



Volunteer Managers Network

February 2026

In this issue...

Introduction P. 1

AI for Volunteer
Managers P. 2

News, Events & Updates P. 3

Other Business P. 5

Welcome to the latest edition of the Stoke-on-Trent 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

AI For Volunteer Managers

VAST’s **Communications and Content Manager**

Faye Angus joined us to discuss Artificial Intelligence (AI) and how it can be used safely and effectively to support with volunteer management.

By integrating AI thoughtfully, charities can create compelling, clear, and inclusive documents such as volunteer role descriptions, that attract the right people and enhance volunteer engagement.



We discussed what a good volunteer role description looks like, and how it should be structured – then shared how, once you’ve created your base role description, AI can help create to maximise your role description to make it more appealing to potential volunteers.

View Faye’s slides, and a brief for enhancing volunteer role descriptions with AI, below:

[Click here to see Faye’s slides](#)

[Click here to see the role description brief](#)

InVOLved Project

inVOLved is a collaborative project between **VAST** and **Expert Citizens** that provides small and informal, interest-based activities to local people experiencing complex and multiple disadvantages such as homelessness, substance use, and mental health challenges.

These activities take place in community venues and outreach settings across Hanley and Stoke. They are flexible sessions designed to accommodate the interests, needs, and moods of those inVOLved, allowing them to dip in and out of activities as and when they feel like it.

By providing regular low-pressure micro-engagement opportunities, inVOLved will help participants to build confidence and self-esteem, gain knowledge, and develop practical skills at their own pace, all while providing a warm and welcoming safe space to meet others and strengthen social connections.

[Find out more about the InVOLved Project here](#)

News, Events and Updates

Totally Stoked Conference: Inclusive Culture, Cohesive Future

On **Tuesday 24th February 2026**, join us at **Stoke City Football Club** for a day of inspiring discussion and hands-on workshops as we come together for the 2026 Totally Stoked Conference.



This year's event will bring together VCSE organisations, local partners, and community leaders to co-create tools, pledges and charters that make our city fairer, safer, and more inclusive for everyone. Through interactive workshops, lived experience storytelling, and action focused sessions, we will work together to shape the inclusive and cohesive future of Stoke-on-Trent with a co-developed cohesion manifesto: a joint **Charter for Change**.

Over the course of the morning, our interactive workshops will look at ways to embed inclusion into everyday organisational practices, helping to shape leadership, spaces, and connections. The workshops are:

- **Inclusive Recruitment & Representation**
- **Designing Inclusive Spaces and Events**
- **Allyship in the VCSE Sector**
- **Equity in Service Delivery**
- **Inclusive Communication**
- **Responding to Hate: Community-Led Safety and Solidarity**

Before we close, we'll come together to share insights from across all six workshops and getting the creation of our city-wide Charter for Change started and headed in the right direction.

Together we'll share practical ideas, celebrate local leadership, and build lasting connections – all working towards one shared goal: creating and embedding this collaborative Charter for Change for the good of all.

The 2026 Totally Stoked Conference promises to be an engaging, hands-on event, one that recognises the impact of the VCSE sector, providing everyone with the knowledge and tools to begin embedding these practices into our community work.

Book your place now and help drive change within our communities, ensuring an inclusive culture for Stoke-on-Trent and cohesive future for all who live here.

Book your **free** place here!

News, Events and Updates

Volunteer Voices Forum

The VAST Volunteer Voices Forum is a peer support space to give volunteers in and around Stoke-on-Trent an opportunity to provide valuable insight, share ideas and improve volunteering in the local area. VAST is dedicated to supporting volunteering in our city and facilitates this forum to ensure that volunteering is safe and inclusive for all.

Upcoming meeting:

The next meeting is on **Wednesday 4th March**, 10:00am – 12:00pm at The Dudson Centre in Hanley. Join us for a chat, volunteer updates, and the opportunity to complete a portrait collage craft activity! Lunch will be provided – please let us know if you have any dietary requirements when booking your ticket.

Who can join:

Everyone is welcome – the forum is open to all volunteers. We aim to have diverse representation within the forum, including from different volunteer roles and organisations across Stoke-on-Trent and North Staffordshire.

What's involved:

- Sharing feedback and perspectives on a range of volunteering topics, including recruitment, training, recognition, support and resources.
- To raise awareness and understanding of volunteering related issues
- To improve networking and co-operation between organisations and across voluntary and statutory sectors
- Discussing upcoming or developing volunteer projects.
- Offering views and ideas for improving the volunteer experience and growing our volunteer community across the local area.

Sign your volunteers up using the booking link here

Have your say about the next session!

We want to make sure this network is tailored to you – so please do let us know what you want to see!

What themes would you like to see for future sessions? Are there any barriers you think we could address as a group? Do you have any resources, knowledge, or achievements you'd like to share? Can you think of the perfect guest speaker?

Let us know, by emailing us:

Contact us at volunteering@vast.org.uk (opens in email)

Other business...

Upcoming training and networking events

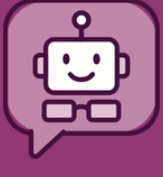
Network

Funding Network



Consultation

Exploring AI in Local VCSE Organisations: Opportunities, Risks and Realities



Micro-Volunteering Event

Conservation of Chatterley Whitfield Country Park



Network

Communications and Events Engagement Network



[Click here to see the VAST calendar](#)

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.



[Learn more about the Quality Standards](#)

Future Meetings

Our meetings rotate between face to face or virtual, with the confirmed details and agenda coming out two weeks before each meeting. You will now need to book your space at the meetings on our website. You can book future sessions below:

- **6th May 2026 (venue TBC)**
- **5th August 2026 (venue TBC)**

If you have any suggestions for the agenda, or can offer a free venue, please email volunteering@vast.org.uk.