



Relationship-Based Approach: Promoting Inclusion at Shelter Scotland

Sarah Latto
Volunteer Development Manager



**‘Diversity is being invited to the party;
inclusion is being asked to dance.’**

Verna Myers

Strategic Ambition

Where do volunteers fit?

- Commitment to involving those who have lived experience of housing issues or homelessness
- Building a movement for change by providing a wider spectrum of opportunities for participation
- Increasing the reach of our Community Hubs as bases for advice, empowerment and activism
- Diversifying the ways we provide advice – online, telephone and website

Volunteering
is the



Relationship-Based Approach

Attachment Theory

- Positive, personal relationships = more resilient and engaged volunteers.

‘The New Alchemy’ by NFP Synergy (2015)

- Volunteer involvement needs to be ‘personalised’, reflecting individual needs and motivations

‘Time Well Spent’ by NCVO (2019)

- Feeling connected lies at the core of the volunteer experience.

‘Volunteering for All’ Framework by the Scottish Government (2019)

- ‘Scotland’s approach to volunteering rooted in our national values of kindness, dignity and respect’



Relationship-Based Culture

Staff and Volunteer buy-in is key

Senior Leadership

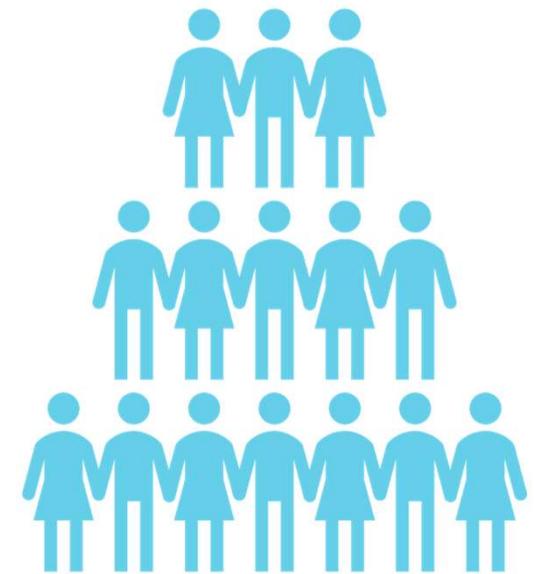
- Have confidence in your expertise
- Evidence your evidence!

Staff Communication

- Think win-win
- Regular eBulletin, including case studies (staff and volunteers)
- Mandatory workshop for ALL staff
- Social Media presence

Volunteer Consultation

- Give your volunteers regular opportunities to reflect and share opinions



Inclusive Roles

Pick and Mix!

Have detailed role descriptions, but make it clear that volunteers can opt in or out of tasks

Be clear on expectations from the start

Acknowledge potential barriers – language? literacy? convictions? confidence?

Provide options for flexible ‘episodic’ volunteering

Give people opportunities to reflect and progress

Have pragmatic approach to minimum commitments – sustainability, not retention



Inclusive Recruitment

Ask the Experts

Strategic approach to recruitment:

- Provides greater choice of roles
- Supports interactive group training
- Volunteer Management System

Reaching New Volunteers:

- Get out in the community
- Ask staff and volunteers to spread the word

Getting the Message right:

- Primary motivation for our volunteers is the cause
- Volunteers want to join a community



Inclusive Selection

Nurturing new relationships

Dedicated staff resource

- Focus on early stages of volunteer relationship = key
- Ensure experience is positive and consistent
- Clear understanding of volunteer needs, motivations and barriers – personalised support

Inclusive Processes

- Replaced application form with chat on the phone for all prospective volunteers
- Removed requirement for references for some roles, and working on removing completely



Inclusive Induction

A vital part of the selection process

Interactive and assessed

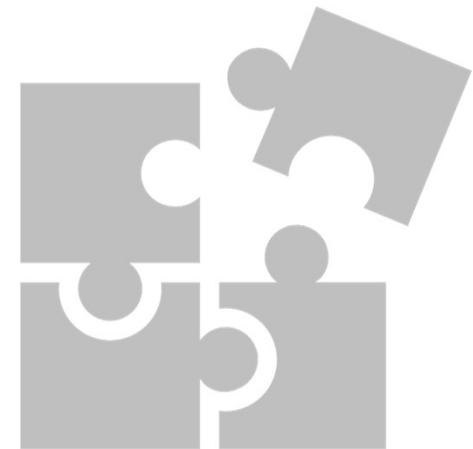
- Helps to build relationship with volunteer and address any concerns
- Assessment can take many forms – quiz, roleplay, peer assessment, observation

Map training topics to your roles

- What do all volunteers need to know?
- Which topics are role specific?

Match the delivery method to the role/audience

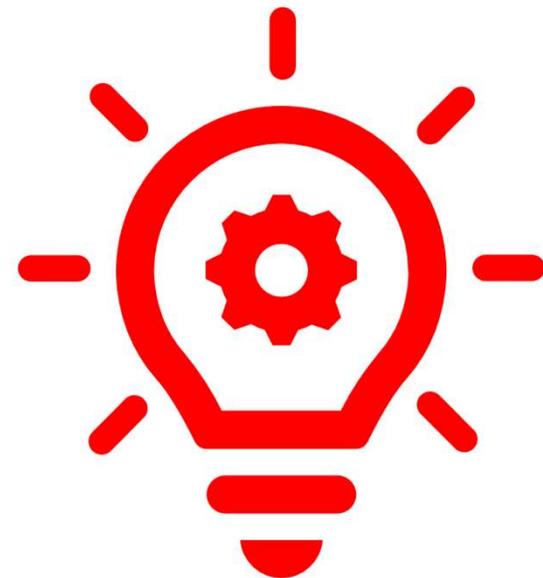
- Interactive group learning for most roles
- E-Learning for flexible/ad hoc roles, but may need other selection methods



Key Points

What is your lightbulb moment?

- Relationship-building and interaction should be at the centre of your approach
- Challenge standardised processes – is there a more inclusive way to do this?
- Consult with your volunteers regularly, and act on their responses
- Volunteers are not staff! Selection is a journey, not an event





‘Human dignity should be our compass and our North Star’

Karyn McLuskey,
Community Justice Scotland

Thanks!

Any Questions?

Get in touch!



Sarah_Latto@shelter.org.uk



0344 515 2440



@sarah_bee13