

Committee: FINANCE AND RESOURCES**Date: 25 MAY 2021****Report: ANNUAL VOLUNTEER RESOURCES REPORT****Purpose of report**

1. To provide information on the following during the year 1 April 2020 to 31 March 2021, covering:
 - Dales Volunteer recruitment activity and equal opportunities;
 - Dales Volunteer training and development; and
 - Dales Volunteer turnover and retention data.

Recommendation

2. That the report be noted.

Strategic Planning Framework

3. The information and recommendation contained in this report are consistent with the Authority's statutory purposes and its approved strategic planning framework, and specifically Corporate Action Plan Objective 13, to "Give people from all backgrounds an opportunity to enjoy and contribute to the National Park by providing at least 7,000 volunteer days per year, with 15% coming from under-represented groups".

Diversity of our volunteers

4. When volunteers join us they provide their date of birth, we also ask them to complete an equal opportunities monitoring form and state whether they consider themselves to have a disability. The latter two pieces of information are not compulsory and so, whilst most provide this, not all do. Together we use this data to understand the diversity within our current volunteers and progress towards our targets of having 15% of our volunteer days completed by those who are in under-represented groups.
5. "Under-represented groups" means the following: Young people (those aged 5 to 24 years inclusive) or Minority ethnic groups (all ethnic groups other than 'White – British') or People who consider themselves to have a limiting long term illness or disability.

6. Across our current volunteers (total exceeds 100% due to rounding):

- 16% are under 18 years old (these are our Young Rangers)
- 1% in the age group 18-25
- 3% in the age group 26-35
- 4% in the age group 36-45
- 8% in the age group 46-55
- 22% in the age group 56-65
- 46% over 65 years of age
- 3% disclosed that they have a disability

7. 97% stated that they were of 'White' ethnicity, whether that be 'White-British', 'White-English', 'White-Scottish', 'White-Welsh', 'White-Irish' or 'White – other', with 3% from BAME groups.

Recruitment Activity

8. In the year from 1 April 2020 to 31 March 2021 we recruited 22 volunteers. This compares to 20 in the year 2019/20. The new recruits were:

- 14 Meet and Greet volunteers
- 3 Learning and Engagement volunteers
- 2 DCM volunteers
- 1 Young Ranger supervisor
- 1 Conservation volunteer
- 1 Access volunteer

Equal Opportunities Monitoring

9. The monitoring of applications for the purpose of equal opportunities is a practice recommended by the Equality and Human Rights Commission. This is an important tool to enable the Authority to ascertain at an early stage whether or not there appear to be any areas of its work from which certain disadvantaged groups are excluded. This monitoring provides evidence as to whether or not current recruitment practices and role offers are reaching the full spectrum of possible candidates and also helps us to avoid possible future problems of allegations of discriminatory practices.

10. Completion of monitoring forms is not compulsory, and non-completion does not invalidate an application. Therefore, not all applicants complete the form fully, or at all. The evaluation of these forms does still, however, provide an insight into the demographic of people applying to volunteer. From the information we do have, concerning successful applications in 2020/21:

- 0% of applicants were under 18 years old
- 18% in the age group 18-25
- 9% in the age group 26-35
- 9% in the age group 36-45
- 14% in the age group 46-55
- 36% in the age group 56-65
- 14% over 65 years of age
- 9% of applicants disclosed that they have a disability

11. There has been an increase in the number of people recruited in the age group of 45 and below: this year, it was 36% compared to last year, when only 5% of people we recruited were aged under 46.
12. There has been an increase in the number of volunteers we recruited who disclosed they have a disability (9%) compared to last year where 0% stated this.
13. 91% of applicants stated that they were of 'White' ethnicity, whether that be 'White-British', 'White-English', 'White-Scottish', 'White-Welsh', 'White-Irish' or 'White – other'. 9% were from BAME groups. This number is similar to last year.

Training and Development

14. All new volunteers complete our National Park Awareness training, this year this took place online due to the pandemic.
15. We also established an online 'induction', this has typically been part of the National Park Awareness training but we had found that volunteers often needed this induction information sooner and so we separated the two elements out. This works well as an online video interaction and we plan to continue this practice post-pandemic.
16. We have also developed an entirely new training module 'visitor care' which all 'public facing' volunteers will undertake in 2021/22.
17. It is the responsibility of the volunteer supervisors to determine what additional training is needed for the volunteer role. The Volunteer team work with the supervisors to deliver this. This year less training than usual took place, as there was less volunteering taking place and opportunities to train were reduced.
18. We delivered some first aid (initial training and refresher) but as this needs to be face to face we had to limit numbers to those volunteers most in need and we start 2021/22 with a backlog to address. Navigation training also has to be delivered face to face, so was postponed.
19. We delivered online briefings to all new 'Meet and Greet' volunteers so that they could start their roles as soon as lockdown ended. Parish path surveying training was also delivered online.
20. We will be looking to identify where online training has proved more effective in terms of time and convenience and if this is something which can be continued in some cases.

Volunteer Turnover

21. Some degree of volunteer turnover is inevitable. It is also desirable. The influx of new people can generate new ideas and fresh ways of thinking. Historically we have seen a high degree of loyalty from our volunteers: 5% of our current 314 volunteers have been with us for over 20 years and a further 25% for between 10 and 20 years. This means almost a third of our current volunteers

have been with us for over 10 years. This number has been relatively consistent year on year.

22. During the period from 1 April 2020 to 31 March 2021 13 volunteers resigned, 3 passed away and 9 moved from the area. The length of service of the 25 people who stopped volunteering in 2020/2021 is shown below:

Length of Service	Number of leavers
<1 year	1
>1 year but < 2 years	5
>2 years but < 3 years	2
>3 years but < 4 years	5
>4 years but < 5 years	2
>5 years but < 10 years	2
>10 years but < 20 years	4
>20 years	4

23. Less volunteers left us this year than last (25 versus 35 in 2019/20) but it is hard to infer a trend, due to the limiting effect of the pandemic on volunteering activity.

Feedback from Leavers

24. We send an online survey to volunteers when they leave; it is not compulsory that they complete it, with 8 leavers providing feedback this year. The feedback was positive, with most responses citing the reason for leaving as being less able to undertake physically-challenging activities. This year Covid-19 was an additional factor for some leavers, who cited it as the cause of them reassessing their priorities. We also had a number of volunteers who were effectively 'on hold' this year, because of personal concerns about undertaking volunteering activity during the pandemic.

Recommendation

25. That the report be noted

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11 May 2021