DEVON COMMUNITY RESILIENCE FORUM

Recruiting Volunteers: Workshop Outputs
22 November 2017, Kenn Centre, Kennford

Our workshop aimed to help Community Emergency Response Teams across Devon to expand. Participants generated ideas for recruiting volunteers. They're captured here so that you can use them too.

1. We've considered the barriers that prevent and stop people volunteering. You'll be able to overcome and influence most objections if you're aware of the barriers.
2. We've listed what can you gain from volunteering, why it's good to volunteer and what motivated the workshop's participants to become a volunteer too. We hope this will help you to persuade other people to join your Community Emergency Response Teams, whether in person or in writing.
3. You'll find some ideas on what else to include in your case for support. And some thoughts on how to get the word out.

1. What barriers prevent people from volunteering? Why might people stop volunteering? Can we overcome or influence some of these objections?

Objection	Some suggestions for dealing with objections
"I'm shy. I won't know anyone. I'm not very confident. I'm new to the community. I don't know the local area very well!	"Pop along to our next meeting. The group's really approachable. They'll make you feel welcome. There's a role for everyone. We can provide an induction and some training, to help build your confidence. You'll get to know a few new people. It might help you connect with the community and build your local knowledge."
I don't have enough spare time, due to work/family commitments. I can't manage a regular commitment.	"Contribute as much or as little time as you want to… You don't have to attend every meeting. Perhaps just help out when there's an incident… You might be able to help us keep our Facebook page or website up to date from the comfort of your own home."
I didn't know our village has a Community Emergency Response Team. Why do we need one? How does it work? What does it do? There's a lack of information.	• Explain what your team does, what cause or group of people it benefits • Explain the difference volunteers make to the people who are supported • Describe the range of opportunities that exist • Describe what the volunteer can gain (from the experience and working with your team) • How the prospective volunteer can find out more. E.g. "You can speak to \<name\> to find out more. Here's their phone number. If you'd like to share your email address I can include you in our mailing list to help keep you informed and up to date. Follow our Facebook page, to stay in the loop." • Maintain strong, regular communication. Share relevant, tailored information • Share success stories

• Apathy/no interest, energy, concern or motivation • Not willing to interact • "I can't see how this is relevant?" • "What's the purpose?" • Other people's negative opinions have put them off	• Explain what your team does, what cause or group of people it benefits • Explain the difference volunteers make to the people who are supported • Encourage them to have a go at trying something new. • Remind them that they'd be really valuable • Let them know what they can gain (from the experience and working with your team) • Make them feel really welcome • Show you're a warm, friendly, approachable team • Show gratitude and acknowledge contributions • Introduce variety and keep things interesting
"It's not my job / It's down to the council / I paid my taxes / It's someone else's responsibility."	"Emergencies can happen at any time, day or night. Nearly all emergencies are dealt with routinely by emergency services, local authorities, utilities and voluntary agencies all working in partnership. But, there are times when their assistance may not be immediately available. For example, in the event that the incident is widespread, or if your community is temporarily isolated. We know our community would pull together to overcome adversity – but this will work even better if we're prepared. Sharing our local knowledge with emergency responders will help them to help us during an incident."
• "I don't think I've got the right skills / expertise / ability." • "I'm not strong enough to fill and distribute sandbags / I'm worried I'll get injured."	"Everyone can play a part. All that's required is a little local knowledge, enthusiasm and free time. No specialist skills are required. You can choose to commit as little or as much time as you have available. It's easy to get involved! Pop along to our next meeting to find out what role could suit your skills and circumstances best. If you're a people person, you might like to help run a shelter or food bank in a community hall, so people have somewhere safe, warm and dry to get a cuppa. Or you might be able to provide admin support before, or during an emergency. Perhaps you can help with local awareness raising activities. Can you help monitor local river levels? Etc."
"I need to look after my own property."	"That's absolutely fine. Give us a call if ever you need our team's support. You're really welcome to assist us with our flood preparations during 'peace time' though. Your input and local knowledge will really help us to get our preparations right"

2. Motivation

2.1 What can you gain from volunteering?

- Satisfaction
- Connect with your community, socially

- Working together to achieve a common goal
- More influence in numbers – 'united'

DEVON COMMUNITY RESILIENCE FORUM

- Learn new skills (work experience), renew forgotten skills and passing on skills
- Gain historic knowledge
- Exercise – away from the familiar
- Develop knowledge
- Sense of respect for self and others
- Develop job prospects
- Bring age groups together and people from all diverse groups
- Gain confidence
- Practical skills e.g. team work, how to use walkie talkies!
- Feeling good about self

- Social contact
- Network with like-minded people
- Self interest
- Good use of existing skills
- Community support
- Sharing own skills
- Giving something back
- Tackling a REAL problem
- Taking responsibility
- Learning new skills
- Replaces my previous employment
- Sense of worth
- Structure

2.2 Why is it good to volunteer?

- Good to work with others / social / networking
- Support the community
- Get things done
- Satisfaction and wellbeing
- Work experience / personal development / skills / develop your CV / may lead to work experience / expand contacts
- Gratifying
- Share your own experiences
- Security for the community (vulnerable people)
- Local knowledge for emergency services etc. → speed things up (resilience)
- Feel part of the community

- Community responsibility
- Belief in need
- Help to glue community
- Self interest
- Power, control
- Annoyance with the powers that be
- Make things happen
- Get things done properly
- Makes your voice heard
- Taking responsibility and being accountable
- Feeling part of a group
- Identify
- Health and wellbeing
- Giving something back
- Fills your time

2.3 What motivated us to volunteer?

- Sense of social responsibility
- Desire to be part of the community
- Nobody else seems to be owning the problem / always someone else's

problem so I will take the lead / have a go
- Interest in the subject
- Self interest

DEVON COMMUNITY RESILIENCE FORUM

- I have time and some skills
- I make time
- Leave a legacy
- Intellectual challenge
- Guilt
- Can do better
- Use expertise
- Anger
- Feel you have something to give
- To get things back on course
- Brought up to volunteer
- Couldn't beat them – so joined them
- Empowered – self motivation
- Nobody else bothered

- Sociability
- Give back
- Interest in resilience / environment
- Recognition (cynicism)
- Charitable
- Share skills and knowledge e.g. local knowledge
- Interest in the cause
- Personal connection with the cause
- Fighting the threat e.g. flooding
- A persuasive friend
- Bought a property in the flood plain
- Correct a problem

3. Recruitment

3.1 Factors affecting recruitment

1. Image and appeal
2. Methods of recruitment
3. Recruitment and application process
4. Induction into volunteering
5. Training for volunteers
6. Overall management of volunteers
7. Ethos and culture of your team
8. Support and supervision given to volunteers

Source: https://knowhownonprofit.org/people/volunteers/recruiting

3.2   Writing your case for support, to recruit volunteers

Here are some key points, to include and consider:

1. Strapline e.g. "make a difference, make your mark"
2. What your team does, what cause or group of people it benefits
3. Range of opportunities that exist
4. The difference the volunteer can make to the cause or the people who are supported
5. What the volunteer can gain (from the experience and working with your team)
6. How the prospective volunteer can find out more (include an email address and phone number so volunteers can get in touch easily)
7. Need to make it as appealing and easy as possible to apply

DEVON COMMUNITY RESILIENCE FORUM

3.3   How to get the word out

- Word of mouth – referrals
- Leaflets and other printed materials/media
- Using volunteer databases
    - **Volunteer centres:** These are local organisations that provide support and expertise within the local community to potential volunteers and organisations that support volunteers. People visit this website to look for volunteering opportunities (https://www.ncvo.org.uk/ncvo-volunteering/find-a-volunteer-centre You could place an advert there
    - **Do-it:** Advertising for volunteers on this website: http://do-it.org You need to register before you can recruit
    - **Reach:** Visit https://reachvolunteering.org.uk to find skilled volunteers. You can search by skill and location
- Organising or speaking at events
- Press and radio adverts
- Online (your own website, other local websites, volunteer recruitment websites, Facebook, twitter). Online methods are particularly attractive to younger people