

What is a Volunteer Centre?

Volunteer Development Agencies (Volunteer Centres such as Hackney Voluntary Action) provide support at a local level for individual volunteers and volunteer involving organisations. They have six core functions:

1. Brokerage

Volunteer Centres primary function is to match both individuals and groups interested in volunteering with appropriate opportunities in the local community. VDAs hold information on a comprehensive range of opportunities. They offer potential volunteers support and advice matching their motivation to volunteer with appropriate volunteering opportunities.

2. Marketing volunteering

Volunteer Centres stimulate and encourage local interest in volunteering and community activity. This may include promoting and marketing volunteering through local, regional and national events and campaigns . Volunteer Centres will manage and promote a national brand for volunteering.

3. Good practice development

Volunteer Centres promote good practice in working with volunteers to all volunteer involving organisations. They deliver training and accreditation for potential volunteers, volunteers, volunteer managers and the volunteering infrastructure.

4. Develop volunteering opportunities

Volunteer Centres work in close partnership with statutory, voluntary and private sector agencies as well as community groups and faith groups to develop local volunteering opportunities. Volunteer Centres understand the potential offered by the local communities and work with them to realise this potential. Volunteer Centres will target specific groups which face barriers to volunteering. Volunteer Centres work creatively to develop imaginative, non-formal opportunities for potential volunteers.

5. Policy response and campaigning

Volunteer Centres identify proposals or legislation that may impact on volunteering. They will lead and/or participate in campaigns on issues that affect volunteers or volunteering. Volunteer Centres campaign proactively for a more volunteer-literate and volunteer-friendly climate.

6. Strategic development of volunteering

As the local experts on volunteering Volunteer Centres inform strategic thinking and planning at a regional and national level.