

Annual Review 2004 -2005



Phew. What a year.
43,000 folk have
accessed our services.

There's still a lot to do.
And new needs develop
in the community all the
time.

And there are more
volunteering opportunities
to manage than ever.
900 at any one time now
isn't it?

Thereabouts. From 560
volunteer-involving
organisations.

So we can't chill out
for a while?

Er, no.



We help to change lives through volunteering

Margaret had experienced back problems for many years but was still able to work and enjoy a busy social life. However, in 2001 she suffered a prolapsed disc which forced her to stop working immediately and resulted in physical problems and chronic pain. The Volunteer Centre's Support and Advice Team helped her into volunteering with Skill Scotland. She is now in paid work again with the Thistle Foundation. She says 'If I hadn't done voluntary work I dread to think what would have happened to me. I wouldn't have dared apply for a job – I got my life back'.

This year we helped 318 people with mental health problems, disabilities, histories of offending or other additional support needs find out how to change their own lives and the lives of others through volunteering. We worked with around 200 referrers from Employment and Careers services to Health and Social Care, building their capacity to support their service users directly into volunteering. We developed a protocol on working with ex-offenders to make sure volunteers are involved safely and appropriately. We delivered pre-volunteering training to young people with mental health problems.

Did I mention that we helped 318 volunteers with extra support needs into voluntary work?

We help organisations recruit volunteers to provide services and make a difference

Skillnet Edinburgh has a volunteer Mentoring Service giving advice and support towards employment to people from Black and Minority Ethnic communities. They recruited most of their volunteers through having a stall at our Annual Recruitment Fair.

The Remember When Project exists to archive and celebrate the histories of Edinburgh's LGBT (Lesbian Gay Bisexual and Transgender) communities. Most of its volunteers have been recruited through advertising the opportunities on our online directory.

We recruit Silver Surfer IT Tutors for older residents with Bield Housing Association; Conservation volunteers to work on a remote island for the National Trust; team volunteers for a garden makeover with HIV support agency Waverly Care; food co-op workers for Broomhouse Health Strategy group and lunch club volunteers for the Magdalene Community Centre.

557 organisations advertised 856 different volunteering opportunities online on www.volunteeredinburgh.org.uk (a 25% increase from 03-04). Around 20% of all volunteers supporting these organisations have been recruited through the Volunteer Centre. 42,000 potential volunteers looked at these opportunities on our website. Another 2,000 volunteers received one to one advice by dropping in at the Volunteer Centre or over the phone. 100 individuals offered specialist skills (from trombone playing to Health and Safety Policy development) direct to organisations through our self-advertising service. 100 organisations took stalls at our annual Volunteer Recruitment Fair in October – which was visited by 1200 people. 25 teams of employer supported volunteers from Edinburgh businesses and companies cleaned riverbanks, built gardens and refurbished premises.

We help to improve the experience of volunteers

Community Arts in Craigmillar improved and developed their practice in working with volunteers by participating in the Volunteer Centre's programme of Community Based Training and Support in Volunteer Management.

'Up until now, volunteers have come and gone from the Arts Centre on a very ad-hoc basis. Following the course, we have written a volunteer management policy, drawn up a volunteer agreement, identified specific volunteer tasks and the purposes for these tasks (and written them down) and we now have a process for advertising for, informally interviewing and supporting our new volunteers.' Community Arts – Craigmillar

This year 340 participants were helped to improve their practice and skills through our training and seminar programme for volunteer managers. Courses included Core Skills in Volunteers Management, Working with Ex-offenders and Protection of Children Scotland Act. Our programme of training for volunteers helped more than 100 volunteers increase their skills and confidence in carrying out their volunteer roles. 626 enquirers received one-to-one good practice advice on volunteering issues from 'What expenses should I pay?' to 'How can I do a criminal record check on a volunteer from Ukraine?' We redeveloped our online library of volunteering resources and started work on a contract for Volunteer Development Scotland to develop this in to a National online information resource in partnership with other volunteer centres. <http://resource.volunteerscotland.org.uk/>. We began a three year contract with Sport Scotland to improve the experience of volunteers involved in Sport.



We help to strengthen communities

Ms A. attended the initial meeting at Volunteer Centre South Edinburgh with her support worker. Her son was planning on leaving home in the near future and she was dreading the isolation. She was extremely shy, nervous and self critical and her self esteem was very low. She couldn't think of anything she would be good at and she was convinced no-one would want her. Although she was very tempted to take the easy option and stay isolated at home, she realised volunteering offered her the opportunity she needed.

She now volunteers every week and feels she might look into a career caring for the elderly.

Volunteer Centre South Edinburgh, working from our base in Gilmerton, helped 120 volunteers develop skills and confidence to make a real contribution to 45 groups in the local community.

Nope. And I didn't tell you about the 630 times we gave advice to volunteer involvers, or the 440 people who came on our training courses.

We help young people get involved in volunteering

20 young people aged between 15 and 18 from Streetwork in Gilmerton joined our team volunteering opportunity to re-decorate a community flat in a high rise block in Moredun. They raised funds; planned the project; learnt painting and decorating skills; developed team work and received Millennium Volunteers Awards. They were visited by First Minister Jack McConnell and Lord Laidlaw.

Another young team developed a new volunteering website for young people www.powerof5.org.uk

This year we published research into young people and volunteering 'Sorry I don't do charity'; developed team volunteering opportunities for young people and continued to deliver the Millennium Volunteers Awards programme for 16-25 year olds.

We help develop policy and strategy on volunteering

One of the strategic aims of the Edinburgh Compact is to 'support and develop the particular role of volunteering and active citizenship in voluntary community and public sectors'

This year we have worked as partners with the Edinburgh Compact Partnership; Community Learning and Development Partnership and Health Action Team, amongst others, ensuring that the contribution of volunteers to all areas of life is recognised, promoted and developed through city plans and strategies. Nationally, we work in partnership with Volunteer Development Scotland to deliver the Scottish Executive Volunteering Strategy.

We help people towards employment with volunteer mentors

'To talk to someone who's not judging you, doesn't know you, and are just listening to your point of view was fantastic and totally the best thing to do. I had doubts in my mind about how I was getting on looking for a job... I was run down, I had lost my son, I was out of work and things were looking bad... once I started the mentoring the confidence came back. It offers you a unique perspective on things. You offered the help, I accepted the help and I'm now very very happy with my situation. I have a full time job with a company I love - and they seem happy with me too!' New deal participant on support from a Volunteer Centre Edinburgh volunteer mentor

85 Job Seeker's Allowance Claimants on New Deal received one to one support towards employment from 43 volunteer Mentors

We help people Become Richer by Working for Nothing

Volunteer Development Scotland research found that 60% of the public felt they had never been asked to volunteer. So we asked. We developed a successful new marketing campaign 'Become Richer. Work for Nothing' involving 16 volunteers expressing their personal experience of volunteering, such as 'My health improved' 'I learnt new skills' 'I met my husband to be'. A poster, flyer and bus ad campaign increased total numbers of people finding out about volunteering by using the Volunteer Centre by 15%

And the other things you need to know....

Volunteer Centre Edinburgh works in partnership with all 32 local Volunteer Centres in Scotland and Volunteer Development Scotland

Volunteer Centre Edinburgh works towards the Scottish Executive National Volunteering Strategy launched in June 2004

Volunteer Centre Edinburgh attained Investors in People Status in November 2004

Volunteer Centre Edinburgh received 20% of the funds to make all this happen from the Scottish Executive Core Grant for Volunteer Centres. Other funders and contractors include: City of Edinburgh Council; BigLottery Fund; Lloyds TSB Foundation for Scotland; Laidlaw Youth Project; Scottish Executive Millennium Volunteers; Robertson Trust; South Edinburgh Social Inclusion Partnership; JobCentrePlus; SportScotland

Accounts 2004-5

Income: £410,519

Expenditure: £370,545

If you would like a full copy of Volunteer Centre Edinburgh's Audited Accounts please contact the accounts department. Accounts are extracted from accounts independently audited by Alexander Sloan Chartered Accountants.

I'd call that a good year and if you would like this fantastic report in a different format, please just ask! Now, any volunteers to make me a cup of tea?

Chair Persons Report

The Volunteer Centre continues to thrive and expand. The Board of Directors has added two members to its ranks and new members of staff have also been appointed.

Volunteering continues to be high on the agenda of The City of Edinburgh Council and the Scottish Executive and to them and the other funding agencies listed in this report, the Board offers its thanks and gratitude for all their support during this financial year.

Funding is a constant issue across the spectrum in the voluntary sector and I, on behalf of the Board of Directors wish to thank Harriet Eadie, our Director and Mike Reid our Treasurer for the continuing efforts in securing funds from various sources.

This year the VCE was successful in the bid for the Investors In People award, the new Business/Development plan was proposed and agreed and changes were made to the internal staffing structures. It has been a busy, productive, interesting and challenging year.

The Board congratulates Harriet, members of staff and the many direct service volunteers for their hard work and commitment during another successful year.

As I retire from the Chair I would like to thank my colleagues on the Board for their help and support during my time in post.

Gill Hamilton, Chair

The People

BOARD: Sandra Blake; Gill Hamilton (Chair); Douglas King; Anna Lawn-Thomas; Jane Maryatt; Chris Phillips; Mike Reid (Treasurer); John Richardson.

VOLUNTEERS: Elaine Cunningham; Richard Jamieson; Helen Walker-Boston. Thanks to our 50 dedicated Mentors, and young teams.

STAFF: Harriet Eadie, Director; Lara Celini; Ruth Boreham; Jill Smith; Linda McNeill; Paul Bennett; Paul Wilson; Mark Steven; Kade Moncrieff; Marion Findlay; Steven Piercy; Sarah Cleary; Lynne Norris; Jude Wilson; Sam Tock; Nick Woodhead.

Contact Us

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