

A photograph of two men in conversation outside a building. On the left, an older man with white hair, wearing a light grey short-sleeved button-down shirt and light-colored trousers, stands and holds a black folder. On the right, a younger man with glasses, wearing a purple polo shirt and black trousers, sits on a concrete ledge. He is holding a white mug with a purple number '2' on it. They are positioned in front of a dark wooden door with glass panels. To the left of the door is a green bush, and to the right is a grey electrical meter. The scene is brightly lit, suggesting daytime. A purple triangular graphic element is in the top right corner.

VOLUNTEERING STRATEGY

2015 – 2018

TURN2US
FIGHTING UK POVERTY



FOREWORD

I want volunteers to be the backbone of this organisation, like for so many charities. For many years our volunteer visitors have represented the human face of our work.

We deal with vulnerable people for whom times are genuinely tough and volunteers are so often the main face to face contact for those we help. At the core of our values is **compassion**; volunteers are the flesh and blood embodiment of that value.

Volunteering isn't just about scheduling grant visits. As a former charity volunteer myself, I know that volunteers don't want to be pigeonholed and "attached" to one bit of the charity. They want – and deserve – a relationship with the charity as a whole. This means that we have to involve them properly, utilise their skills and passion for our cause and make volunteering for

Turn2us a rewarding and life-enhancing experience for both volunteer and beneficiary. This means we have to get both the logistics and human feelings right.

As a paid member of staff I am inspired and humbled in equal measure by our volunteers. That is a precious asset and one we need to make central to the way we work. The volunteering strategy is therefore a timely and necessary cornerstone of our new direction as a charity.

Simon Hopkins
Chief Executive

We want every volunteer – whoever they are, wherever they are based, whatever their role – to have a consistently great experience, now and in the future, from the moment they choose us to offer their time and talents to until they step down from their role, recognising and celebrating their achievements and the impact they have on the individuals who ask us for help



OUR VISION FOR VOLUNTEERING
**INSPIRING PEOPLE
 TO WORK
 TOGETHER IN OUR
 FIGHT AGAINST
 UK POVERTY**

INTRODUCTION

As part of the wider transformation plan for the charity, the need for a fresh and coordinated volunteer strategy has been recognised. At the heart of this is the need to work with volunteers through adopting an approach and ethos that puts them and those we help at the centre of our thinking.

To achieve our ambitious vision that no one in the UK should live in poverty we need to grow our current volunteering programme. That does not just mean recruiting more volunteers, it also means involving volunteers more effectively in our work, ensuring that volunteering is integral to our organisational strategy and by offering new ways for them to get involved we can achieve more in the future.

This strategy sets out our approach to volunteering and how we plan to develop volunteering opportunities and look after our volunteers for the next three years. These principles apply across the whole of the organisation and all of our volunteering strands, providing a framework for how staff and volunteers will work together to deliver our organisational mission and strategic objectives and also for those staff who manage volunteers. This is the first step in a long-term effort to improve the way we support all aspects of our volunteering programme. It sets out the principles we'll apply in the future stages of this work which will include our plans to improve

particular aspects of our volunteering programme alongside how we measure the impact of our volunteering.

At the heart of this strategy are the talents, passion and commitment of our volunteers, many of whom have been volunteering with us for a substantial number of years. They support our work in many different ways from taking a governance role as a Trustee, fundraising in their local communities, visiting individuals who are receiving support from our grant-making programme through to enhancing the quality of life for residents in the Elizabeth Finn Homes.

We want to have clear mechanisms in place for us to listen and respond to our volunteers, tailoring our channels of communications with them in-line with how they want to be communicated with so that they feel engaged and appreciated. We will strive to encourage a culture of open, effective and honest dialogue – not only among staff and volunteers but also between volunteers themselves – to inform the continual evolution, quality and growth of our programme.

OUR VISION AND SUMMARY OF VOLUNTEERING STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

We want volunteers and staff to be inspired to work together more closely to develop new ways to deliver better outcomes for individuals using our services, placing their talents, skills and passions at the heart of our fight against UK poverty through delivery of the following objectives:



OBJECTIVE #1

To ensure a common, inspiring definition and vision for volunteering across the group



OBJECTIVE #3

To improve communication with, and support for, our volunteers



OBJECTIVE #2

To improve the structure of our volunteering programme through the delivery of a “joined up” national approach across the group ensuring that the aspirations, passions and talents of our volunteers are at the heart of our approach, enabling them to add value across the group irrespective of our internal structure



OBJECTIVE #4

To grow volunteering through diversification of opportunities across activities and time commitments to appeal to a wider audience



OBJECTIVE #5

To introduce evaluation and impact measurements to identify areas for improvement and opportunities to grow our programme

WHAT IS VOLUNTEERING?

In the context of this strategy, we have adopted the NCVO nationally accepted definition of volunteering:

'Any activity that involves spending time, unpaid, doing something that aims to benefit the environment or someone (individuals or groups) other than, or in addition to, close relatives, central to this definition is the fact that volunteering must be a choice freely made by each individual.'

This definition includes formal volunteering which takes place in organisations ranging from small community groups to major national charities and informal volunteering which refers to a wide range of different kinds of mutual help and co-operation between individuals and communities including checking on a neighbour and involvement in faith groups.

The national volunteering landscape has changed hugely over recent years. Leading increasingly complex lives, people are frequently pulled in a multitude of directions; their volunteering varies depending on life circumstances. Episodic volunteering has evolved to meet the changing motivations and needs of potential volunteers. Increasing numbers of web based platforms for niche types of volunteering has impacted on the traditional routes into volunteering by providing more options for specific activities/target groups.

The increased reliance on technology to conduct all aspects of our lives continues to rapidly increase – 35% of the population use their smartphone to daily access the internet, forecast to rise to 69% by 2020 – requires charities to ensure that they have an attractive presence and strong brand positioning on the internet and social media platforms.

As an innovative charity, we are aware that our volunteering programme needs to reflect the spread of the consumer model and service culture across broader areas of life by creating an “offer” that best aligns to what volunteers themselves need and want from their volunteering experience, not just what our charity needs. We understand that if we want individuals to give up their valuable free time to volunteer for us, whilst altruism remains a strong motivational factor, it now competes with a need for activities that fit individuals' lifestyles, skills and interests. They have higher expectations about the quality of their experience and expect much more from charities in respect of using their time in meaningful ways and we will strive to ensure that our refreshed volunteering programme can meet that challenge.

The way in which people undertake their volunteering can be broken down into the following categories:



Regular – volunteering at least once a month during the year



Episodic/ad-hoc – dip in and out to meet lifestyle constraints, volunteering usually occurs at events, festivals, conservation projects, etc



Micro – bite-sized chunks of time, activities completed from home or work on demand under your own terms either in response to smartphone apps such as Orange “Do Some Good” or against a micro-role devised by a charity to deliver a short intervention



Internships – used to describe an opportunity supporting a particular piece of work or project with a clear start and finish date i.e. campaign/fundraising activities

Whenever and however frequently volunteering happens, it is universally accepted that there are four fundamental principles to this activity, namely:



Choice – volunteering must be a choice freely made by each individual.



Diversity – volunteering should be open to all, no matter what a person's background, age, race, disability, caring responsibilities, faith, sexual orientation, etc



Reciprocity – it is important that volunteers as well as the volunteer involving organisation benefits from the whole experience



Recognition – it is important that volunteers receive recognition whether privately or publically

WHY DO PEOPLE VOLUNTEER?

Volunteering is many things to many people, why someone volunteers differs greatly from one person to the next but it is important to understand the motivations behind individuals coming forward as volunteers for the organisation because it will inform not only our marketing approach for recruitment but also how we recognise and reward the endeavours of our volunteers.

Reasons can include to:

- ▶ develop new friendships and social networks
- ▶ practice existing skills or develop new ones
- ▶ “give something back”
- ▶ gain practical experience and a reference to increase employability prospects
- ▶ add another dimension to a university application form
- ▶ try something different either as a potential career option or career change
- ▶ fundraise for a charity close to their heart
- ▶ campaign about a cause they are passionate about
- ▶ effect change in their neighbourhood or local community – responding to a need that has been identified by residents
- ▶ help someone less able than themselves or facing a difficult time in their lives due to ill-health or personal circumstances
- ▶ enhance their own feeling of well-being or improve self-confidence



EDDIE'S STORY

Four years ago Eddie was a volunteer in his local Citizen's Advice Bureau and he became aware of our work through a conversation with a colleague. Although Eddie enjoyed his volunteering, the thought of having a more active role and visiting different people in their own homes sounded very appealing so he successfully applied to become a Visitor in his local community and he is one of our most active volunteers, currently visiting twenty three people. When asked why people who were thinking about volunteering should consider our Visitor role, Eddie said:

“You need to think about what you want out from life and this role provides not only something for you but also for the individual seeking support. It's a two-way process. If you are happy to visit people in their own homes there is a great deal of deep-down satisfaction to be had from getting people the help they need when they need it. It is really worthwhile because your visit report is part of the grant making process that can help people's quality of life, particularly when you have helped identify a genuine need that individuals have not mentioned in their application. People know that you are the person who will help them get through the next financial year.

You need to be able to have empathy for individuals and their situation, listen to why they need our help, ask questions and find out the information the Caseworkers need to make their decision. However, it is often what you observe as well that matters – any signs of wear and tear to the property, a broken fence etc because people are often very proud and don't want to indicate that they are having great difficulties. By looking, listening and being friendly but questioning, you can find out their real circumstances if they are prepared to disclose them.

There is a real “feel-good” factor about helping people through a tough period in their lives.”



The Charity's vision, mission and values are what we are working together to try to achieve. They define what sort of organisation we are (or aspire to be). Our values in particular characterise the way in which we conduct our work and are at the heart of everything we do.

OUR VISION:

NO ONE IN THE UK SHOULD LIVE IN POVERTY.

OUR MISSION:

To improve the lives of people living in poverty in the UK.

OUR ROLE:

We help people to access support including welfare benefits, charitable grants and a range of services – online, by phone, and face-to-face through partner organisations and volunteers.

OUR VALUES:



WE ARE COMPASSIONATE

We never forget that people are at the heart of everything we do.

WE ARE INNOVATIVE

We respond to what people need and we're always looking for new ways to make things better.

WE ARE COLLABORATIVE

By working with others, and combining their talent and experience with ours, we can achieve more.

WE ARE DRIVEN

We are relentless in our fight against poverty. We will make a real difference to everyone we support.

WE ARE OPEN

We're proud of what we do and how we do it. We are candid about the facts, and we acknowledge and learn from our mistakes.

TURN2US

FIGHTING UK POVERTY

OUR HISTORY AND HERITAGE

Our charity first began at a social gathering in 1897 when Elizabeth Finn, a pioneering 72 year old woman, made a stand and read accounts from people who were living in poverty. Her audience were so moved that many volunteered to fundraise and get support from their friends. It was from these humble beginnings that the charity's work began, starting in her London home and by the time she died in 1920 it was firmly established as a vital source of support for people in poverty across the UK and Ireland. Poverty in the Victorian era was very different to what we deal with today, but it would be wrong to think that it is no longer a problem in the 21st Century. Today over 13 million people in the UK are classed as living in poverty, including 3.5 million children.

In 2014-2015 we distributed £3.1 million in grants to 4,813 individuals and over 3.9 million people have used our services. One of the tools on our website is the "Benefits Calculator" which was used to complete 948,000 benefit calculations and we have been increasing our reach by training staff and volunteers in other charities to use our website tools when dealing with their clients who are in financial hardship - 1,700 individuals have been trained from 885 organisations as part of our Intermediaries Workshop Programme. There were a further 94,000 calls to our free helpline. During this period our work was supported by over 300 volunteers in various roles.

BACKGROUND TO THE STRATEGY

The need for an overarching volunteering strategy was initially highlighted as part of the revised organisational strategy in 2014. One of the

important elements that was identified by that review was that we wanted to build on our point of differentiation to other charities involved in similar work to ours, namely that we are the only organisation providing access to welfare benefits, charitable grants and support services in one place, to all people in financial need across the UK; working with the full spectrum of bodies that have regular contact with and support people in financial need.

During that review the following revised strategic objectives were identified for the organisation:

- ▶ To distribute direct grants for a series of trusts and funds managed directly by the charity
- ▶ To provide a comprehensive set of channels and resources to help people in financial hardship to gain access to welfare benefits, charitable grants and other support services
- ▶ To provide a focal point for grant giving and other financially related not-for-profit organisations to tackle poverty
- ▶ To raise awareness of practical help available to those living in financial hardship
- ▶ To run our affairs in a professional and financially sustainable manner

In order to help attain our aspirations, we realised that it was important that we grew our volunteering programme, not just by increasing the number of volunteers we have but also by ensuring that we can offer a variety of different ways to support our work both with regard to the activities volunteers can get involved with and also the time commitment that we ask from them which in turn would refresh the demographic profile of our volunteers. Alongside this ambition, we wanted to ensure that volunteering for Turn2us is a great experience, with everyone knowing that they are making a positive contribution to achieving our goals.

This strategy is our first step in our work towards ensuring that our volunteers know how highly they are valued and how central they are to our organisational strategy. It sets our framework to achieve this through ensuring that our volunteers have the resources they need, are engaged with and supported by the charity, that we communicate effectively and openly with volunteers and that their contributions are recognised and rewarded through a variety of different mechanisms in-line with their personal preferences.

OUR APPROACH TO DEVELOPING THE STRATEGY

Once the need for the strategy had been identified, it was decided to establish a Project Team comprising of representatives from the staff team and volunteers, overseen by a Project Board led by the Chief Executive. The project plan outlined draft objectives and outcomes for the strategy and the accompanying communications plan detailed the ways in which we planned to communicate them to our wider staff and volunteer stakeholder group, giving them opportunities to contribute their experience and thoughts into the creation of the final strategy and activities to support the accompanying action plan to transform our vision into a reality.

Our first steps were to develop a range of consultation mechanisms to present the framework of our draft strategy to our stakeholder audiences. These comprised of workshops created for the Project Team members, HQ staff not directly involved in the project, a programme of five regional events for volunteers in four locations across England and Wales and the creation of a database of project update and survey preferences for those volunteers unable to attend these events so that they could receive regular updates and feed into the process through other avenues.



WORKSHOPS

The purpose of the workshops was to appraise attendees of our current position in respect of our volunteering programme, give an overview of the national volunteering landscape and trends and then to provide them with an opportunity to contribute their thoughts to the development of the strategy through participation in various exercises which contributed to our internal analysis of the charity. These exercises included SWOT and PEST analysis which encouraged participants to think about the volunteering strategic issues that the organisation is facing and an "identifying ideas, options and opportunities" for either their areas of work (staff) or their volunteering role (volunteers). Attendees shared their knowledge about potential future demands on their areas of work (staff) and their frontline operational experience dealing with individuals we support with grants (volunteers).



DINAH'S STORY

Twenty five years ago, Dinah was unexpectedly widowed and left with two children of ten and twelve. She contacted the charitable arm of the professional body attached to her late husband, requesting assistance with funding a car. This organisation was very generous in giving her a loan which she later paid back. The application process was not unlike ours in that – in her words – "a charming woman/visitor made a home visit to assess the situation on their behalf. She returned annually for some time and I always appreciated her care, attention and general friendliness". Some ten years later, Dinah had time to spare but did not wish to commit to a regular volunteer slot. Through the charity REACH she heard about our Visitor role and thought it would suit her because she knew what it felt like to be on the "other side of the sofa". When asked what she enjoys about her volunteering, Dinah said:

"As a sociable person I enjoy the opportunity to talk to people from all walks of life and all ages (current individuals range age from 30-92) and it allows me to use skills from my working life. I feel it is a privilege to be allowed into someone's home and try to gain their confidence so that an open conversation is possible. I am interested in people's life stories and each and every one is important to me. I also get personal satisfaction in hearing first hand about how Turn2us funding helps, and the enormous difference having a 'lifeline' of funds makes to each person."

I would recommend becoming a Volunteer Visitor because it provides personal satisfaction in helping vulnerable people to make the most of the assistance from Turn2us, I feel valued by an organisation which is committed to supporting volunteers and offers flexible opportunities and it provides you with opportunities to use your skills for the benefit of people in need."





VOLUNTEERS SURVEY

This survey was created using SurveyMonkey and was made available in both an electronic and hard copy format which was posted out to those volunteers who had expressed a preference for a postal version. Key statistics from this survey were as follows:



PREFERENCES FOR MECHANISMS TO RECOGNISE AND THANK OUR VOLUNTEERS

70% CHOOSE EITHER RECEIVING A LETTER OF THANKS OR A TOKEN OF OUR APPRECIATION

69% A VERBAL "THANKS" DURING THEIR SERVICE

38% DISAGREED WITH HAVING A FORMAL AWARDS CEREMONY WITH A NOMINATION PROCESS

32% DISAGREED WITH HAVING INDIVIDUAL INFORMAL AWARDS OR CERTIFICATES OF RECOGNITION



TOP ANSWERS IN RESPECT OF MOTIVATIONS TO START VOLUNTEERING

54% Wanted to GIVE SOMETHING BACK

48% Wanted to USE EXISTING SKILLS

34% Were aware of the work of Turn2us/EFC THROUGH FRIENDS AND CONTACTS

32% HAD TIME ON THEIR HANDS



65% VOLUNTEERED FOR UP TO 5 HOURS PER MONTH

with 35% contributing more than 5 hrs pcm (12% of which were doing over 11hrs pcm)



65% ALSO VOLUNTEERED FOR ANOTHER ORGANISATION



53% had been VOLUNTEERING FOR BETWEEN 5 - 15 YEARS

with a further 24% volunteering for between 15-25 years, clearly evidencing the longstanding nature of our current volunteers



POTENTIAL VOLUNTEERING OPPORTUNITIES THAT THEY MIGHT BE INTERESTED IN

38% BEFRIENDING IN PERSON

19% EVENT VOLUNTEERING

18% BEFRIENDING BY TELEPHONE

13% SKILLS BANK

13% SUPPORTING INDIVIDUALS TO NAVIGATE WEBSITE TOOLS IE BENEFITS CALCULATOR

12% SUPPORTING TURN2US CAMPAIGNS

7% AMBASSADORIAL ROLE

The results from this survey indicate that whilst there are some areas that we could improve upon, we are doing well in other areas particularly with regard to volunteers' levels of satisfaction in helping individuals to access our services and their feelings of appreciation by staff. The information regarding length of service reinforces our earlier findings during the scoping phase of this project and their desire to use existing skills has the potential to be further harnessed by our plans to develop a Skills Bank model of volunteering.



TOP ANSWERS WITH REGARD TO THEIR FEELINGS ABOUT THEIR VOLUNTEERING EXPERIENCES

93% Felt that it was important to them to KNOW THE OUTCOME OF THEIR WORK

91% Got satisfaction from helping to identify how they could HELP INDIVIDUALS WITH GRANTS FROM ELIZABETH FINN FUND

91% Knew that if they had a problem or identified an issue with an individual THAT THEY COULD CONTACT HQ FOR ADVICE AND SUPPORT

89% Knew that their volunteering was APPRECIATED BY THE TURN2US STAFF

85% Felt that THEIR RELATIONSHIP WITH THE INDIVIDUAL they visited was an important part of why they volunteered

71% Felt PART OF THE CHARITY AND ITS WIDER WORK

68% Felt that: COMMUNICATION WITH HQ WORKS WELL



VOLUNTEERING STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES MATRIX

These pages illustrate how the objectives from this volunteering strategy align to support the delivery of the overarching Organisational ones

The Volunteering Objectives are:

- 1** To ensure a common, inspiring definition and vision for volunteering across the group
 - ▶ Volunteers are engaged with the charity and have an informed voice on organisational issues
- 2** To improve the structure of our volunteering programme through the delivery of a “joined up” national approach across the group ensuring that the aspirations, passions and talents of our volunteers are at the heart of our approach, enabling them to add value across the group irrespective of our internal structure
 - ▶ Potential volunteers are provided with clear information about volunteering opportunities, the recruitment and selection procedure, what volunteers can expect from the organisation and what the organisation's expectation are
 - ▶ Efficiency and budgetary savings are achieved through greater use of electronic communications and streamlined processes
 - ▶ A clear volunteering plan which sets out priority areas for development, reinforcement and – where necessary – cessation over the next three years
 - ▶ Volunteers will be enabled to effectively match their talents to a bespoke volunteering opportunity through the addition of a new “Skills Bank” brokerage model
- 3** To improve communication with, and support for, our volunteers
 - ▶ Volunteers are engaged with the charity and have an informed voice on organisational issues
 - ▶ Volunteers levels of satisfaction with the organisation and their volunteering experience are captured to inform reviews of processes and procedures, ensuring quality is maintained in our approach to volunteer management
 - ▶ Staff supervising volunteers are supported and trained to effectively manage volunteers
- 4** To grow volunteering through diversification of opportunities across activities and time commitments to appeal to a wider audience
 - ▶ A clear volunteering plan which sets out priority areas for development, reinforcement and – where necessary – cessation over the next three years
 - ▶ Increased numbers of volunteers are involved in the delivery of our services, fundraising and grant-making activities which enhances our ability to reach more people affected by poverty
- 5** To introduce evaluation and impact measurements to identify areas for improvement and opportunities to grow our programme
 - ▶ A suitable impact measurement toolkit is identified to ensure that evidence of the impact of the volunteering programme in delivery of the organisational aims and objectives is captured
 - ▶ Those we help are supported in meaningful ways by our volunteers and given opportunities to demonstrate the impact of our support and intervention



How the Volunteering Objectives align with the overarching Organisational ones:



DELIVERING THE STRATEGY

The strategy will be implemented through the delivery of the Action Plan which contains details of the key activities that will transform our volunteering programme so that it is aligned to these objectives and outcomes, building on the learning from our consultation with staff and volunteer stakeholders.

However, as a “living document”, this strategy will also retain flexibility to respond to any new developments in the national landscape for volunteering together with emerging operational needs for the organisation.

CONTACT US:

Whether you're looking for support, or just want to find out more about what we do, visit our website or follow us on social media to find out more.

Visit us:

TURN2US.ORG.UK

If you would like to find out more about supporting our work as one of our volunteers please complete the online enquiry form in the Volunteering section of our website or telephone: **+44 (0)20 8834 9200**

 twitter.com/turn2us_org

 facebook.com/turn2us

Turn2us is a trading name for Elizabeth Finn Care. Elizabeth Finn Care is a charity registered in England and Wales No: 207812; and in Scotland No: SC040987.

