

# **SURVEY INTO THE USE OF BRIGHTON AND HOVE VOLUNTEER SEARCH**

## **JANUARY 2008**

*In July 2007 Community Base launched Brighton and Hove volunteer search - a guide to volunteer opportunities with community and voluntary groups in Brighton and Hove consisting of a database of volunteer opportunities accessible in folders at Community Base reception or through the Community Base website.*

*In January 2008 we emailed four questions to the 89 local community and voluntary groups that between them had listed 223 volunteer opportunities on Brighton and Hove volunteer search in its first six months to find out what they thought of it. 47 groups responded. Here are their responses to our questions.*

### **1 How many potential volunteers have contacted you through volunteer search?**

40 groups responded to this question telling us that they were contacted by a total of between 200 and 269 potential volunteers through volunteer search in its first six months.

### **2 How many volunteers have you recruited through volunteer search?**

40 groups responded to this questions telling us that they had recruited a total of between 71 and 78 volunteers through volunteer search in its first six months.

### **3 Do you think that volunteer search duplicates other services supporting local volunteering or is a useful addition to these services?**

- 33 groups told us they thought volunteer search was a useful addition to services supporting local volunteering
- 3 groups told us they thought volunteer search duplicated other services supporting local volunteering and was a useful addition to services supporting local volunteering
- 11 groups did not answer this question directly.

### **4 What general comments do you have to make about volunteer search?**

44 groups made general comments on the service. Here are all these comments in full

1. As an organisation we seem to get a lot of response from students via Project V interested in our volunteering opportunities. We have not had much communication with volunteer search. We do receive lots of volunteer applications via the Volunteer Bureau, additionally many vol's self apply directly.
2. Sadly we have had no response at all.
3. 2 have contacted us through you and we have recruited none yet! I think it's a useful addition to the service, its complementary to existing efforts.
4. None of our volunteer applicants have come through Volunteer Search yet but we have not been registered with it for long. I'm sure it will be useful in the long-run. It's good to advertise our volunteering opportunities in as many places as possible.
5. Anything that increases access to information about volunteering is a good thing. Definitely a useful addition. Before volunteer search, when potential volunteers came into Community Base asking about volunteering, it was more disruptive to members of staff at Amaze who dealt with the enquiry. Now volunteers are more filtered as they can find out much more about the volunteering opportunity before contacting Amaze, and then when they do contact us they are speaking to the right person.
6. It's a really accessible service to both groups needing volunteers and volunteers needing placements
7. Great
8. I haven't kept an exact tally of numbers but would estimate to have had up to half a dozen enquiries from the listing. None of them have got further than the enquiry stage so far but it has been the winter period so this is to be expected. I don't know how this compares to other groups but I have been delighted with this number. I have recommended the service to other community groups as I think it is so useful. I have heard that there are other volunteer bureaus but to be honest I have found yours to be the most easily accessible and the most widely known. So keep up the good work!
9. an addition to services - but people need to know about it

10. WELL DONE, KEEP UP THE GOOD WORK.... ALSO ONE IMPROVEMENT COULD BE TO CONTACT US BEFORE REFERING VOLUNTEERS TO US- POSSIBLY WITH REFERENCES.
11. To our knowledge, no-one through the service. We have had a greater uptake in the past few months, but through service user contacts rather than anything else, and/or our own website. We are also placed through sport-specific channels, but again as far as aware, no contacts through those either. Hope that helps!
12. Keep up the good work!
13. Fantastic - keep going!
14. To an extent, it does seem to duplicate the work of Brighton and Hove Volunteer Bureau, however, we get a much larger number of enquiries from people using your service
15. I'm afraid no one has mentioned you yet but when I'm more organised next week I will reply and ask our new volunteers where they saw our adverts!
16. I am very pleased to have recruited a volunteer using this method, thanks for all your help.
17. Be good to know stats on how many enquiries you have had generally by phone, email visits, maybe good for open day for staff to meet organisations who post through you
18. I am aware that potential volunteers contacting us have had contact with community base and thus probably volunteer search. Probably about 4 have contacted, 1 of them is now volunteering and 1 other is currently considering doing so. I think it is important to have such a resource specifically responsive to the community.
19. We have not recruited any volunteers through volunteer search yet. However I'd imagine that'll change when we move in April! I cannot see how the search is duplicating other services. It's a highly visible option for many potential volunteers, centrally located and up to date. Plus there's no sponsorship of the service. Sometimes funding for volunteering opportunities is linked to meeting targets around getting certain categories of people into work. Whilst offering training and work experience to the underemployed is great, there are clear benefits if the service is free from pressure to focus on those the government wants to get into work.
20. Efficient. Thanks, Sorry not very positive results but early days yet
21. I see no harm in this service running concurrent to any others in Brighton
22. It's a useful addition, it's good as it allows you to contact opportunities directly at source. Great idea overall, maybe some of the opportunities need to be screened a little more in terms of whether what is advertised is actually what you get when you contact the opportunity however its a great idea and very helpful at linking people together. We had one that definitely replied via the community base ad we placed. I did also use your volunteer placement search to find placements for our volunteers. I can confidently say that our placement for two volunteers was facilitated through this and it was also very useful to make contacts for future volunteering opportunities with other Brighton based organisations, especially regarding our community action days. I hope this is helpful, if I remember anything else I will let you know.
23. I think it is a very useful addition as many people, young and old visit Community Base. I don't think duplication is a problem, but rather enhances what's available. I think it's a very useful tool, easy to navigate
24. I don't think we've had any contact through your service. We are very specific (& demanding!) & have no course to offer at present so that may be why. We have the odd enquiry through the Lewes District Volunteer Agency & I did put up an add on gum tree which we had lots of replies from – but I'm not certain how appropriate they will be & most have not returned their application forms.... Sorry if this doesn't tick off any of the relevant boxes (!) We do however use your venue search (and an old, old catalogue) loads.
25. In fairness we think we left it too late to recruit for our winter project but think volunteer search is really good. It's important that people can get information about volunteering from many different avenues and sources.
26. A very useful addition. If people come into Queens Road they don't want to be signposted to Hove! 'Catching volunteers' through the window of opportunity is very important. As long as people continue to volunteer it is not important which window they look through. Only that they receive relevant information.

27. I am sorry but I do not record the information you are asking for. I can guess that I must get a few people enquiring from your service in a year. There are other services that I receive more enquiries from, so in that sense your service does duplicate the others, however, I am sure there are people using yours that would not know of or use the other ones. Hope that helps.
28. I think it's a useful addition. The more places information is posted, the better. It is easily accessible. We are also able to post a lot more information about what we do than other volunteer databases.
29. We have had a very good response from our volunteer request. We have recruited three volunteers from the advert we posted with you and we have four or five others where we have taken their details and will contact them when we have a vacancy. Your service is definitely a very useful addition to these services. Generally I would very much hope that you continue your service into the future.
30. Useful addition - we've been contacted by people we wouldn't have met otherwise... er... keep up the work?!
31. Definitely got one volunteer that came through volunteer search, may be others. Useful addition.
32. early days to judge
33. I'm sorry but we have recently had a complete changeover of staff and our current members have no knowledge of this service. I know how useful these figures would be to you and I'm really sorry that we can't help. Good luck!
34. I haven't recorded this so I am going on memory but I would say between 6 and 10 potential volunteers with 3 or 4 going on to volunteer with us (we don't always ask where they saw it). It's a useful addition. In the same time I have had 1 query from the VB. Keep up the good work!
35. More information about the service and how it works would be helpful so that we could signpost to it.
36. None yet - only been advertising for about a few weeks, seems fine to me
37. Sadly we have never been contacted by any potential volunteers. I do think the service you offer is very similar to that of the volunteer bureau, but that in my opinion isn't a bad thing.
38. Excellent service as more visible than vol bureau
39. I believe that at least 10 potential volunteers have come through your base. I have recruited 6 so far and more being interviewed. I think the search is a great way to narrow down the volunteers options and gives them so many choices. It has worked very well for us and I have not had any difficulty using it.
40. Our opinion is that the service, while being helpful, just adds more confusion to the already complicated world of volunteering support services. We feel it would have been more productive for Community Base to find a way to negotiate some kind of partnership with the Volunteer Centre. This may have taken more time, but would have been more beneficial to the end user in terms of getting a more integrated service (not such a quick answer - sorry). 4) Nothing about the service, but would urge Colin to do some relationship building with the Volunteer Centre.
41. A useful addition as other services not very reliable or responsive. Please keep it up, anything that links volunteers with training and opportunities, and workplaces with reliable help and support is a good thing.
42. We haven't had info about opportunities in the file very long; we have recruited one person and had several inquiries [?6] which may turn into recruits; there are other sites [vol bureau on Western Rd in Hove] but the more sites the more opportunities the better; the one recruit we have definitely got is ideal so feel very positive!
43. It's a great way to put people in touch with local services and a great location for people to find. I've just had a thought - I wonder if people are automatically saying the Vol Bureau, not realising that you are a different agency and so not being specific about being referred through vol search! I will check this out.
44. We have had half a dozen calls, and think the website service is excellent.