West Lothian Volunteer Network

Tuesday January 28th 2pm

**Chair**: Linden Raeburn (West Lothian Council) Linden.Raeburn@westlothian.gov.uk

**Note Taker**: Victoria Isbister (VSGWL) [Victoria.Isbister@VSGWL.org](mailto:Victoria.Isbister@VSGWL.org)

**Apologies:** Ray Fallan (VSGWL), Martin Thomson (WLC), Jacqui Marwick (Cruse), Susan Proudfoot (CAB), Claire Garton (NHS), Roz (The School bank), Gillian Dunnigan (Social Security)

**Attendees**: Jocelyn Lockhart (WLCAN), Leighann Bishop (Xcite), Dorothy Terhune (NCT), Lee Dolby (Linlithgow), Chris McLaughlin (Active Schools), Jennifer Harley (HCT), Sharon Rae & Sandra (Cyrenians), Aynsley Douglas (WLC), Lisa Callaghan (Home Start), Erin (VSGWL Volunteer)

1. **Welcome and Apologies** – Linden opened the meeting and thanked everyone for coming.
2. **Guest Speaker: Erin Wright: Dogs Trust**

* Dogs trust background: Rehoming, fostering, volunteering, media, training and behaviour, supporter relations, rehoming.
* Where are we – West Calder (and Glasgow): 22 rehoming centres UK wide
* West Calder site – 37 kennels, 60+ staff and volunteers, 20 acres. Rebuild June 25
* Volunteering – kennel help and dog walking, foster carers, fundraising support – very grateful for support of volunteers.
* Our future: we will be there for all dogs who need us
* Happy to speak to community groups, get in touch! Erin.Wright@dogstrust.org.uk

1. **Last minutes and previous actions – last minutes approved.**

* Guest Speaker list 2025 – Victoria (ongoing)
* Project 2025 dates – Victoria – last Tues of the month 2pm online (completed)

1. **Volunteer Fayre review**

Held last Monday, 10 or 11 agencies attended. Resulted in a few enquiries and great networking. Opportunity to raise awareness and share service information. Active schools had 3 or 4 decent conversations: keen to attend any and all events. Was January a good time? No comments either way. Linden said it was nice to be in the room altogether and sharing information, finding out more about each other. Erin offered to publicise any events at Dogs trust. Summertime fairs next in a couple of locations. Agreed need to be seen and out and about recruiting volunteers regularly.

1. **Volunteer event: June 2025**

No update on funding. Planning has been done while wait however decision will be needed at February meeting on plans so planning can restart. Linden will try to get an update.

1. **Volunteer celebrations and stories (all members)**

* Lee shared that a volunteer thank you event was held at the Hub in December for 20-25 people. Pizza, crafting, small gift – “You Matter” keyring, which was well received. Keen to continue exploring volunteer recruitment and retention.
* Leighann spoke about Serious Social award nomination for a volunteer who was short listed, and this involved a trip to Manchester. This is recognised across all of UK and was a fantastic experience. Met other volunteers and had interesting conversations, networking. Leighann will share any award opportunities she hears about.
* Two volunteers successfully fundraised last year holding a music event in Linlithgow church hall raising £1300. They will repeat this in May. Two successful student placements ongoing – befriending groups and sighted issues (speaking to groups and telephone befriending). Digital support – volunteer went to Bield and held 1:1 sessions with 8 people e.g. learning about their phones, online food shopping. Was well received.
* WLC Volunteer Christmas party, nice to bring volunteers together from both Macmillan and the advice shop, hearing shared stories and experiences.
* HCL advised that volunteer driver in mid Lothian partnership completed a case study and this has been chosen to be part of national recruitment campaign with Volunteer Scotland. Nice bit recognition.

1. **Service Updates**

* Ageing well: Few volunteer enquiries, mainly Xcite members. Changed website (Ageing well now has own section) or inclusion of advertising on TV screen in Hub within studio. Services running as normal, couple new classes. Happy to advertise – email over any digital materials.
* WLC: Volunteering course starts next week so chatting to people this week. Plan to run most months, please get in touch if you know of anyone who may benefit.
* Opal: Community hub set up a year ago, now setting up a man’s group. Regular coffee mornings once a month, Time to Talk in Feb – will be asking people what they want at the hub. Resource library (books, games, quizzes, jigsaws etc) Open to everyone, sign items in and out.
* NCT: Breastfeeding support group at Armadale was cancelled due to location sudden closure, still looking for a new space (in an area where there is not already a NHS group). Suggestion made of Dale Hub. Expanding support into Neonatal in St Johns. <https://linktr.ee/WestLothianBreastfeeding>.
* WLCAN: Biodiversity. Environmental volunteering, get in touch if you want to join the conversation.
* Team Jak: Fundraising celebration for Burns night with over 90 people at Howden Park centre, mostly families. Entertainment provided by Warrior Children, raffles, games etc. Jak’s Ball, 10yr anniversary of Jak’s death coming up at Prestonfield house – sold out. It takes £36,000 a month to keep Jaks’s den open providing range of valuable supports.
* Active Schools: Volunteer inductions, working to move online course. Would welcome any advice. Looking to recruit older members of community – currently have younger members. Regular volunteering (1hr per week, lunchtime / after school) or one of support at events e.g. netball competitions. Flexible options. Coordinators based across the authority. Level of fitness not necessary, more about facilitating physical activity than taking part.

1. **Any other business**

* Volunteer mapping: Action carried forward from last year as result of enquiry at an event – there is no current overall record of the number of volunteers in WL, and it does fluctuate. Previously tried a survey, try again perhaps May 2025.
* Are there themes that people would like to speak about at meetings e.g. training, expenses.
* Themed organised marketing campaign: Would it be appropriate for WLVN to have a stall showcasing all members at Linlithgow artisan market held first Saturday of every month from March? Last year in June there was a stall with volunteering information. It’s felt if repeated it would need to be engaging – people tended to walk past stall last year.

1. **Next meeting date** Tuesday February 25th 2pm online.

**Actions**

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| Volunteer vacancies form: <https://salesforce.123formbuilder.com/form-6733157/volunteer-opportunity-form-new> | All members |
| Continue to share events on WLVN Facebook | Email Victora, Anne H or Linden |
| Guest speaker suggestions | All members |
| Sharing best practices about recruitment | All members to email Chris at Active schools with any information, templates or advice |