

Stoke Volunteer Managers Network

February 2025

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**Welcome to the latest 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

Our Vision for Volunteering is supported by an overarching statement:

"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."



During our last meeting, we split into small groups and each group read through the original suggestions and notes from the November 2024 meeting. This was incredibly useful for us to work out what parts of the draft strategy were well received and what needed changing to better suit the sector. There was a lot of discussions around what language to use and some great suggestions for names for our four key themes, such as 'Encouraging Individuality' rather than 'Accessible and Inclusive' as was originally suggested. Each key theme now has three subthemes which are all supported by several actions.

Investing in Volunteers

- Reward
- Recognise
- Retain

Community Connections

- Ideas
- People
- Issues

Experimentation and Innovation

- Partnerships and Collaborations
- Mentoring
- Sharing Learning

Encouraging Individuality

- Accessibility
- Inclusion
- Removing Barriers

We are now busy finalising our Vision for Volunteering using all of the feedback provided during the November and February meetings and we are excited to present hopefully the final version at our May meeting.

If you are particularly passionate about a local Vision for Volunteering and want to know more before May, please email volunteering@vast.org.uk

Stoke100

Stoke-on-Trent is turning 100! In 2025, we'll celebrate a century since the city received its well-deserved status, honouring the rich history, vibrant culture, and unique identity that have made Stoke-on-Trent a global name. This year-long celebration isn't just about looking back. We'll be recognising the impact of our people and products on the world stage, while also setting our sights on the exciting years to come.



We're creating a year packed with events, activities, and celebrations to mark this momentous occasion. Here's where you come in...

Do you have an event planned for 2025? Or are you inspired to create one specifically for the centenary? Stoke-on-Trent City Council want to hear from you! They want you to get creative! They're open to all ideas that celebrate Stoke-on-Trent's spirit. Let's work together to make this centenary a celebration to remember. Please get involved and spread the word to honour our 100th birthday!

Find out more by visiting their website [here](#).



Amazing Adegunle!

Adegunle is one of the amazing volunteers that supports Citizens Advice Staffordshire North and Stoke-on-Trent as a Welcome Advice Community Volunteer. Adegunle says *"I get to know about my community in Stoke-on-Trent, I meet people, it helps to support my mental health, and I enjoy learning new things. Volunteering also helps to keep me busy and helps with boredom."*

Read more about his story [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

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	



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.

- 8th May, 10am - 12pm - in person, The Dudson Centre
- 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