

How to recruit volunteers

3 Top Tips

1. To keep your groups sustainable in terms of members you, as group coordinator, should be spending most of your time recruiting new volunteers and training existing ones to take on new responsibilities. If you'd rather be running activities yourself then you're better off joining up with an existing group and running something as part of their work, rather than running your own.
2. To find volunteers you need to meet them where they like to spend their time. If you want a volunteer to run your social media, you're most likely to meet them on social media, if you want someone to work on a community garden, try the local allotments or houses nearest the garden, if you want someone to run a village fete, try the people who live on the streets where the fete will be.
3. Expect something like 3 new volunteers for every 100 you talk to. Recruiting long-term highly engaged people is hard, that's why it takes so much of your time. Don't be downhearted if an engagement event doesn't result in any new members, it will probably take several events at least, and each one is getting you a step closer.
4. It's easier to ask someone to take on a big task with lots of responsibility that gives them a feeling of purpose and value, than it is to get someone to take on regular small tasks, even if they're easier. If you want volunteers that show up again and again, they need to feel valued, and for that they need to be a leader and have their ideas be followed (at least some of the time).
5. Tension is good actually! If members of a group disagree about how to do things it means they care deeply about them. If tension turns into conflict, it's important you sort it out quickly, so people aren't put off, but a bit of tension and disagreement is healthy for a sustainable group.

If you feel like you need help resolving a conflict you can turn to Southern Brooks for mediation support.

Doorknocking

Doorknocking (going door-to-door speaking to people in their homes about their project) can be one of the best ways to recruit new people. Nothing beats a face-to-face conversation.

When doorknocking you and your group might experience rejection but once people realise you aren't selling them something they'll be much happier to speak to you. It's very rare that anyone will be rude on a doorstep, most people are polite and friendly.

The most important thing is that you listen to them and their interests. People are more likely to remember your conversation well if they do most of the talking. The script below gives you an example

that would work for a group where members can begin new projects. If yours is only doing one very specific thing, like litter picking, you may be better off just saying hello and then explaining what you're offering.

Do have simple leaflets with you that have your group's contact details on them.

Do have a pen and paper with you so you can collect their contact details (if you do that you'll need a simple GDPR statement to read to them before they give you their details)

To help you with this, here's a script you can follow:

Script	Notes
<p>Hello, my name's _____ and I'm just coming to speak to everyone on your street about our community project _____. Don't worry, we're not asking for money.</p> <p>I'm just asking people about what green issues are important to them to see if we can do something about it.</p>	<p>It's important to make them feel like they aren't being targeted and establish early on that you aren't after any money.</p> <p>If people aren't interested, they'll normally tell you quickly so you can move on.</p>
<p>Are there any environmental issues that you're worried about?</p> <p>Do you use ____ park at all? What do you think of is?</p> <p>What would you like to see change about our local environment/park?</p>	<p>If they say yes, great, you can talk to them about their climate issues.</p> <p>If they say no, have some suggestions up your sleeve, something like "what about the litter in the local park" or "have you noticed some speeding on this road, does that affect you?"</p>
<p>Have you spoken to anyone about this issue? How did that go?</p> <p>Have you ever tried to do something about this issue?</p> <p>What stopped that working?</p> <p>What's making you feel like you can do anything about it?</p>	<p>You want to show people that you're more likely to get somewhere if you do things as part of a group.</p> <p>If they don't feel like they can do anything about their issue that's ok, go on to the next section.</p>
<p>Do you think other people share your issue?</p> <p>I spoke to your neighbour, and they said the same thing to me, it seems like lots of people round here have the same issue/want the same</p>	<p>You want to get them to realise that a group of people might have more luck than them on their own.</p> <p>You want to make them feel like they're not alone and that this could be a united project</p>

things.	other people would work with them on.
What would it look like if your issue was solved? How would you like this area to be?	It's important you steer the conversation in a positive direction. We want people to imagine the thing they're aiming for. It's more motivating.
Would you feel up for bringing this issue to one of our group meetings? We could invite your neighbours who feel the same and talk about getting a project off the ground.	They might be shy about this so suggesting their neighbours come as well is a good way to make them feel like the pressure isn't all on them.
Is it alright if I take your number or email so I can contact you about future meetings? I just need to read our GDPR statement to you before I get your details.	Try and get this and then make sure you call or email them a day or two after the conversation, so they remember it. Make sure you read your GDPR statement to them before you get their details.

GDPR statement draft – you can use this to create your own to read out and put on your website

We will keep your personal details safely stored in our organisation's contact list which is hosted on our google/outlook/yahoo email/in our record book.

We will only use your contact details to contact you about our activities. We will never pass it on to anyone else or any other group without your permission.

We will update your details as soon as you tell us they change.

We will delete your contact details as soon as you ask us to. The only exception to this is if you're involved in a safeguarding incident and we need to first resolve the issue.

Safety Tips

- Always go out in groups of 2 or more
- Make sure you all have each other's numbers
- You may be invited into someone's house. Don't feel like you must if you don't want to. If you do decide to go in, don't go in alone and always make sure someone else in the team knows what you're doing (going into someone's house to speak to them is up to you, but have an excuse prepared for when you want to leave)
- Trust your gut. If someone invited you into their house but you feel at all uncomfortable about it, don't go in.
- Everyone in the team should have each other's phone number in case you need to get in touch.

If you want more support for this or other activities that bring you face to face with the public, contact CVS. Their job is to help organisations like yours to grow and flourish.

Other places to get volunteers

If you need volunteers with specific skills, like an accountant to do your finances, there are places you can post adverts.

This tends not to work so well for regular, general volunteers, but for something specific this can be a good option. Potential new trustees might come to you this way. These resources are to attract skills volunteers who already know what they're looking for.

Treasurer Volunteer Recruitment

- **Institute For Chartered Accountants in England & Wales (ICAEW)** - Advertise the vacancy for free:

Click on to [this link](#) which takes you through to Accountancy Jobs;

6. If you look at the screen in front of you, there is a brown heading at the top, "ICAEW Volunteers" – if you click into that link it takes you to [this page](#)
7. Look across the icons at the top to the one on the right "Post A Role" and click on that which takes you into [this page](#). You will need to register to post the role.
8. If you need help in posting or advertising the role, please call ICAEW on 01908 248250."

Trustee Recruitment

- **Women on Boards** – Their 'basic' recruitment plan' is free to advertise non exec board vacancies. Click [here](#)

One off tasks

If you need a one-off tasks, especially physical tasks like building a raised bed or planting trees, there's a lot of options, including corporate volunteering days.

- [Good Gym](#) can arrange for a group of keen athletic types to come and help you with physical tasks. This is particularly good for gardening, moving compost or otherwise carrying objects around.
- [Benevity](#) can advertise your organisation to large businesses who can offer help with things like social media, marketing or admin support. They're generally looking to work with larger and

more established organisations.

- [Neighbourly](#) can advertise your organisation to volunteers of all sorts. Generally, this is where you will attract volunteers with professional skills, like finance, looking for short term volunteering that makes a big impact.
- [Southern Brooks](#) can connect you with teams of corporate volunteers who often contact us asking for help finding a community group to help with a day or two volunteering.
 - For volunteers in or near Yate contact alexandraswatton@southernbrooks.org.uk
 - For volunteers in or near Patchway contact lizevans@southernbrooks.org.uk
 - For volunteers in or near Kingswood contact jessicabrassington@southernbrooks.org.uk
 - Not sure which to contact, you can also contact louisedelmege@southernbrooks.org.uk

Other Volunteer Recruitment

Since these are all online spaces, you are most likely to attract people to roles that can be done online. Things like treasurer, chair or trustees are likely to be found here, though you can advertise for any role.

- [Can Do Bristol](#) – Set up a page for your organisation on this Bristol Council led volunteer matching website then advertise the volunteer role
- **Voscur** – Free to advertise voluntary roles on their website (the roles also go out in their newsletter with a wide reach) – Details on how to advertise [here](#)
- **Charityjob.co.uk** – Click [here](#) If you scroll near to the bottom of the page, you'll see an option to post a free volunteer ad.