

**Connecting Volunteering Network
Wednesday 8 November 2023
10am – 11.30am
Zoom Meeting**

Present:

Beth Cowen (BC) (Chairperson)	CVS Falkirk & District
Lynsey Hansford (LH)	CVS Falkirk & District
Kerrie Hoggan (KH) (Minute Taker)	CVS Falkirk & District
Allan Roberson (AR)	Social Security Scotland
Carolyn Dick (CD)	Dates n Mates
Janice Donoghue (JD)	Citizen's Advice Bureau
Kirsty Greenhouse (KG)	
Kimberley Gray (KG)	RVS Forth Valley
Eileen Jackson (EJ)	Friends of Kinneil

Apologies:

Colette Low	Link Living
Geoff Reid	Sacro
Julia Duncan	TCV
Morag Fullard	FDAMH
Karen Kapusciak	NHS
Hazel Taylor	Cyrenians
Jo Hall	Strathcarron
Georgia Freyne	Chest Heart & Stroke Scotland
Harry Baird	Forth Valley Flyers
Kirsteen McDonald	Blue Triangle

1. Welcome and Introductions

LH welcomed Network members present, she advised that Meg Guy had moved on to another role in the third sector and that CVS Falkirk was recruiting for a replacement. Apologies were noted as listed above. LH introduced Beth Cowen (BC) as the newly appointed Volunteering and Participation Development Officer for Falkirk, with focus on Bo'ness and Bonnybridge.

LH noted Falkirk Council's Strategic Property Review and the Empowering Communities Programme, which was designed to support the local third sector and communities to make an informed choice regarding community ownership and how the role of volunteer participation was crucial to this.

LH outlined that most Network meetings would take place online (via Zoom), however at least one meeting would be held in person during 2024. She encouraged feedback on what the best use of the Network would be for its members.

2. Make Your Mark in Volunteering Campaign

BC drew attention to the 'Make Your Mark in Volunteering Campaign' slides, which were available on the [CVS Falkirk webpage](#). The following points were noted:

- I. The goal of the campaign was to increase the number and diversity of heritage volunteers in Scotland, with online training, supported by a new toolkit, to take place in 2024 (dates to be confirmed).
- II. Although 'Make Your Mark' was aimed at heritage organisations, its reach was broad enough to encompass a much wider range of groups.
- III. To hear when the training would take place and the toolkit was released, organisations could contact Make Your Mark, the details were on the slide.

3. CVS Falkirk & District Activity

LH informed the group that the CVS Falkirk & District AGM would be taking place on Tuesday 28th November at Bonnybridge Community Centre. All welcome to attend.

BC drew attention to a presentation titled 'Connecting Volunteering Forum Presentation' which was available on the [CVS Falkirk webpage](#). The following points were noted:

- I. The recruitment of volunteers was a big challenge, impacted by several factors from the cost-of-living crisis to a change in the skill set needed by many organisations.
- II. The questions listed under 'Re-thinking the 'Volunteer'' were designed to encourage approaching the recruitment of volunteers from a different perspective.
- III. This was extended to ideas to demonstrate how additive volunteering could be for individuals, together with asking for volunteer expenses to be covered in any funding bids.
- IV. CVS Falkirk could help with advertising for volunteers via numerous channels. Including Volunteer Scotland and Volunteer Falkirk, as well as social media.
- V. Tips were provided to promote within the role description, core to which was selling the mission of an organisation and what could be gained, not just given, by the volunteer.

AR left the meeting.

It was noted that Volunteer Scotland had put in place a survey to gather feedback on the impact of the cost-of-living crisis on volunteering. [**post meeting note:** this closed on the 15 November 2023, results would follow].

LH spoke about the Third Sector Interface (TSI) [positioning statement](#) that was published in March 2023 which confirmed that TSIs would not advertise volunteer roles that would be used to cover previously paid positions. As other organisations move to seek volunteers, a watch would be in place to make sure guidelines and boundaries are in place.

A discussion took place on the challenges experienced by members for the recruitment of volunteers, the time invested in the recruitment of volunteers which was not recouped, and that the boundary between volunteering and employability was quite thin. This was followed by a request for ideas on how CVS Falkirk could help, and members were encouraged to send feedback. The following ideas were put forward:

- I. Support with PVGs
- II. Health and Safety guidance
- III. A refresher session on The Volunteer Friendly Award, which was redeveloped in 2021 by Volunteer Scotland and the TSI Scotland Network.
- IV. Support with strategic engagement around volunteering.

Action: Send feedback to BC and LH on what members would like to see from the Network and more widely CVS Falkirk to support volunteering.

4. AOCB

There being no other business, the meeting was closed.

**Dates of Next Meetings:
Wednesday 7 February 2024, 10am – 12pm, via Zoom**