

VDS, Learning & Practice Development

Volunteer Knowledge
Working with Volunteers
September 2007



Name of Organisation

The Green Team

Why did you decide to go for Investing in Volunteers?

We managed to obtain a grant from CEC to help cover costs.

We had been reviewing our work with volunteers and felt that the service we were providing was quite good. Having the opportunity to let someone look at our work from outside the organisation was too good an opportunity to miss out on. Our organisation just wouldn't exist without volunteers and we wanted to give them the best service possible. It was really to find out if our standards were adequate.

What benefits have you found from working towards Investing in Volunteers?

- Really focused us on the services we provide for our volunteers.
- Gave us confidence knowing that we were providing our volunteers with a good service.
- Creating our Self Development Plan gave us clear goals to work towards.
- Feedback from our external assessor highlighted a few things that we hadn't thought of. (it was great to have an external viewpoint)
- Our volunteers know that we have invested our time in them and it has given us good reason to celebrate all their fantastic work.

How did the assessment work in your organisation?

We had an initial presentation from Jude Wilson who took us through the IIV system.

2 of the GT staff worked on the Self Development plan initially and split any work that had been highlighted. When all the work had been completed we then sent the plan back to the Volunteer Development Scotland. We were then contacted by our external assessor and arranged a date for her to visit the organisation.

This was a huge day!!! We had 8 volunteer leaders, 2 members of Staff and 2 Directors who were interviewed by our external assessor. This flowed well. It did take a bit of organising but our volunteers were very accommodating and really enjoyed talking about their experiences. I think our assessor did very well! It was a very long day for all of us.

5 Practical tips you would give another organisation working towards Investing in Volunteers

- Start it A.S.A.P – it really does help you focus on the service you provide to your volunteers.
- Try and encourage 2 members of staff to work on it – this helps prevent anyone feeling overwhelmed with the work to do.
- Have your IIV meetings with laptops present if possible – we found that if we updated our records as we met, it saved time.
- Make your dates for your development plan realistic to fit in with your year.
- Celebrate all your hard work at the end – you've just completed a wonderful process that edifies how you work with volunteers.

What training/learning did you require to help you meet the standards and where did you source it? e.g., local Volunteer Centre, local college

We got advice from VDS about policies etc. Identified a training course on 'coaching' for our volunteer coordinator through VDS.