

How to Guide:

RECRUITMENT



Volunteering is always nicer if there are more people to help out. Our research shows that many of our volunteers and community supporters join because they were directly asked by already existing volunteers. In this guide we offer you a few ideas how you might go about recruiting extra pairs of helping hands.

How can we get more people to join in to volunteer?

The main questions you ask yourself when it comes to volunteer recruitment could be: what needs doing, who could help and when and then: where or how will you find them?

What needs doing?

There are many varied things volunteers can help with. Often it will be many things combined. But it can be useful to not overask, as some people will have a passion for something in particular and be wary in case volunteering will take up too much of their time. So focus on where the need is highest, hint at other things people *might* choose to get involved in and suggest how much time a month would be involved, ideally. This way you may be able to lower the threshold.

Have a think also about if there is a project – something with a clear end point – that could be interesting. Young volunteers might be interested in joining in for a set time, if at the end of it there will be a clear outcome, which could look good on their cv or in their portfolio. Open-ended volunteering is not for everybody and it is a way to benefit from new skills, for instance on the digital front.

Keep in mind that these are volunteering roles, and use language that makes that clear. There is nothing wrong with sharing your expectations, but it all needs to be flexible.

Roles you could look for:

- Church opening and welcoming
- Organising events
- Cleaning and Gardening
- Fundraising
- Guided Tours and Walks
- Research church and social history
- Photography
- Project roles
- Task based – micro-volunteering

Who do you need?

With the role in mind, who are the people you are trying to recruit? That might decide where you will look for them. When do you need them, and how long for? Do they already visit? How much do they know about you and your opportunities or needs? That will help pinpoint your call to action and where to find these much-needed people.

For instance, if you decide that you want some help on a guided walk, which is also available online, you might want to talk to a ramblers' group, a local town guide and the local college. If there is a particular task that you need doing, perhaps corporate volunteering could be a possibility: local businesses might relish an opportunity to get away from their place, and help you – this is their way of giving back to the community, and it helps if it can be highly visual, so that they can take photographs of the task at hand.

A quick community audit can be helpful here where you map what organisations there are, who is involved, where and when do they meet. It is sometimes easier to enrol people who are already active community members in other organisations such as Scouts, u3a and others. Although we all know that serial volunteers are overcommitting themselves.

Due to cost savings and environmental concerns we have started to move away from leaflets. But a poster on the notice board outside the church with a good photo and an interesting fact, could entice people to come inside. And you could easily update and change that with the seasons. A CCT format is available to all to use, please ask your CCT contact for the materials.

What are the benefits of volunteering?

We often forget that volunteering not only benefits the charity, it hopefully also benefits people who volunteer. Here are a few things that people might see as benefits of volunteering with CCT, and you may have other thoughts. It helps to have this in mind, to make the volunteer call out as attractive as possible to interest the people you would like to attract.

For instance, if you would like to recruit newly retired volunteers, the flexible approach may be of interest, whereas student volunteers could be reminded of the improving of their CV.

- Making a difference in your local environment
- A chance to work with other likeminded people
- Travel expenses
- Flexible volunteering – both in time and in place
- Using your creativity
- Safeguarding training and other opportunities
- Improving your CV
- Regular communication

- Regional meetings to share ideas with others
- National online celebration event, sponsored by Marsh Charitable Trust
- Discount on Champing TM

Where do I find people?

So, if you are clear what you need and you have an idea who you need, then how do you go about finding people? There are several distinct ways, and you will often try on several fronts, depending on the audience group you are targeting. Try and see which ones you are most comfortable with yourself, and ask help if you want to trial something which is outside your own expertise. What works in one area, may not work in other areas.

We will have a quick look at recruiting on site, online and off site.

On site

On site is often seen to be the easiest way of engaging people. After all, they are already visiting, therefore they probably are interested in the building and its history. You are in the good position to be able to tell people something about the church or chapel they might not be aware of, gauge their interest and highlight that your group/the church could really benefit from their enthusiasm and expertise.

If they are not local, they will tell you so swiftly, in which case you could mention that CCT cares for 357 churches, and that they could contact the office for their nearest church.

Of course, you may not always be there. In that case, a poster or leaflet highlighting the need for extra support is the simplest step. We don't suggest a list for people to leave their name and contact details, because of GDPR issues. A list like that should ideally not be displayed in the church.

Events have been known to be a good opportunity to sign up likeminded people. A volunteer recruitment event might work, but it might be best to combine that with a specific history talk to bring people in. Guided walks or tours are the best. You have most likely local people, who are listening to you already. They are interested in the story you are telling. So it offers a chance to talk a bit about what volunteering means for you, what you could do with extra helping hands. See where you have a space to highlight that the event (let's say a fair, a theatre performance, a coffee morning) is being supported by volunteers. Is it when you say a thank you to all helping hands – and if people feel inspired, to come to you for a chat? Is it a few notices up saying you're always looking for more people?

Specific taster days where people are buddied up with existing volunteers offers a nice and social way of trialling volunteering. Remember to follow up after the taster day.

Remember to take photographs of volunteers in action (with their permission), as this will help both in creating engaging posters, as well as helping make the help visible online.

A poster on the outside of the church may be useful. One of our LCOs recently put a poster on a door, asking for cryptkeepers, and had around 10 people come forward.

This was in Bristol, so was able to benefit from high footfall, but realise that people might take you for granted, and not step in because they may not know they are needed.

Online

There are several ways of getting a call to volunteers out online. Some need more preparation than others. For instance, some might want a role profile, others want to know if you have certain policies in place.

- CCT website
- Do-it website – CCT has a central log in but you can use your own
- Local Councils for Voluntary Service
- Leicester Museum Jobs website
- Big Help Out
- Social media
- Online event

Websites such as Do-it, your local CVS websites and the Leicester Museum Jobs website have been known to be useful. Try to emphasise what it is that you think people might enjoy about helping. Is it the community spirit, the beautiful site, the flexibility of the volunteering? Is there something people could do on a project basis? The Big Help Out is now a regular event, in June, which wants to bring focus to volunteering. We can put events on there – this year we had a few, but if next year we have more, it might generate more traction. It is worthwhile considering an event in that time to get volunteers interested, and the Big Help Out could offer a bit of extra marketing.

Social media is an ever-growing chance to make people aware of needs. For this sort of post, think about what image you need to grab people's attention and keep the text short. Who could you tag in the post, and have them share it? Is there something funny that you could add? A question? A treasure hunt? Proofread your post, check your links and let somebody else look at it too. Although, one of the most popular posts online was the BBC when they indicated a film star had been active for 90 decades... so mistakes can help you go viral, but we're not suggesting that as a course of action.

Of course online events can also help you share your message. If you organise online talks, or you are streaming a concert – consider your reach and your call for people to join you as helping hands.

Off site

- (Volunteer) fairs
- Posters in libraries and other places (your window?)
- Talking to friends and neighbours
- Giving a talk to a local group
- Article in newspaper or local magazine

You can of course organise your own volunteer recruitment event but it might be easier to join in events that others organise. Your local CVS often organises a fair. Or perhaps there is a local bootfair where you can have a stall?



What is your stall going to show? Do you have good photos? What will pull people to your stall? What can people take away to remind them? You are ok on a stall to take people's details, but again try to not have them on show for others, in good GDPR practice.

We often get people asking if they have to be religious to volunteer with CCT, so perhaps stress that it is about caring for historic buildings, as Marie did in this stall in Exeter. She also found that having large keys to handle (and guess the weight), combined with some sweets, worked a treat! She had created and printed leaflets for people to take away, but ultimately the names she took on the day led to active volunteers, and the leaflets didn't generate any leads.

A poster may make even more sense where it is not expected. Where in your local community could you put up a poster where it is allowed? The library, the town hall? Perhaps you can have a poster in your window if you live somewhere local with good footfall? Be concise on a poster: a good, catching image and a call to action and a way to get in touch is often what is needed. As Rachel our LCO found, to call for cryptkeepers rather than volunteers, engaged an entirely new group of people.

We asked volunteers how they thought recruitment would work best, and how they came to volunteer and it is still often about getting your own contacts involved. As an enthusiastic ambassador, you are the best way to convince others to join you! You could ask for help realising a particular event, so that it's not such a big hurdle to commit to. And if they like it... who knows?

If you are comfortable with public speaking, you could consider offering a talk to a local group. You know very well that volunteers often volunteer for more than one organisation, so under the guise of an interesting talk about the history of the church,

you could rally the troops of a u3a group, rotary or Women's Institute. If you'd like to give a talk about a wider topic, we might be able to help you with slides and content. Many of you also engage the local press through an article in the local newspaper or magazine. You could write something yourself, as local press are often in need of content. Is there a quirky story you could offer?

Next steps

If you have ideas, check with your CCT contact. They may be able to help market and plan with you.