



Strategic Plan

2014 - 2017

Our vision...

Lives and communities positively changed through volunteering.

Our mission...

Enriching the lives of individuals and communities by enhancing the value of volunteering, through supporting and creating opportunities for all.

You can read more about the communities we support and the work that we do later in this document.

Our values...

Working together as a team to achieve our vision and mission, we are committed to:

- **Excellence** we maintain and enhance our reputation by being the best we can be;
- **Respect** we embrace diversity and are committed to equality;
- **Responsive** we adapt and improve in an ever-changing environment;
- **Service Focused** we design everything we do around the needs of the people we support;
- **Teamwork** we support, respect and value each other.

Our objectives...

Through to 2017 we will:

- Ensure the long-term sustainability of our business;
- Develop and sustain our core services;
- Respond to needs and opportunities; and
- Strategically promote and develop volunteering.

You can read more about each of our objectives, how we will deliver against them, and how we will measure our performance, on the coming pages.

Building on success

We are delighted to present our Strategic Plan 2014-17, and look forward to working with you to ensure we meet our objectives and continue to positively change lives and communities through volunteering in the years ahead.

Our plans are based on over 15 years of successful delivery, from a detailed analysis of the needs of our community, and on the experience and ideas of everyone in our team. We're not starting from scratch – our work in the coming years will be building on the success of recent years, where some of our notable achievements include:

- Engaging with over 7,000 local people each year to give them the information, guidance and support they need to get involved with one of the hundreds of organisations we support;
- Delivering high quality training programmes to organisations and individuals to increase skills and knowledge – from good practice in volunteer management, through to employability skills ready for the workplace;
- Focusing efforts on those facing barriers to employment, and providing tailored training, volunteering and support packages that have enabled over 50% of them to progress into sustained employment;
- Developing successful projects in response to needs, from our supported volunteering projects through to our work with sports clubs and in tackling environmental issues – where we see a need we develop an effective response that delivers results; and
- Recruiting and supporting large numbers of volunteers for high profile events, including the 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games.

In economically challenging times we have worked to diversify our income, developing successful consultancy and training services which meet the needs of the people we work with whilst also enabling us to sustain our core work in supporting local communities.

Our plan is focused on achieving what our community needs from us, whilst ensuring the long-term sustainability of our business. We'll be driven by our values, working with our committed team of staff, volunteers, Trustees, partners and supporters – we hope you'll join us on our journey.

Neil Grey, Chair

Michelle Martin, Chief Executive

Objective: Ensure the long-term sustainability of our business

We know that the work we deliver is of a high quality, achieves strong social impact, and is valued by the community. We also know that traditional sources of funding will be under pressure throughout the years ahead, and that we need to strengthen our service and funding mix to ensure the sustainability of our work for the future. We are not complacent, and nor are we starting from nothing – we have always evaluated our services to identify improvements and areas of development, and have established respect for our expanding work providing consultancy and training services on a commercial basis for those who commission us to do so. By 2017 we will have completed work to put in place the services and approaches we need to ensure the long-term sustainability of the charity.

Meeting this objective:

- We will continue to diversify our service mix to secure income from multiple sources to ensure the financial sustainability of the charity;
- We will be entrepreneurial in our approach to service development, recognising the pressures on funding from traditional sources of charitable support;
- We will seek to engage more directly with individual and corporate supporters to promote opportunities for giving;
- We will maintain our reputation for quality as we expand our services, seeking to be recognised as market leaders in all that we do; and
- We will complete research to measure the impact of the work we do, and seek to increase the social return on investment that we achieve with the resources available to us.

Key performance indicators:

| | Indicator | 2013 | 2017 |
|---|---------------------------------------------------------------|----------|---------------|
| 1 | Proportion of income from largest single source | 64.7% | 49.5% |
| 2 | Growth in income from consultancy and trading activities | £32,200 | £50,000 |
| 3 | Proportion of income from Unrestricted sources | 7.4% | 15% |
| 4 | Participants rating our services as “excellent” in evaluation | Baseline | Baseline + 5% |
| 5 | Proportion of our work assessed against impact measures | 0% | 50% |

Activities to help achieve this objective:

- Expand social enterprise provision through maximising the potential of our new accommodation, developing new channels of service delivery (e.g. online training), securing new contracts for the delivery of services, and ensuring new work contributes to core costs;
- Develop a clear corporate sponsorship offer, explore crowd funding opportunities for projects, establish an individual giving programme, and hold events to reach new supporters;
- Measure the wider impact of our services and use this to promote the value of our work to existing members and supporters, and potential commissioners and stakeholders; and
- Proactively engage with the local community as individuals, businesses and voluntary organisations through events and open days, promoting our offer to a wider network.

Objective: Develop and sustain our core services

We're committed to innovation in the delivery of our services, though recognise that the core of our work will remain essential – supporting more people into quality volunteering opportunities with organisations supported to achieve impact in their work. We're rooted in our local community and pay close attention to the needs of local people and organisations as we develop our services, with an eye on emerging trends and external influences which we will need to respond to – ensuring our services are fit for purpose now and for the future. We recognise that funders are also looking at developments and innovation in meeting community need, and that we need to build on our strong foundations of partnership working and impact measurement to further enhance our services in the coming year to ensure their ongoing sustainability.

Meeting this objective:

- We will embed our approach to impact measurement across our services to ensure we are continuously improving the work that we do;
- We will engage with more organisations in our borough, bringing them into membership and ensuring they benefit from the services we provide;
- We will strengthen our training provision for local organisations and individuals, developing new programmes in response to need;
- We will ensure our marketing strategy actively promotes the achievements of the organisation and the range of services we provide; and
- We will work with bidding consortia and partnerships to increase our access to alternative ways of funding our core services.

Key performance indicators:

| | Indicator | 2013 | 2017 |
|---|---------------------------------------------------------|-----------|----------------|
| 1 | Proportion of our work assessed against impact measures | 0% | 50% |
| 2 | Increase in the number of members | 50 | 60 |
| 3 | Increase in number of participants on training | 157 | 250 |
| 4 | Number of people engaging with us on social media | 384 users | 1,500 users |
| 5 | Proportion of income from partnership sources | Baseline | Baseline + 10% |

Activities to help achieve this objective:

- Provide training and support to all staff and volunteers on impact measurement, incorporate measures into supervision and appraisal meetings, and use impact measurement results in all project monitoring reports and as the basis of project development plans;
- Maintain our relationship with current members through our engagement and communication channels, and proactively build relationships with new organisations through outreach, attendance at targeted events, and through partnership working with others;
- Agree quality standards for staffing levels, service delivery and staff development, and report against these to the Trustee Board on a quarterly basis; and
- Develop our marketing strategy and allocate resources to ensure it is effective.

Objective: Respond to needs and opportunities

We're proud of our reputation for being proactive at identifying opportunities and in understanding the needs of our communities, and using this as the basis of the development of our services. We know that in an increasingly-competitive market we will need to maintain our agility at responding to opportunities as they arise, and that investment in the organisation's capacity to respond effectively will make a real difference to our ability to thrive in this market. We're delighted that the impact we are able to achieve through our work is increasingly recognised as beneficial to organisations and individuals operating in different sectors, and that these offer the opportunity for further growth of our work, ensuring more people's lives are enhanced through our quality services. By 2017 we will have expanded our work further into these sectors, and embraced the opportunities available to us.

Meeting this objective:

- We will develop our relationships with key stakeholders in the health and education sectors to expand our work in these areas;
- We will develop our operating models to maintain our agility and enable us to seize new opportunities whilst minimising the risk to the organisation's sustainability;
- We will invest in our capacity to identify opportunities and measure need, and to respond to these to secure resources for the organisation;
- We will explore opportunities for revenue generation alongside our mainstream activities by working in partnership with other organisations; and
- We will build on our reputation with local Councillors and MPs through producing regular briefings on volunteering in the borough, to ensure policy-making is informed by need.

Key performance indicators:

| | Indicator | 2013 | 2017 |
|---|-----------------------------------------------------------------|----------|------------|
| 1 | Proportion of income from health and education sources | 10.4% | 15% |
| 2 | Number of freelance people quality-assured to delivery services | 0 | 10 |
| 3 | Level of resources allocated to fundraising activities | Baseline | £40,000 pa |
| 4 | Proportion of funding from social enterprise activities | 0% | 8% |
| 5 | Number of briefings sent to elected representatives each year | 2 | 10 |

Activities to help achieve this objective:

- Creating a staff post dedicated to business development activities, to support the Chief Executive in expanding our reach into new markets and securing additional resources to ensure the ongoing expansion of our work;
- Quality-assuring a network of freelance trainers to work for the organisation as the service requires, with levels of activity linked to changing patterns of delivery for the charity;
- Developing a more structured pattern of briefings to local Councillors and MPs to ensure they are aware of the activities of the charity, the needs of the local community, and the opportunities for us to support key policy areas in the borough; and
- Work with our partners in the sector, in particular ivo.org.uk, to look at how to add revenue-generation alongside our existing service provision.

Objective: Strategically promote and develop volunteering

We know from the work we do with people and organisations that volunteering makes a lasting difference to our local community, and that our role in further promoting and developing volunteering is a critical role that others look to us to provide leadership for. We recognise research that shows levels of volunteering in the UK have remained static for many years, but know we can build on our track record of success at increasing levels of participation and bringing the benefits of volunteering to more people, whether they are volunteers themselves or beneficiaries of the services provided by volunteers. By 2017 we will have further expanded our reach into volunteering in the borough, and have the systems in place to measure our impact and support others to do the same.

Meeting this objective:

- We will strengthen our use of online communication channels to market volunteering and to provide services to potential and existing volunteers;
- We will develop feedback mechanisms that track volunteer experiences with local groups, and use this feedback to support organisations to develop their volunteering practice;
- We will extend our reach into new referral agencies working with local people, to smooth the process of entering our services and receiving our support to become active;
- We will design our marketing materials to reflect the needs and interests of different groups of people, and ensure our messages are targeted for maximum impact; and
- We will engage the experience and knowledge of all parts of our team in designing new services based on an analysis of our impact data on an annual basis.

Key performance indicators:

| | Indicator | 2013 | 2017 |
|---|----------------------------------------------------------------|----------|----------------|
| 1 | Number of people visiting our website | Baseline | Baseline + 25% |
| 2 | Number of organisations provided with good practice advice | 78 | 100 |
| 3 | Proportion of enquiries coming from referral agencies | 38.2% | 45% |
| 4 | Proportion of volunteers developing their employability skills | Baseline | Baseline + 5% |
| 5 | Proportion of team members involved in business planning | 50% | 85% |

Activities to help achieve this objective:

- Develop our communications strategy to strengthen our brand, our messages, and ensure we have appropriate resources in place to deliver these messages to our audiences;
- Identify new referral agencies, or opportunities to develop existing relationships, to reach new groups as potential volunteers (e.g. CETEC, the Job Centre, or local schools and universities);
- Review volunteer feedback on recruitment and selection, and use this to inform approaches to organisations to offer good practice training and advice;
- Improve our website with new content, look to use YouTube and other media to expand our online presence, and monitor the use of these channels by our stakeholders; and
- Annual planning day to analyse data, involving all volunteers, staff and Trustees.

Context: Our community...

...is growing (254,557 people now live in the borough, an 18.7% increase in ten years)

...is becoming more ethnically diverse (47.7% of local people are from BME groups, compared to 29.4% ten years ago)

...speaks over 90 languages (with 16.9% of the community not having English as their first language)

...brings together people from all over the world (with 31% of residents born outside the UK)

...has a large proportion of people living on their own (32% of local people are in single households)

...rents more than owns the property they live in (43.3% of the population own their homes)

...is more likely to have a qualification below level two than at level four (20.6% have no qualifications, 25.1% have a level one or two qualification, and a third have a level four qualification or above)

...are almost as likely to have never worked or be long-term unemployed as be in higher managerial, admin or professional jobs (9% compared to 10.9% of the local population)

...have more than a one in ten chance of living in overcrowded accommodation (11.1% of homes are overcrowded)

...are more than twice as likely to be under 18 as over 65 years old (24% compared to 10.3% of the population)

...are more likely to have jobs in wholesale/retail than any other sector (with 12.2% in jobs in these industries)

You can read more about our community in appendix one – community profile.

What this means for us as we deliver our work:

- Whilst there are a greater number of potential volunteers in the borough, there are also more people who could be in need of support, and pressure on local services;
- We need to ensure our marketing strategy, ways of working, partnerships and projects reflect the needs of local people and are open to all;
- Cultural understanding of volunteering may not be consistent across all communities, requiring more focused and tailored work to engage and support people appropriately;
- Less owner-occupiers and more single households can present challenges for community cohesion, with people less likely to stay in the borough for a long time, with volunteering a potential social anchor for a significant number of people;
- We need to offer accredited learning alongside volunteering to help people progress – not just getting a job, but getting a better job and escaping the growing problem of in-work poverty;
- Data on the people we are reaching and working with needs to be carefully analysed to form the basis of continuous service improvement to ensure that we are maintaining our position as the charity for all in our community.

Context: Volunteering...

...levels can be increased when effort is made to do so (the highest levels of volunteering in the last 15 years were 2005 (the Year of the Volunteer) and 2012 (the Olympic and Paralympic Games))

...contributes £23.9billion to the UK economy, equivalent to 1.5% of GDP (using hours given and median equivalent wages from comparable occupations)

...is mostly done by a 'civic core' of people (a third of the population give 90% of the volunteer hours and 80% of the money donated to charity)

...is seen as difficult to do by some, with 60% of non-volunteers saying work gets in the way (and 34% doing other things with their leisure time)

...is as likely to be done by younger as older people (44% of both the 16-25 and the 65-74 year old groups volunteer at least once a year)

...is getting better organised (31% of volunteers say it could be better organised, compared to 71% saying this ten years earlier)

...is too bureaucratic for some (27% of volunteers say there's now too much bureaucracy)

...is supported by Volunteer Centres locally, with the average London centre seeing 2,705 people each year, double the England average (though in Greenwich we deal with over 7,000 enquiries each year)

...needs support and promotion to make it work well (55% of organisations report struggles to get enough volunteers, and 57% can't find people with the skills they need)

What this means for us as we deliver our work:

- We need to ensure our efforts to promote volunteering are well-supported, knowing that this helps to get more people into volunteering in local communities;
- The value of volunteering and the social return on investment from the work of local people needs to be recorded, recognised and respected;
- We must engage with all communities in our borough to expand the civic core of those giving their time on a regular basis, increasing the ability of local organisations to meet the needs of local communities, whilst bringing the benefits of volunteering to a larger group;
- Recognising that volunteering is just one of many things that people can do with their leisure or spare time, and that it needs to be flexible and appropriate to enable more people to get involved alongside their other life priorities;
- Our good practice support to local volunteer-involving organisations needs to help them continue to improve the experience for volunteers, whilst not letting the paperwork get in the way of social action to improve the community we live in; and
- The objective to "develop and sustain our core services" is critical in ensuring that local organisations have the volunteers they need to deliver their work and meet the needs of our growing local community.

Appendix one – Community profile

The data in this profile is drawn from the following sources:

- 2011 Census (Office of National Statistics);
- Citizenship Survey, 2001-2011 (Cabinet Office);
- Community Life Survey, 2012-13 (Cabinet Office);
- Annual Volunteer Centre returns, 2011-12 (Institute of Volunteering Research);
- Member survey, 2013 (Greater London Volunteering); and
- Civil Society Almanac, 2014 edition (National Council of Voluntary Organisations).

Our borough

The last ten years have seen a big increase in the population size of our local community in the Royal Borough of Greenwich. The 2011 Census recorded 254,557 resident in the borough, but this was 214,403 people at the time of the 2001 Census, which means we've seen an 18.7% increase over the last ten years (greater than the 11% ten-year predictions made by the ONS after the last Census). This level of population growth has increased the density of our community, and places an increased demand on service (both public and transport services, and on those provided by us and other organisation in the voluntary and community sectors), though also provides a greater pool of potential volunteers and supporters for local causes.

At the same time as growing in numbers, the borough has also been becoming more ethnically diverse – in 2001 77% of the population identified as White, with this dropping to 62.5% in 2011 (with White UK now representing 52.3% of the population). The second largest group after White UK remains Black African, though this has increased from 11% of the population to 13.8% now. All Asian or Asian British groups have gone from 6% to 11.7%. When compared to London as a whole, Greenwich's White UK population makes up a greater proportion of our local community than elsewhere in the capital (at 52.3% to the London average of 44.9%), we are broadly comparable on mixed/multiple ethnic groups (at 4.8% compared to London's 5%), have a smaller population of Asian/Asian British and Other Ethnic groups (11.7% Asian compared to 18.5% and 1.9% Other compared to 3.4% across London), but a higher proportion of Black/Black British groups (most notably Black African, at almost double the London average – 13.8% compared to 7%). There is, however, a great variation between wards in the borough, from Eltham North which records the highest proportion of White UK residents at more than 4 in 5 (80.8%) through to Thamesmead Moorings and Woolwich Common where 1 in 3 residents are from the White UK group. These patterns of communities has implications for the ways in which we promote our services, for our selection of outreach venues to reach local people, and in our targeted work to engage and support local organisations working with specific communities.

More than 90 different languages are spoken across the borough. 16.9% of our local population do not have English as a first language, with the most common languages being Yoruba (West Africa, largely Nigeria) with 5,058 speakers, Nepalese (reflecting that Greenwich has one of the largest Nepalese communities in the UK) with 2,232 speakers, Panjabi with 2,151 speakers, Tamil at 1,882 and Polish at 1,773. In addition to the diversity of languages, people's life experiences increasingly embrace a wide spectrum of countries of origin – 31% of local people were born outside the UK, with the largest non-UK birth groups being those born in Africa (10.6% of the population), Europe (8.9%)

and the Middle East and Asia (8.3%), with a total of 9.6% of our local population having lived in the UK for less than 5 years. The growing number of people from outside the UK who may not have the same cultural understanding of volunteering, together with the complexities of multiple languages, has implications for our marketing messages as well as wider activities to consider in relation to community understanding and cohesion.

Looking at the household composition of the borough, households of one person under the age of 65 are the largest group at 22.7%, followed by married couples with children at 18.5% of households, lone parents at 14.5% and one person households where the resident is over 65 years old making up 9.3% of households. The majority of people rent their properties from social landlords (34.3%) or private landlords (19.8%), with those owning their properties accounting for less than half (43.3%) of the local population. Households with an occupancy rating of -1 or less (i.e. there is overcrowding in the property relevant to the size of the family/household living there) make up 11.1% of households in our borough. This mix of households has implications for our services and our work with local communities, with the potential for renting populations to be more transient, and for those living alone to potentially look to volunteering to help increase their social connections, and to build community capital in the borough.

We have a long and successful track record at working with people who face barriers to volunteering, and with 7.5% of local people saying their day-to-day activities are limited a lot by a limiting long-term illness, and a further 7.6% having their activities limited a little, this work is still vital to promoting inclusion and accessibility in the borough. Beyond our work in supported volunteering, though, these statistics are important to consider in our work with local organisations in the design of volunteering roles and in our associated good practice work.

Recognising that many people access volunteering to gain the skills and experience needed to progress into paid work, or further their careers, we have successfully delivered accredited learning and skills development work for a number of years. Looking at the qualification level of the borough illustrates the importance of this work – whilst a third of the population have a level 4 qualification or above (degree level), 20.6% of population have no qualifications, and 25.1% have a level one or two qualification. 9% of population (aged 16-74) have never worked or are long-term unemployed – almost the same as the 10.9% who are in the higher managerial, admin and professional group. The proportion in lower managerial admin and professional roles make up 20.6% of working age population, matched by the 21.3% in routine or semi-routine occupations. The biggest “industry” for our working age population is “wholesale/retail, repair of motor vehicles” at 12.2%, with human health and social work activities at 12% and education at 10.2% (all other categories below 10%). The implications for our work on accredited training and routes to work are clear, but this should not just be about getting a job, but about getting a job that helps people escape in-work poverty and providing opportunities for further progression.

In terms of age, the borough has a relatively young population – 24% of local people are under 18, 45% are 18-44, 20.6% 45-64 and 10.3% aged 65 or more. This feeds through to the economic activity levels in the local population too, with a relatively high student population. The statistics on those who are economically active locally (70.7% of the population) include 38.5% who are employed full-time, 11.1% employed part-time, 9.8% self-employed, 6.2% unemployed and 5.2% who are full-time

students. The economically inactive population (29.3%) includes 8.4% retired, 7.5% students, 5.1% looking after home/family, 4.6% permanently sick/disabled and 3.6% other.

The national picture

Levels of volunteering in 2012/13 were at 29% for those giving time “at least once a month” and 44% for those volunteering “at least once a year”, which took the numbers back up to the same levels as 2005 (when the UK Year of the Volunteer saw a push to promote volunteering through local Volunteer Centres). With some minor fluctuations rates in other years the levels have been roughly constant (40-42% for volunteering once a year and 26-29% for those doing something every month) since data was collected (2001 onwards).

Within these numbers, however, there is a strong “civic core” – a third of the population give 90% of the volunteer hours and 80% of the money given to charity. These people are more likely to be highly educated, in professional and managerial occupations, middle-aged, have lived in their area for more than 10 years, practise a religion, and are living in the least deprived areas of the country. In terms of age, the most likely to volunteer were 35-49 year olds (49% doing it at least once a year), and younger people were as likely to volunteer as older (44% for both 16 to 25 and 65 to 74 year olds).

60% of non-volunteers say it is work commitments that prevent them from getting involved in volunteering (suggesting we need to do more to enable organisations to offer more flexible opportunities, or promote such opportunities in a more targeted way to the groups who would be interested) and 34% are “doing other things with their spare time” (importantly, we need to look at the marketing of volunteering against other leisure pursuits, not just as a “charity thing to do”).

Using the estimate of 2.1 billion hours of volunteering in given each year, and using median wages from equivalent occupations, the ONS estimates that volunteering time can be valued at £23.9 billion, in the UK, which is equivalent to 1.5% of GDP.

Across the country, the average Volunteer Centre receives 1,086 volunteering enquiries a year, and has funding of £100,028 (though this has been falling). In London, the average number of volunteer enquiries handled by a Volunteer Centre is 2,705 a year, with the centres working for 478 organisations to find volunteers for some 550 opportunities. Volunteer Centre Greenwich is well above average for the numbers of local people we support, with over 7,000 enquiries handled in the last year alone.

Looking at the places where volunteers give their time, volunteer management is still often seen as an “add-on” to existing jobs and as such is consistently under-valued – over a third of volunteer managers are unpaid, for example. Against this backdrop, 55% of organisations report difficulty in recruiting enough volunteers, and 57% have problems recruiting volunteers with the right skills.

Despite this, there have been improvements in the way volunteering is organised – 31% of volunteers in 2007 said volunteering “could be much better organised”, compared to 71% saying this when asked in 1997. But 27% now think there is too much bureaucracy, too much focus on getting people with the right skills into roles, and less space for volunteers to gain learning from their experiences. There is a danger that an overly-formal volunteering offer could deter or alienate many people who are looking to undertake social action and make a difference in their community, and our work on good practice and support of local organisations will need to reflect this mix of needs and ambitions.