
- Volunteering not only adds real capacity to the City but also has real benefits for those that volunteer
- Good volunteer management and good matching, particularly for disadvantaged groups, are critical to retaining volunteers and to keeping people volunteering
- The number of volunteers in the City can be expanded through increasing the capacity of organisations to manage volunteers
- Disadvantaged people have support needs that require dedicated resourcing
- Increasing employer-supported volunteering schemes will not only increase volunteering opportunities but is likely to lead to employers taking greater account of volunteering experience when recruiting
- The recession is increasing the numbers wanting to volunteer but is also displacing more disadvantaged people from volunteering

Brighton & Hove has a thriving Third Sector with approximately 19,200 volunteer positions, giving 57,600 per week of volunteer hours (an annual salary equivalent of £24 million).<sup>1</sup>

Without volunteering and volunteers our social care, healthcare, recreational and education systems would be impoverished and the environment that we live in would not be as safe, green and clean as it is. Volunteering not only make an essential contribution to the well being of Brighton and Hove, but the further development of volunteering will enable the City to reach many of its targets in the 2020 Sustainable Community Plan<sup>2</sup>.

Volunteering not only brings significant benefits to those people and organisations that volunteers support but also to the volunteers themselves. It builds social capital, thereby improving community safety, has a major impact on both mental and physical health, improves self confidence and skills, gives a sense of social value to those who cannot work and is often a route back into employment for those who can. As such it has a particular benefit to the more vulnerable and socially excluded members of our community and can provide them with opportunities they otherwise would not have.

This *Double Impact*, on both society and the individual, is why volunteering is so important to the City. Public, private and third sector agencies need to work together to ensure that these crucial opportunities continue to be supported and developed.

<sup>1</sup> 'Taking Account: an economic and social audit of the third sector in Brighton and Hove' *September 2008*

<sup>2</sup> [http://www.2020community.org/downloads/site2020/downloads/Community\\_Strategy.pdf](http://www.2020community.org/downloads/site2020/downloads/Community_Strategy.pdf)

### **Our Vision**

*“... that Brighton & Hove is a City where residents feel inspired to volunteer and participate in community activity, have the opportunity to do so and are celebrated and recognised in their efforts”.*

The purpose of the Strategy is to ensure that the future environment of Brighton & Hove is one that encourages volunteering in all its forms to flourish both in the number of volunteering opportunities available and their quality. The volunteering strategy sets out how, in partnership, our vision will be achieved.

### **Our Strategic Aims**

#### **Aim - Increase the number of volunteers in the City**

- improve the coordination and availability of volunteering brokerage services in the City
- develop a coordinated and high profile publicity campaign to increase the number of volunteers and volunteering placements
- increase the capacity of organisations to involve (more) volunteers

#### **Aim - Improve the quality of volunteer management**

- improve the volunteering experience for both the volunteer and organisation/individual they volunteer for by providing more good practice support in volunteer-involvement

#### **Aim - Increase access to volunteering for disadvantaged groups**

- provide additional support to enable under represented groups to participate in volunteering

#### **Aim - Build an environment that enables volunteering to have the maximum economic and social impact**

- recognise the importance of volunteering to the City through events and awards
- increase the ways volunteers and volunteer managers may build skills, learning and employability
- promote the benefits of employer-supported volunteering

#### **Aim - Enable the Voluntary sector to work effectively with commissioners**

- develop methods of measuring volunteering activity and the impact of volunteering in the City

## Agenda Item 45

To meet these aims, the strategy proposes a 5 year action plan that will specifically enable us to:

- Achieve the target set within our Local Area Agreement<sup>3</sup> for;  
**National Indicator 6<sup>4</sup> - Participation in Regular Volunteering** (target 26.6% as measured by the 2011 Place Survey)
- Assist with meeting the targets set within our Local Area Agreement for;  
**National Indicator 4 - percentage of people who feel they can influence decision in their locality**, by increasing levels of community activity (target 30.6% as measured by the 2011 Place Survey)  
**National Indicator 7 – Environment for a thriving third sector**, by increasing the capacity of the Third Sector through volunteering (target 25% as measured by the 2011 Place Survey)
- Increase the number of volunteering opportunities by 2.7% a year (as measured by Taking Account)

A desk based scoping exercise was carried out that examined the extensive body of research into volunteering also revealed that the strategy will assist in meeting the wider targets of Brighton & Hove's '2020 Sustainable Community Strategy', findings of which are discussed within Local Policy and Context and found within Appendix 1.

The strategy work was led by the City Volunteering Strategy Steering Group, which had representatives from a number of stakeholder groups, and was managed by the Volunteer Centre Brighton & Hove.

Extensive consultation was carried out with key stakeholders groups which addressed five key themes within volunteering. These were;

1. **Reducing the barriers to volunteering** - enabling choice, opportunity and access for all
2. **Promoting, recognising and valuing volunteering and volunteers** - the celebration of volunteering and all involved within it and touched by it
3. **Providing a good volunteering experience** - a meaningful and positive experience for all involved in volunteering; volunteers, organisations and end beneficiaries
4. **Resourcing volunteering and the links to employment** - the cost of volunteer-involvement and enhancing the opportunity of volunteering as a pathway to work and gaining skills
5. **The impact of volunteering** - the benefits of volunteering to volunteers, organisations, their service beneficiaries and the wider community

<sup>3</sup> Local Area Agreements (LAAs) set out the priorities for a local area agreed between central government and a local area (Local Strategic Partnership) and other key partners at the local level.

<sup>4</sup> National Indicators are the means of measuring national priorities that have been agreed by central government.

## Agenda Item 45

The findings of the consultation were scrutinised and recommendations were developed by the City Volunteering Strategy Steering Group.

### ***Main Recommendations***

1. Improved strategic co-ordination of volunteering across the City to be resourced and implemented
2. Measures to be taken to improve the matching of the skills of volunteers to the needs of organisations
3. Volunteering to be well publicised, recognised and publically valued
4. Good practice guidance and support to be made available to organisations across sectors to improve accessibility to volunteering
5. Disadvantaged groups to be given additional support into volunteering
6. Volunteering to be strengthened as a pathway to employment
7. All sectors to encourage their employees to volunteer and to be supported to do so
8. People out of work to be supported by all sectors to volunteer
9. Commissioners to promote volunteering, including through recognising full added value of volunteering in commissioning strategies

