

## 10-Step-Plan for Recruiting Parish Volunteers

### Outline

| Step                | Actions   |
|---------------------|---|
| <a href="#">1.</a>  | Assess the current situation in your parish.  |
| <a href="#">2.</a>  | Gather a planning group. Involve them from the start.   |
| <a href="#">3.</a>  | Together, consider the needs of the parish and plan next steps.                                   |
| <a href="#">4.</a>  | Formation - call to service / active faith / love in action                                       |
| <a href="#">5.</a>  | Prepare Role Descriptions   |
| <a href="#">6.</a>  | Prepare / gather the forms needed for the safe recruitment of volunteers.                         |
| <a href="#">7.</a>  | Promotion – where and how to invite parishioners to get involved                                  |
| <a href="#">8.</a>  | Volunteer Recruitment Event   |
| <a href="#">9.</a>  | Follow-up interest  |
| <a href="#">10.</a> | Ongoing support, nurturing and recognition of volunteers and ongoing review of volunteering needs |

More detailed actions for each step are on the next page, or click on a number to go straight to details for that step.

Links to resources and websites are on the last page, or click [here](#).

## 10-Step-Plan for Recruiting Parish Volunteers

| Step | Actions   |
|------|---|
| 1.   | Assess the current situation in your parish. Is there a need for more volunteers?   |
| 2.   | Gather a planning group. Involve them from the start.<br><br>(Include existing volunteer representatives / group leaders, safeguarding rep, parish administrator, Caritas rep, pastoral assistant, people who might help coordinate the volunteers, anyone else?)   |
| 3.   | Together, consider the needs of the parish. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Celebrate successes to date, discuss opportunities for improvement and enrichment.</li> <li>b. Agree the roles you want to recruit. Any priorities / most pressing needs? Discuss the purpose and scope of each role (see point 5). How many volunteers for each role?</li> <li>c. Discuss how to reach groups not normally reached. Think about who might feel excluded. "Enlarge the space of your tent" (Is 54:2) Identify barriers. Do you know what is stopping people from getting involved? If not, whom could you ask?</li> <li>d. Plan next steps, agree responsibilities and allocate / delegate tasks</li> </ol>                                       |
| 4.   | Formation <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. during homilies, especially when the readings at mass lend themselves to speaking of the active Christian life. Volunteering as a way to live out the universal call to service. 'Love thy neighbour'.</li> <li>b. Use Love in Action resource (free, <a href="https://caritaswestminster.org.uk/resources/love-in-action/">https://caritaswestminster.org.uk/resources/love-in-action/</a>) or other resources</li> <li>c. Day of reflection, retreat, Bible study groups</li> <li>d. Guest speakers / series of talks in Lent</li> <li>e. Are there other opportunities to offer some formation? For example, for parents while their children are in sacramental preparation classes?</li> </ol> |
| 5.   | Prepare Role Descriptions<br><br>They do not have to be complicated. Depends on complexity of the role. Purpose is clarity. For you and the volunteer. Include a clear purpose of the role, the main tasks, person specification, and time commitment. Make the tasks worthwhile.<br><br>Diocesan website has ready-made role descriptions for several typical parish roles.  |
| 6.   | Prepare / gather other forms needed for the safe recruitment of volunteers. ' <a href="#">Safer recruitment process</a> ' flowchart and related documents available on diocesan website. Ensure all involved in the volunteer recruitment process are familiar with it.   |

|     |   |
|-----|---|
| 7.  | <p>Promotion – where and how to invite parishioners to get involved</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Face-to-face / personal invitation /word-of-mouth (these tend to be the most effective)</li> <li>b. posters, flyers, newsletter, website, social media (-&gt; young people)</li> <li>c. Parishioner census / sacramental preparation enrolment form /New online expression of interest form</li> <li>d. Parish appeal (general; for specific roles)</li> <li>h. Volunteer recruitment event</li> </ul>  |
| 8.  | <p>Volunteer Recruitment Event</p> <p>Celebration, International Day, Love in Action planning, parish volunteer fair, open day.</p> <p>Opportunity for encounters. Build relationships. Allows you to get a glimpse of the gifts, skills and interests.</p> <p>Face-to-face, personal invitation is the most effective way. Invite, don't just ask. Say why you think this person has a lot to bring to that role. Invite, no pressure. Being personally invited can be very affirming.</p> <p>Be honest about the commitment required. Don't be tempted to 'undersell' because you're worried about scaring people off. Playing the commitment down can have the effect of playing down the contribution the volunteer can make.</p>   |
| 9.  | <p>Follow-up interest</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Follow up fast! This step is crucial. Once a person's enthusiasm is sparked, do not let it go cold by ignoring them. (Message received: "they are not interested in me", "don't need / want me")</li> <li>b. Match the person to a role that matches the interests and strengths of the volunteer.</li> <li>c. Provide information and be ready to answer questions about training and support, skills required, time commitment, flexibility.</li> <li>d. Where possible, get the new volunteer started in some way as soon as possible (always keep within safe recruitment process. Can they do a taster session or shadow another volunteer? Can they start with initial training or induction?)</li> </ul> |
| 10. | <p>Ongoing support, nurturing and recognition of volunteers:</p> <p>Training, support (checking in 'how is it going?'), recognition ('thank you!', social event, outing, reflection day, certificates, nominate for an award)</p> <p>Ongoing review of volunteering needs</p>   |

## **LINKS AND RESOURCES**

Safer Recruitment Process flowchart:

<https://rcdow.org.uk/att/files/safeguarding/forms/safer%20recruitment%20of%20new%20volunteers.pdf>

Diocesan Volunteer Role Descriptions for DBS roles, a checklist and a wealth of other information and forms:

<https://rcdow.org.uk/safeguarding/safer-recruitment-and-dbs-applications/>

Safe Recruitment of Volunteers – talk with slides - YouTube recording:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4wcDyc7bLN8>

Love in Action (resource for parishes)

<https://www.stepforwardinlove.org/>

Talk by Fulvio Ornato, CAFOD's Head of Volunteering, on Volunteer Management. Pastoral aspect. Volunteering as giving people an opportunity to develop their faith. Well worth a listen.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6HM5O4rmo5M&t=6s>

Time Well Spent report (NCVO)

<https://ncvo-app-wagtail-mediaa721a567-uwkfinin077j.s3.amazonaws.com/documents/time-well-spent-a-national-survey-on-the-volunteer-experience.pdf>

### **Useful websites**

<https://rcdow.org.uk/diocese/safeguarding/>

<https://rcdow.org.uk/safeguarding/safer-recruitment-and-dbs-applications/>

<https://www.catholicsafeguarding.org.uk/>

<https://caritaswestminster.org.uk/volunteer-service/>

<https://caritaswestminster.org.uk/resources/volunteering-resources/>

<https://www.ncvo.org.uk>

<https://volunteeringmatters.org.uk>

(Includes 'top tips for volunteer recruitment': <https://volunteeringmatters.org.uk/volunteer-recruitment-getting-word-out/>)

<https://www.volunteerscotland.net>

<https://www.manchestercommunitycentral.org/volunteer-centre-manchester>

<https://doinggoodleeds.org.uk/resources-for-volunteer-managers/>

<https://cuf.org.uk/resources/volunteering-resources>