

Value your Volunteers

presented by
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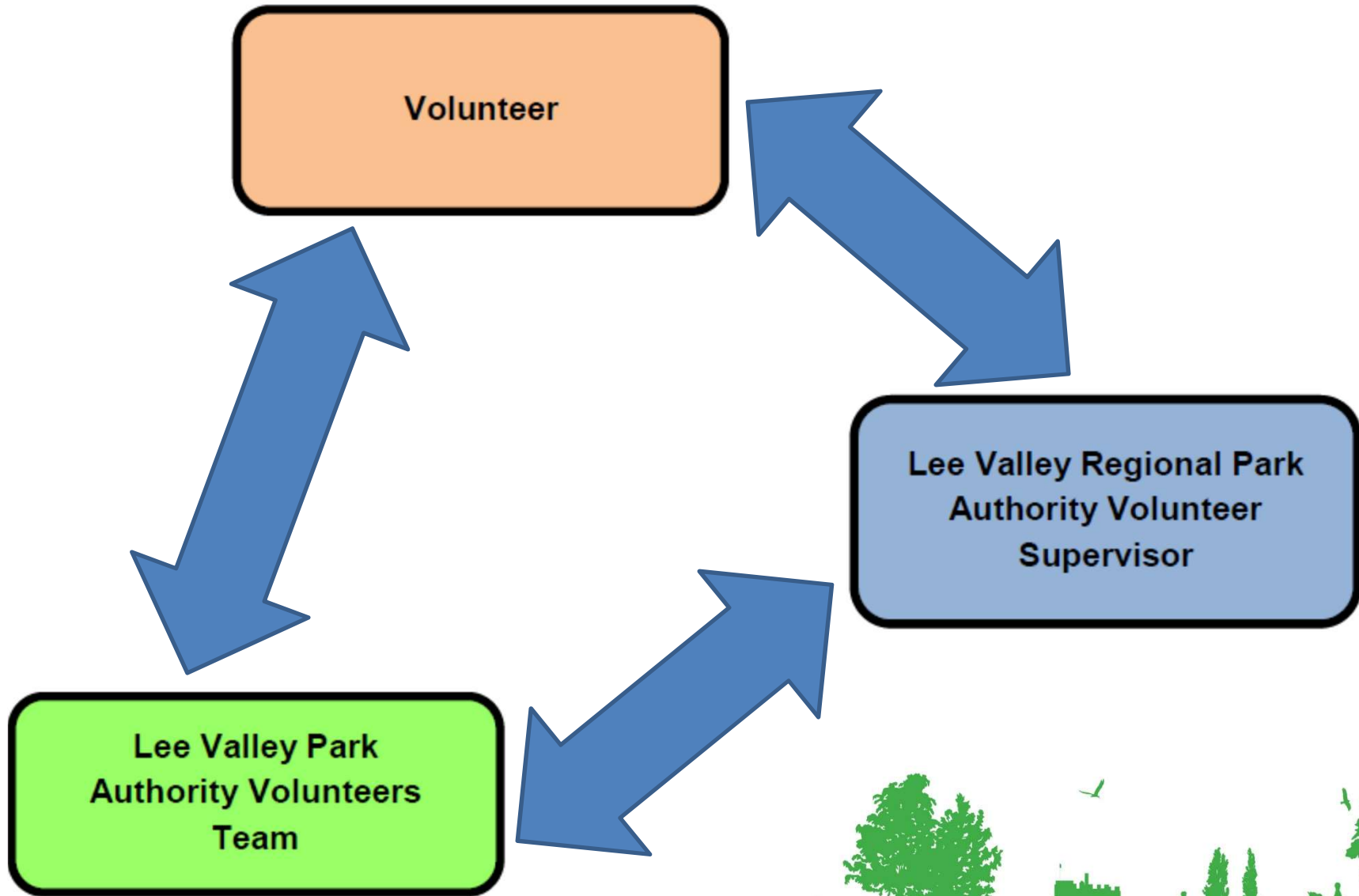
Introductions



Learning Outcomes

- Skills needed to manage and support volunteers
- Softer skills
- Why we work with volunteers
- What motivates volunteers to get involved





Volunteers Team

How we keep up to date with best practice:

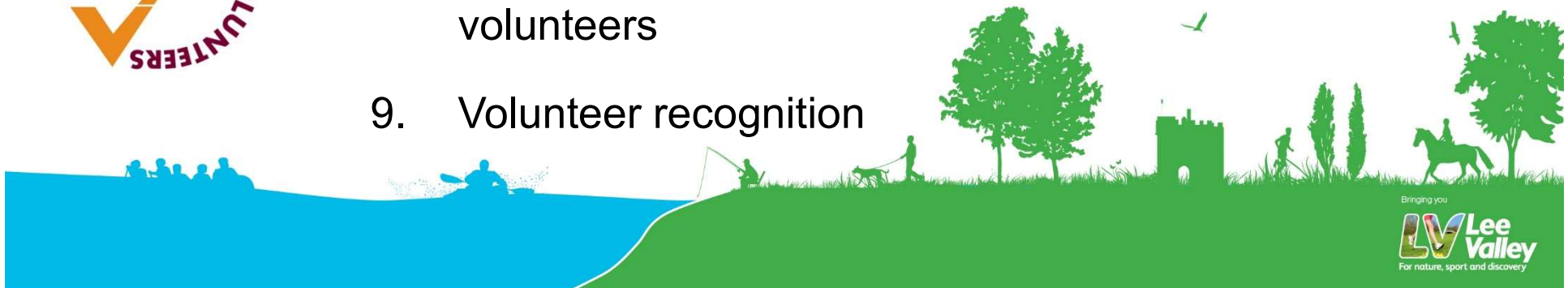
- Local Volunteer Centres
- Local Voluntary Action Groups
- Friends of Groups / User Groups / other affiliated groups
- Networking events / Partnerships / Forums
- The National Council for Voluntary Organisations (NCVO)
- CMA
- Training e.g. LANTRA, MHFA, First Aid, Data Protection, Safeguarding...



Investing in Volunteers

Summary of the nine indicators

1. Commitment to involving volunteers
2. Resources
3. Diversity
4. Volunteering roles
5. Volunteer safety
6. Volunteer recruitment procedures
7. Volunteer induction procedures
8. Support and supervision needs of volunteers
9. Volunteer recognition



Our Volunteer Programme

Volunteer Policy, Volunteer Strategy and Volunteer Handbook

<https://www.leevalleypark.org.uk/en/content/cms/corporate/volunteers/policy-strategy-and-handbook/>

Volunteer processes and procedures (available on our staff intranet) including...

- Recruitment
- Induction
- Day to day management
- Reward and Recognition



Definition

The UK does not actually have one common national definition of volunteering, although you can find definitions set out in government legislation and reports, as well as in research on volunteering which makes statements such as the following:-

- **freely** offer to do something.
- work for an organisation **without being paid**.
- any unpaid activity spending time doing something to benefit others.
- Volunteering is a choice freely made by each individual.
- Volunteering is an altruistic activity.
- Volunteering is working for no pay.
- Volunteering can produce a feeling of self-worth and respect.
- Volunteering is good for skill development.
- Volunteering can be social and fun.
- Volunteering has positive benefits for the volunteer.
- Volunteering can help with possible employment.
- Many volunteers are trained in the areas they work, such as medicine, education, or emergency rescue.

Dictionary

- **freely** offer to do something.
- work for an organisation **without being paid**.

NCVO (National Council for Volunteering Organisations)

‘..... any activity that involves spending time, unpaid, doing something that aims to benefit the environment or someone (individuals or groups) other than, or in addition to, close relatives. Central to this definition is the fact that volunteering must be a choice freely made by each individual.’



Wikipedia

- Volunteering is generally considered an **altruistic** activity and is intended to promote **goodness** or **improve** human quality of life. In return, this activity can produce a feeling of **self-worth** and **respect**. There is no financial gain involved for the individual. Volunteering is also renowned for **skill development**, **socialization**, and **fun**. Volunteering may have **positive** benefits for the volunteer as well as for the person or community served. It is also intended to make contacts for **possible employment**. It is helping, assisting, or **serving** another person or persons without pay. Many volunteers are specifically trained in the areas they work, such as medicine, education, or emergency rescue. Others serve on an as-needed basis, such as in response to a natural disaster.



Volunteering – what's in it for us and them?

- Free resource and support for organisation
- Community Engagement Activity
- Social activity for volunteers
- A structure to peoples week
- Contact with the public
- Supports a particular interest of the volunteer (e.g. conservation, cycling, animals etc)
- As a service for people that need interaction
- Experience and a link to employment
- As a form of exercise for volunteer
- Local and regional engagement and use of our resources



The Carrot or the Stick?

What is the difference between managing staff and volunteers?

- Volunteer management differs to managing staff in a number of ways.
- Something to think about is the carrot (for volunteers) versus stick (for staff).
- You need to know what motivates volunteers.



Managing Staff

- Paid
- Can be appraised annually
- Can be subject to performance, capability and improvement actions
- Can be disciplined
- Have rules and regulations around sickness
- Can be set objectives and targets
- Have standard/compulsory/required attendance times



Managing Volunteers

- Are not paid
- Can be appraised annually but can decline – difficult to do
- Are not subject to performance, capability and improvement actions
- Can't be disciplined but do have a code of conduct they often sign up to and can be asked to stop volunteering
- No rules and regulations around sickness
- Often difficult or unnecessary to set objectives and targets for volunteers
- Can not be held to attendance times – if they don't turn up no process to deal with – we just have to live with it



Anyone can be a volunteer

We should seek to support all people to volunteer what ever their ability, age, gender or background.



Developing Roles

- You can develop any role that you think may be of use
- Lee Valley Volunteers Team support staff in developing their roles.
- Volunteer Supervisor needs to...
 - Decide what the role needs to do
 - Draft up a role description
 - Complete a Risk Assessment
 - Launch your role
 - Review each year (Risk Assessment as well)



How do you advertise at your organisation?



Advertising volunteering

- Your organisation's official website
- Volunteer Centres
- Venues / parklands
- Word of mouth
- Email newsletter / postal newsletter
- Leaflets
- Volunteering websites e.g. Do-it.org, Countryside Jobs Service
- Social Media e.g. Twitter, Facebook
- Partner organisations
- Volunteer Database



Reward and Recognition

Smaller scale:

- Thank you events/trips out
- Provide tea/coffee – lunch etc
- Provide uniform
- Involve them in team meetings/have specific volunteer meeting
- Say thank you at the end of each session
- Treat them as if they are a member of the team
- Training
- Nominate volunteers for awards
- Publishing and promoting positive volunteer stories in the press
- Publicity on social media – twitter, staff intranet etc



Reward and Recognition

Larger Scale

- Volunteers Party
- Volunteer of the Year Award
- Long Service Awards
- Discount Cards
- Volunteers Committee
- Support in interesting specific activities (e.g. free ticket to the British Birdwatching Fair)
- Pass on any good news stories to your communications team to publicise locally or nationally



Why do volunteers feel valued



What Lee Valley measures

Key things

1. **Number of Volunteers** – (800+ registered)
2. **Volunteer Hours** – (around 26,000 per year) measured by:
 - individual
 - site and opportunity
 - month and year
3. **Demographic Data**
 - Age, gender, ethnicity and disability
4. **Length of service** – (5, 10, 15 and 20 years)
5. **Where our volunteers come from** – (Regionality)
6. **Number of Volunteers to FTE's** – (2.5 to 1)
7. **Monetary value of volunteering** – (around £330,000 per year)



Why we measure them

- **Hours** – discount card, Important measure for members
- **Number of Volunteers** – monitor how we are performing
- **Demographic data** – inclusivity and equal opps
- **Length of service** – retention, reward and recognition
- **Location** – reporting on our regionality and for the levy
- **Vols:FTE's** – as a standard measure against other organisations

**All also helps with Awards and Accreditations
(Green Flag, Investing in Volunteers)**



Feedback

Formal and informal both valuable

- **Feedback** – exit interview, general feedback
- **Volunteers Committee**
- **Email newsletter**
- **Direct to and from staff**
- **Open forums where possible**
- **Other channels** (i.e. database, survey monkey)



I had a fantastic day. I learnt lots about the park, and what you are trying to achieve, and I really enjoyed myself making giant haystacks! – Ranger Volunteer

Great opportunity to meet people & chat about the park & what is going on in and around the Bittern Information Point – BIP Volunteer

Having done Conservation work for 8 years the most important things for me is the friendship with the rest of the volunteers and the mixed sense of humour – Ranger Volunteer

Positive Quotes

Good to work with CRT again, Swan & Pike pool now looking good after years of neglect
good turn out I thought - very industrious group – Partner Day

Thank you and your team for all the help and support you have given to CHEXS Without your support we would not be able to offer the wealth of experience that we can – Community Group



Valuing your Volunteers

- Softer skills
- Working with our volunteers to add value
- Allow volunteers to have ownership
- Working towards your goals and objectives
- Communicating with them regularly
- Including them – team meetings
- Building a valued team of support & invaluable resource
- Understanding their needs, skills and abilities and what inspires them

