

Cross-Party Group on Volunteering

25th January 1pm-2pm online

Minute

Present

MSPs

Jeremy Balfour MSP, Co-Convener
Evelyn Tweed MSP

Invited guests.

Rob Gowans, The ALLIANCE
Sarah Latto – Volunteer Scotland
Graham Galloway, Kirrie Connections
Alan Stevenson, Volunteer Scotland

Non-MSP Group Members

Louise Orr	Volunteering Matters
Ian McCall	Paths for All
Fiona Harvey	CHAS (Children's Hospices Across Scotland)
Emma O'Shea	Impact Funding Partners
Sue Bowen	Dyslexia Scotland
Claire Stevens	Voluntary Health Scotland
Diane Wilson	Impact Funding Partners
Louise McGinty	Quarriers
Sarah Murray	Royal Voluntary Service
Tracey Brown	Marie Curie
Mike Melvin	ACVO (third sector interface for Aberdeen)
Catriona MacLeod	CVS Inverclyde
Tracey Passway	NHS Tayside
Sarah Van Putten	Befriending Networks Ltd
Kimberley Somerside	Voluntary Health Scotland
Marion Findlay	Volunteer Edinburgh
Sharon Bleakley	Healthcare Improvement Scotland
Ann Wilson	The Ayrshire Community Trust
Fiona Zapirain	Scottish Government
Tina Cameron	VASLan

Anna	Stark	Voluntary Action South Ayrshire
Emma	Kyles	YouthLink Scotland
Sarah	Cleary	Volunteer Edinburgh
	Sherwood-	
Damian	Johnson	Sistema Scotland
Katy	Wilson-Scott	Kairos Women+
Paul	Wilson	Volunteer Edinburgh
Karen	Russell	Stroke Association
Kirstin	Worsley	The Breastfeeding Network
Alison	Crofts	Voluntary Health Scotland
Ruth	Hutton	Scottish Government
Wendy	Diack	Cruse Bereavement Care Scotland

Apologies

Foyso! Choudhury, MSP Co-Convener
 Kim Atkinson SSA
 Alison Crofts VHSotland
 Lauren Blair VHSotland

1. Minutes of previous meeting 17th November 2022/AGM

The minutes of the previous meeting were approved.

2. An Introduction to the National Care Service - Rob Gowan, The ALLIANCE

<https://www.alliance-scotland.org.uk/blog/news/the-alliance-calls-for-national-care-service-to-be-investment-of-citizenship/>

The Alliance have been working with Scottish Government for several years on what a national care service/Bill will involve. The Scottish Governments statement for a national care service which can be achieved, through legislation and co-design.

“Delivering a system that is genuinely accountable to people. Promoting best value across care and support by driving up quality. Embedding a human rights-based approach.” [source Scottish Government 21st June 2022]

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/national-care-service-statement-benefits/#:~:text=care%20systems%20by%3A-,Delivering%20a%20system%20that%20is%20genuinely%20accountable%20to%20people,a%20human%20rights%2Dbased%20approach>

This is a key policy area for The Alliance, ensuring experience and co-creation is at the heart of policy, integrating human rights and equality across all parts of the social

care system and providing equal access to social care. More importantly ensuring resources for the Third Sector of which carry out a huge range of social care services. As we know social care is under-funded therefore provide a focus on funding and procurement. This is a whistlestop tour of what the Alliance is doing about the National Care Service and Rob would welcome any members to contact him for further information.

Jeremy Balfour MSP and co-convenor confirmed that there have been several committees in Parliament that have taken evidence on this topic such as a social security committee, finance committee and delegated powers committee to name a few, with further evidence being presented at the Health and Social Care Committee in February.

3. The Contribution of Volunteers to Social Care – Sarah Latto, Volunteer Scotland

Sarah provided an overview of the current statistics of the contribution volunteers make to social care in Scotland.

- 17% of Scotland's formal adult volunteers supported groups focused on health, disability, and wellbeing.
- This equates to 201,000 people, which is like the total number of paid staff in the social care sector.

As a caveat, these statistics from the Scottish Household Survey (SHS) we can't disaggregate health, disability and wellbeing into health and social care so we don't know the exact number looking at social care, so this is as close as we could get, but it does equate to the 201,000 paid staff in the social care sector.

It's also worth highlighting that it's not just health and social care organisations where volunteers are contributing for example there is 5% adult volunteers support groups that support older people which is around 59k people and within sports and physical activities particularly supporting people to preventing or delaying the need of social care which is around 142k people. Then you have the large number of who support community and neighbourhood 25% of formal volunteers equates 300k people allowing people to stay within their communities.

Examples of organisations that are operating in this space are Childrens' Hospices Across Scotland (CHAS) and Royal Voluntary services although both organisations provide volunteer opportunities out with residential settings as well. CHAS involve approx. 750 volunteers in a variety of roles, volunteers also support provision of respite to parents and carers.

The Royal Voluntary Service Provide plethora of services in hospital and community settings such as 'home from hospital' service which begins when still in hospital and to support patients to go back to their homes and families. They also supported approx. 88% of vulnerable people supported in 2021 said it helped them to cope with everyday issues.

Social isolation and loneliness have a massive impact on individuals and linked to increased risk of, depression, cognitive decline, and dementia. Befriending has a great impact in tackling isolation and loneliness, volunteers are helping build back confidence, social connection, and happiness. Similarly community transport is vital service that is provided across the country supported by volunteers. It's important in social settings to help vulnerable people to attend hospital appointments etc and help with social connectedness.

Another substantive example is Food Train who provide a range of volunteer-led services including. In a report in 2018, they found significant challenges and a postcode lottery of statutory food services.

As you will know there has been a lot of media coverage, it was reported that Glasgow Food Train may close due to the loss of local authority funding. On-going discussions with councillors are taking place along with a petition to keep the funding on-going.

Evidence shows that physical activity/sport can help reduce the risk of falls and decline in cognitive decline a Glasgow based charity, Weekday Wow Factor, a volunteer-run social enterprise, provides a range of activities including daytime discos for older adults and those with disabilities.

Overall evidence shows that participation in volunteering has significant health benefits. Which in a way is a support to our health care service. Volunteer Scotland have published reports on the health benefits of volunteering.

<https://www.volunteerscotland.net/research-evaluation/research-publications/the-contribution-of-volunteering-to-scotlands-health-wellbeing>

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VS's consultation response to the National Care Service (Scotland) Bill can be found below.

<https://www.volunteerscotland.net/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/Volunteer-Scotland-Consultation-Response-National-Care-Service-Scotland-Bill-September-2022.pdf>

These presentations have highlighted the importance of volunteers but there is an issue in recruiting volunteers due to the cost-of-living crisis and we need to be realistic of what volunteers can support. In relation to prevention and the role of volunteers there are anxieties that volunteers start to replace paid carers. In response to cost of living crisis, VS are looking to promote the Volunteer Charter of which Cabinet Secretary Shona Robison MSP, has asked to her team to circulate the charter to around all government departments and public bodies, we will be doing more on how to promote the Volunteer Charter in the coming months.

<https://www.volunteerscotland.net/event/learning-bite-a-volunteer-charter>

4. Case Study: Volunteers Supporting Social Care – Graham Galloway, Kirrie Connections Meeting Centre

Graham spoke about how Kirrie Connections volunteers support in a social care setting within a community.

Meeting centres are an evidence-based model developed by University of Amsterdam over 30 years ago, there are hundreds of these centres across the Netherlands. The meeting centres provide local, community driven, on-going, flexible, post-diagnostic person-centred support for people living with dementia and their care partners.

Kirrie Connections was the first to open in Scotland in 2019 and as of today Age Scotland have announced funding for 5 projects across Scotland to open meeting centres. There is a community development stage in developing the centres as well as voluntary organisations and community groups too. There is a real focus on social activities, creative activities and physical activities too.

The volunteers are key to creating a caring and inclusive environment.

Please see the videos below providing case studies of the impact the meeting centres must have on volunteers and dementia patients.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1HmLrmW8F7M&t=10s>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q5xI1UFjTS8&t=5s>

5. AOB

Alan Stevenson, Volunteer Scotland provided an update on the Volunteer Action Plan, the Cost-of-Living Task group is well underway with a meeting with Cabinet Secretary scheduled. The funding consortium met this week for the first time and will progress. Policy Champions network has a term of reference agreed. The National Recognition and Celebration group is looking beyond Volunteers Week and focusing on promoting volunteering through various campaigns throughout the year. The VAP communications group are working on a plan that will be shared with members.

More information can be found on the VAP website; <https://volunteeringactionplan.co.uk/>

The next meeting will be online in March with a face-to-face Volunteers' Week celebration on the 1st of June at Scottish Parliament.