

## **Initial evaluation of Hastings Voluntary Action's Volunteers' Week activities May/June 2018**

### **Key findings:**

- Across 3 Volunteers' Week events, at least 55 people agreed to volunteer
- A further 125 people expressed an interest in volunteering
- Potential volunteers welcomed the face-to-face approach
- Facebook Events was most cited as the way people had heard about our events
- Although considerable time was spent organising and promoting these events, we believe these events were an effective way of recruiting volunteers

### **Volunteers' Week events**

From mid May to mid June 2018, Hastings Voluntary Action planned a range of activities during Volunteers' Week 2018, based on what we have learned from previous years' events. Throughout the year we help potential volunteers and Volunteer Involving Organisations, but we particularly wanted to highlight volunteering before, during and after Volunteers' Week. We are responding to demand from local Volunteer Involving Organisations (VIOs) and HVA's trustees, who see promotion of volunteering as a priority.

HVA organised 2 public events in 2018 (and supported a third event) to raise awareness of volunteering and encourage people to volunteer:

- Monday 4 June – at Ore Community Centre, in partnership with Hastings & St Leonards Food Project, focused on VIOs related to food or food poverty
- Wednesday 6 June – in Hastings town centre, in partnership with local VIOs
- Friday 8 June – in St Leonards town centre, in partnership with local VIOs

There was an open invitation for Volunteer Involving Organisations to join us at these events, and around a dozen organisations did so. Whenever a potential volunteer expressed an interest in their area of activity, that VIO took the lead in the conversation.

HVA engaged a designer to create banners, stickers and online material, and these events were promoted through HVA's publications, a social media campaign and press releases.



An initial review of HVA's Volunteers' Week activities has found that:

- The two town centre volunteering events were the most demonstrably effective of HVA's Volunteers' Week activities.
- At the Hastings town centre event, **at least 35 people agreed to volunteer** via HVA or with a Volunteer Involving Organisation that was present at the event.
- At the St Leonards town centre event, **at least 20 people agreed to volunteer** via HVA or with a Volunteer Involving Organisation that was present at the event.
- The Ore event was less successful in terms of footfall, and no new volunteers were recruited on the day.
- People offered to do a wide range of activities including volunteering with children and families, vulnerable older people, education and skills, and arts and heritage.
- **We had positive conversations with at least a further 125 people** at these two events, and we anticipate that some of these people have now started to volunteer.
- We publicised these events in various ways. Several people said that they had heard about these events through Facebook Events.
- This response in Hastings and St Leonards exceeded our expectations.
- The feedback from participating VIOs at these two events has been very positive.



For more details about volunteering in Hastings and St Leonards contact Tanya Vice at Hastings Voluntary Action on 01424 444010 or [tanya@hvauk.org](mailto:tanya@hvauk.org) or visit [www.hastingsvoluntaryaction.org.uk](http://www.hastingsvoluntaryaction.org.uk)