West Lothian Volunteer Network

Tuesday July 1st 2pm (online)

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: Claire Garton (NHS), Margaret King (Team Jak), Katie Tusler (CHSS)

Present: Roz (School Bank), Ray Fallan (VSGWL), Gina Freeman, Leighann Bishop (Xcite), Elizabeth Campbell (HCL), Lee Dolby (Linlithgow CDT), Mrs Coulter (Active Schools), Hannah Drummond (Woodland Trust), Lisa Callaghan (Home Start)

1. **Welcome and Apologies**:

Linden thanked everyone for coming and apologised for date of change.

1. **Last minutes and previous actions**: Agreed.
2. **Volunteers Week feedback**

Ray said the Volunteer event went well and positive feedback received as well as 938% increase in social media traffic. Traction was incredible and shows that there’s a need for recognition for volunteers. Linden said she really enjoyed event as did the volunteers - “The joy in the room”. Linlithgow CDT ran a light touch campaign which included awareness of volunteering, personal story, how to volunteer (promoted Gateway), overall thank you. Over 2000 views which was considerable increase. Good experience for team to run a campaign (as opposed to bits and pieces posts). Ray spoke about enquiries she has had from schools regarding young people’s options for volunteering which she is now exploring further. WLC held coffee morning and feel a face-to-face event would be beneficial next year. Aynsley spoke to couple volunteers who suggested speaking at Employers, so she is looking at options.

1. **Themed discussion: Volunteer Expenses**

Everyone present pays expenses. Is it more difficult budget wise than previously? Can’t not pay expenses however it’s becoming difficult to source additional funding. Ray quoted the volunteer charter, “nobody should be out of pocket for giving up their time.” Linden said sometimes they reduce the number of times a volunteer volunteers to fit within their budget. Lee wondered whether there was a good practice guide and whether we can lobby funders? Raise awareness about importance. Allowable expenses should be allowed. A flat rate payment is not expenses – receipts should be provided. WLC 45p a mile.

Overall agreement that a consistent good policy across WL which everyone could feed into would be useful.

[Volunteer opportunities, rights and expenses: Pay and expenses - GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk/volunteering/pay-and-expenses)

[Volunteer Charter - Volunteer Scotland](https://www.volunteerscotland.net/volunteer-practice/volunteer-charter)

[Cost of Living and Practice - Volunteer Scotland](https://www.volunteerscotland.net/volunteer-practice/cost-of-living-and-practice)

1. **PVG Updates**: Nobody has had any issues. Ray said an extension to the grace period would be welcomed. One member said they applied recently, and it was quite quick, 2-3 weeks.
2. **Volunteer Celebration Event**

WLC money still available. Linden has enquired at WL college and shared the 2022 agenda: Arrival, welcome, afternoon tea at table, WLVN rep, guest speakers, Bingo, Presentation of certificates, photos. Sound system etc all at college. Linden offered to also get costings for evening event. November or January – need to fit in around college. A/n tea £7.50 per head – Linden waiting on updated costs.

1. **Volunteer Fayre/s** – January 2026: Discuss nearer the time.
2. **Service Updates inc Volunteer celebrations: awards and successes**

Home Start: All wished Lisa the best in her new job. Lisa said she enjoyed meeting everyone and finding out who does what.

HCL: Dial a bus / Dial a ride services. The Dial a bus route on a Monday to Tesco Linlithgow is now running to Sainsburys in Winchburgh in response to demand.

Linlithgow CDT: Secured grant through Awards for All for large consultation, changing the way we engaged, ongoing engagement, go out and talk to people – what do they want? Enable us to engage with more volunteers. Working behind the scenes to identify 6 volunteers and case studies. Recognition award, not necessarily about number of hours / lifetime award. Repair shop, number of items has increased. 200-250 per month. 7 or 8. 10-12 would be good to manage items, keeps items out of landfill. Can offer placements. Staff have been PAT trained.

Woodland trust: Cover 16 sites in WL. Three sets of volunteers – 15 wardens (eyes and ears on the ground), Woodland working group meet once a month: practical conservation tasks, Seed collectors. [Warden (West Lothian Woods) | The Woodland Trust Volunteering](https://volunteer.woodlandtrust.org.uk/opportunities/84533-warden-west-lothian-woods-2025-02-27). Lee asked about team building opportunity.

Active Schools: Senior pupils and staff, sports clubs, delivering extra-curricular activities, holiday clubs start next week. Community volunteers help. Focus group coming up with ‘job description’ for Gateway to try and recruit. Fleet of bikes – would be good to get a volunteer to support this

WLC: Pathways to Volunteering course completed and placements organised, course dates agreed rest of year.

MacMillan: Information events monthly at Oncology with relatives, carers and volunteers. Will be looking for volunteers for Pop ups at xcite.

Xcite / Ageing well: Applying for 4 PVG’s, taking 4 volunteers on – wanting to help out at courses they are attending. Regional meeting – hoping to meet volunteers (hard to get them altogether!) to share ideas, improvements and concerns. Keen to be approachable. Separate celebration event September time as volunteers on holiday in June. Thanks to Ray for event - was nice for volunteers to be recognised.

School bank: Dealing with a lot of referrals as school holidays and high amount donations. Sponsor a child campaign. [Sponsor-A-Child - SchoolBank](https://schoolbank-westlothian.org/sponsor-child/).

VSGWL: Ray has lots of volunteers to place. Linden said if Ray has a small amount of volunteers who need confidence built, they would be happy to run a group. Duke of Edinburgh always looking for placements.

1. **Any other business**: None
2. **Next meeting date**: Last Tuesday of the month 2pm online: July 29th

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| August 26th | WLC Volunteering (Linden) | Volunteer Fayre |
| September 30th | Community Benefits Gateway (Tracy, VSGWL) | Volunteer Training |
| October 28th |  | Volunteer retainment |
| November 25th | Volunteer Scotland? |  |

**Actions**

1. Look at contact information for WLVN / publicity - Linden
2. Feedback on event at Employer (Sept) - Aynsley
3. Volunteer expenses subgroup – end of next meeting.
4. Continue to find out costings and dates for college events – Linden
5. Email out course dates – Aynsley / Victoria – see below

Pathways to Volunteering courses: Bathgate Partnership Centre:

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| **July** |  |
| Tuesday 15th | 1-3:30 |
| Thursday 17th | 1-3:30 |

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| **August** |  |
| Tuesday 26th | 10-12:30 |
| Thursday 28th | 1-3:30 |

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| **September** |  |
| Wednesday 10th | 1-3:30 |
| Thursday 11th | 1-3:30 |

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| **October** |  |
| Monday 27th | 10-12:30 |
| Tuesday 28th | 10-12:30 |

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| **November** |  |
| Tuesday 25th | 10-12:30 |
| Wednesday 26th | 10-12:30 |