

Stoke Volunteer Managers Network

November 2024

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**Welcome to the November edition of
the Stoke Volunteer Managers Network
Newsletter.**

The Volunteer Managers Network is a space for people working with volunteers in and around Stoke-on-Trent, an opportunity to share ideas, network and provide mutual support.

This newsletter enables us to reach those who haven't been able to attend our recent meetings, and to share any relevant information. Feel free to share amongst your networks with those you think may be interested.

If you're not already part of the network and you'd like to join, please email **volunteering@vast.org.uk**

Developing a Local Vision for Volunteering

Since the national Vision for Volunteering strategy came out, we have discussed developing a local Stoke-on-Trent based vision. We first created a statement as an initial commitment to the Vision for Volunteering:

"Our Vision for Volunteering is to create a community where everyone comes together to make a positive impact. We believe that together we can create meaningful connections, foster empathy, and create a real sense of unity.

Putting the 'unity' in community, our mission is to inspire others to join in and help make the world a better place for all."

We hosted a world café event in March 2023 around the national Vision for Volunteering which helped us to introduce this strategy to local organisations. The feedback from this event, has helped us to shape our local Vision.

We identified four key themes utilising our world café data, and recent volunteering themed events, such as our Volunteer Managers Networks and Volunteer Forums. We felt that these four key themes fit the ethos of volunteering in Stoke-on-Trent.



Celebrating Volunteers and Volunteering

Recognise volunteer contributions

Day to day recognition

Storytelling and awareness

Local Community Connection

Building partnerships

Shared resources

Collaboration platforms

Experimentation and Innovation

Feedback loops

Pilot Projects

Cross-sector collaborations

Accessible and Inclusive

Broadening participation

Reducing barriers

Sharing expertise

We discussed these themes at the meeting, and how we can make the Vision as sector-led as possible. We sent a draft of the discussions out with the February meeting invite.

At the February meeting, we will be finalising our Vision for Volunteering!

T-Levels

T-Levels are linked to an occupation or career path and are made up of 80% classroom learning and 20% 'on the job'. You can see a short video of T-Levels [here](#).

The City of Stoke-on-Trent Sixth Form offer a range of T-Levels ranging from Digital, Health and Science, Education, Business, Legal, Finance and Accounting, Creative and Design and Sales, Marketing and Procurement.

There is a minimum of 315 hours/45 days/9 weeks in the workplace is a **mandatory** requirement of all T level courses. Placement days and week-long blocks are built into the courses.

To register your interest, or to find out more, please click [here](#).



Meet Steve!



Steve is a fantastic volunteer with Father Hudson's Young at Heart Project in Stoke-on-Trent. In Steve's own words: *"it's all about feeling needed, good company, sharing stories and having a laugh!"*

You can read more about his experience [here](#).

Friendly Reminder

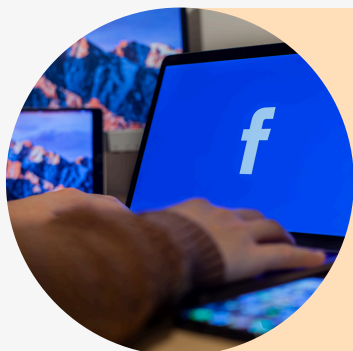
If you have volunteer roles listed on the VAST Volunteer Noticeboard, please check they are up-to-date and contact volunteering@vast.org.uk if anything needs changing.

We are always more than happy to offer free advice on role descriptions to make them more attractive to potential volunteers.



Facebook Group

Have you joined our Facebook group? Request to join [here](#) and help to grow the group by posting, commenting, and sharing volunteer opportunities. You can also get news and updates via **VAST Volunteering** on Facebook.



We would love to hear more good news stories involving the power of volunteering. If you have any you'd like to share, please send them to volunteering@vast.org.uk

VAST Volunteering Quality Standards



VAST Volunteering Quality Standards

Our free scheme provides a framework which organisations can work towards accreditation based on their volunteering policies and procedures, and the way they work with new and existing volunteers.

Our vision for the quality standards scheme is to instil consistent volunteer-related best practice across the whole of the local voluntary sector through structured and proactive support.

You can find the information [here](#).

Training and Events

VAST offers a wide range of training and events for VCSE organisations.

The majority of our training is free for VAST members.

You can see our training and events calendar [here](#) and you can book your places online.

2025	
VAST Training Programme	Getting Started in the VCSE Sector (2-day session) 26th & 27th February / 10th & 11th September
	Planning a Community Event 13th March
	Introduction to Volunteer Management 27th March / 6th November
	Monitoring and Evaluation / Tools and techniques E 10th April
	Procurement and Commissioning 1st May
	Beginners Guide to Fundraising E 15th May
	Introduction to Equity, Diversity and Inclusion 22nd May
	Governance and Best Practice for CICs 12th June
	Supporting and Managing Volunteers E 19th June
	Governance - The Basics / Trustee Essentials 26th June
	Engaging with your Community 17th July
	Introduction to Budgeting, Forecasting and Financial Reporting 25th September
	Funding Strategies E 9th October
	Communications and Social Media / Introduction to Canva E 23rd October
Partnerships and Collaboration 20th November	
Having Difficult Conversations 27th November	
Introduction to Safeguarding 11th December	

Scan the QR code to book your space.
Training is available to VAST member organisations.

support@vast.org.uk
vast.org.uk/calendar

Future Meetings

Our meetings rotate between face to face or virtual, with the confirmed details and agenda coming out two weeks before each meeting.

- 5th February, 1pm - 3pm - in person at CAFAG
- 8th May, 10am - 12pm - in person, venue TBC
- 5th August, 1pm - 3pm, over Zoom
- 5th November, 10am - 12pm, in person, venue TBC

If you have any suggestions for the agenda, or can offer a free venue, please email

volunteering@vast.org.uk