



Interim Report – Volunteer Strategy for Perth and Kinross 2024-2027.

Introduction

This document reports on the progress made by the Third Sector Interface (TSI) for Perth and Kinross towards realising the goals of the first volunteer strategy for Perth and Kinross which is to be actioned between 2024- 2027. I have chosen one topic or action for short term actions, medium term actions and long term goals to demonstrate the TSI's progress towards the volunteer strategy.

Actions & Impact

Our first action was to disseminate the strategy widely, connecting with council staff, councillors, volunteer involving organisations (VIOs) and the general public to share our approach. We hosted a lunchtime launch of the strategy which saw over 20 attendees learn about the strategy and ask questions. We also promoted it through a variety of events and media posts. The document contains information on volunteering including local case studies and is readily available to view or download on our website. Several short term goals from aim 1 & 2 were covered in the document such as: People have an increased awareness that volunteering is for everyone; People have an increased understanding of what volunteering is; People have an increased awareness of the spectrum of volunteering, including informal, micro and digital volunteering. To supplement this message, we also released a series of blog posts hosted on Be the Change targeting individuals who may be interested in volunteering or who are taking their first steps into the volunteering world. With over 900 users registered on Be the Change to date, this is not an insignificant audience.

Moving on towards more medium term goals, as an example of volunteering for all, we have had a focus on Asylum Seekers and migrant communities. During Volunteers' Week 2025 we contributed to a volunteer fair for the residents in a hotel hosting asylum seekers where we welcomed over 80 attendees. This event started a conversation about volunteering with participants who were new to the concept. We also advertised Be the Change to individuals which resulted in some direct sign ups. In addition, individuals signed up to volunteering opportunities with the volunteer involving organisations in attendance such as the Perth and Kinross Heritage Trust and the Perthshire Welfare Society.

See Case Study: [Case Study June 2025.docx](#) Following this event, our Development Officer for Equalities partnered with a local VIO and spoke directly with men seeking asylum who already volunteer or who want to volunteer showing them how to sign up to Be the Change. Our current action on this topic sees our Development Officer for Health and Social Welfare, participating in the Volunteer Scotland working group developing resources to support organisations working with migrants. The group is focused on helping staff and volunteers respond to and manage hostility from local communities, while strengthening their confidence, resilience and ability to provide safe and welcoming support.

Working towards a longer term impact, in November 2025 the TSI facilitated a visit in support of the parliament's Equalities, Human Rights and Civil Justice Committee Inquiry into Human Rights in Rural Scotland. 32 representatives of VIOs, volunteers and service users met with committee members and participated in a wide ranging discussion around the issues facing rural communities in Perth & Kinross. Participating in the inquiry brought the TSI, and the voices of the volunteers and their organisations in Perth and Kinross, closer to the Scottish Parliament and encouraged a sense of engagement and participation in the working of the parliament. Strong links were fostered with the Participation and Communities Team which will be developed to bring further opportunities for the sector. The event also brought the TSI closer to member organisations in a shared desire to influence policy. The impact contributed to the objective that: 'Volunteering in all its forms is integrated and recognised in our lives through national and local policy. [Volunteering for All, outcome 2]' And the process honoured the intention to: 'Listen to volunteers by ensuring that the volunteer 'voice' is heard and that volunteers help make the decisions that affect them. [The Plan, end goal 3]' [Case Study November 2025.docx](#)

Funded Training

A particular success was our partnership with Gannochy Trust to provide training to third sector organisations and their volunteers at no or low cost to the participants. By combining online and in-person training with follow-up support, the fund generated benefits that continued beyond the delivery period. Over 240 individuals representing 70 organisations engaged in at least one training activity. This continues to demonstrate a need for affordable and free learning opportunities which was identified in our goal to access 'more long-term funding available for upskilling volunteers.'

Training in volunteer management and volunteer endings were particularly well received and will contribute to more structured and considered volunteer leadership. The results will be stronger volunteer management processes and procedures and enhanced communication and recognition and development of long-term support. As a direct result of this training offer, several organisations produced new or updated policies, including volunteer policies, handbooks and strategies, mental health policies and governance procedures. Several organisations have developed, or plan to refine, their services including improved IT support,

more structured mental health support, enhanced fundraising capabilities and more efficient volunteer support systems. This feeds into several of the goals we set out spanning all three of our over arching aims. It is worth noting that future demand is particularly high for Volunteer Management, Mental Health First Aid Training and Mediation workshops with many on waiting lists.

- *"Thanks for the training session about volunteer journeys, it was so interesting and has given me a lot to think about."* – Volunteer Endings attendee
- *"It was so useful for me to see what I am doing well, the Volunteer Management training helped me feel proud of the work I am already doing and at the same time gave me some new ideas and motivation. It was great hearing about what other organisations are doing too."* – Volunteer Management training attendee

Next steps

1. **Develop our Training schedule.** Whilst our training schedule has already covered many of our goals as set out in the strategy, we will continue to strengthen its impact through our partnership with the Gannochy Trust. As previously mentioned, there are several waiting lists active and as we spread the word about the success of the training, we hope to reach more participants who may have not been aware of our programme thus far. For this purpose, we have engaged an intern from the University of Dundee to help us create a digital training calendar which will be consistently updated with our programme and will share news of third party training opportunities available to volunteers and third sector staff. We will continue to gather the voice of volunteers and VIOs to ensure we are covering gaps. For example, identified in the strategy then asked for during a training needs survey was digital communications and marketing which is now scheduled for the next round of training: 'Volunteer-involving organisations have an increased understanding of how to use digital communications to reach potential volunteers.'
2. **There is a working group for a campaign aimed at VIOs to be more inclusive of youth volunteers in the process of being set up.** The volume of youth volunteering undertaken in the local authority area is astounding. The PKC Youth Strategy reports that between August 25' and April 26', young people contributed a total of 14,304 volunteering hours, including 5,464 hours through partnership activities and 8,840 hours through the Duke of Edinburgh's Award. Based on the national minimum wage of £8 per hour for a 16-year-old, this represents an estimated social value of £114,432, highlighting the significant contribution young people make to their communities. Whilst there is no lack of enthusiasm from young people, there are often barriers faced which prevent them from engaging in this activity which will be a focus for the final year of the strategy. This action directly answers the goal that 'Volunteer managers

have increased knowledge of how to engage youth volunteers.’ It also contributes to the long term goals of ‘widening access to volunteering by understanding and reducing the barriers to participation and supporting community-based, ‘place-making’ activities. [The Plan, end goal 2]’; ‘There are diverse, quality and inclusive opportunities for everyone to get involved and stay involved. [Volunteering for All, outcome 5]’ and ‘Volunteering and participation is valued, supported and enabled from the earliest possible age and throughout life. [Volunteering for All, outcome 1]’. We are working to create a landscape of quality, inclusive volunteering, throughout life in Perth and Kinross.

3. **Build on the VIPK awards and brand.** In 2026 we introduced the inaugural Volunteering in Perth and Kinross Awards – the VIPKs. We want a Perth and Kinross where ‘there is an environment and culture which celebrates volunteers and volunteering and all of its benefits’. [Volunteering for All, outcome 3] as set out as a long term goal in Aim 1: Enable greater participation in Volunteering. The awards gala was well attended by volunteers, their families, their volunteer involving organisations and invited dignitaries such as local councillors. This event was received with joy and made volunteering visible and celebrated in Perth and Kinross. This also ties into the strategy Aim 3: Ensure that volunteers are supported, valued and recognised. We intend to continue to involve the community in the design and delivery of the VIPK awards and hope to build on its legacy as we invest in the places and spaces that people volunteer.

Conclusion

This report lays out just some examples of the work we have undertaken which feeds into the Volunteer Strategy for Perth and Kinross 2024 – 2027. It is clear that we have successfully made progress towards realising the aims of the strategy. We have made distinct progress in making volunteers feel valued, supported and recognised, particularly through the launching of our volunteer awards and the rolling out of our training programme. Our chosen next steps intend to embed this progress into our community and continue to champion inclusive volunteering for all.

Perth and Kinross CLD Plan Partnership

Volunteering in Perth & Kinross: Supporting Communities Through CLD

Volunteering continues to play a significant role in strengthening communities across Perth and Kinross. This is recorded through the performance measures set out the CLD Plan for Perth & Kinross which many partners contribute towards.

Through Community Learning and Development (CLD) activity, volunteers contribute their time, skills and experience to support learning, wellbeing, community participation, environmental improvement and opportunities for children and young people.

The Active Schools Programme alone recorded 14,455 volunteer hours, who supported 9,637 extracurricular sports and physical activity sessions across Perth and Kinross schools. Volunteers included teachers, parents, young people, community members and sports coaches, demonstrating the breadth of volunteering opportunities available locally. A focused recruitment and training programme also helped increase parent volunteering within schools.

Volunteering also plays a key role in youth development. Through the Duke of Edinburgh's Award programme, young people contributed 7,826 hours of volunteering, while 283 adult volunteers supported programme delivery. In addition, volunteers accessed training and development opportunities, with adult volunteers receiving qualifications such as MIDAS awards to strengthen their contribution to local communities.

Across community development activity, volunteers continue to support local groups, community organisations and environmental initiatives. As part of the CLD Plan performance reporting by greenspace teams, there were over 39,000 volunteer hours dedicated to environmental projects, alongside more than 200 greenspace sites managed by volunteers, highlighting the ongoing value of volunteer-led stewardship of local places and spaces. Communities also benefited from volunteer involvement through community cafés, warm welcome projects, transport initiatives and a wide range of community-led groups.

The CLD Partnership recognises volunteering not only as a contribution to service delivery, but as a pathway to personal development, employability, community leadership and social connection. Evidence from adult learning and ESOL programmes shows that learners frequently progress into volunteering opportunities, building confidence, developing new skills and becoming more active participants within their communities.

Overall, volunteering continues to be a vital asset across Perth and Kinross, contributing thousands of hours of time, expertise and community leadership. Through collaborative working between CLD services, community organisations, volunteers and the Third Sector Interface, volunteering remains central to building resilient, connected and empowered communities.