

# HOW DO WE MAKE VOLUNTEERING MORE INCLUSIVE?

Enablers for Volunteers with  
Neurodivergence, Learning  
Disabilities or Care Experience

Norfolk & Waveney Volunteering  
for Health Programme



# INTRODUCTION

This is a summary of recommendations based on feedback from grant recipients about the barriers and enablers to volunteering for people with health inequalities, and research into the attitudes of care experienced young people to volunteering.

The full Get Involved Innovation Fund Interim Report and the Community Voices Report from Norfolk & Waveney ICS and Break charity are available.

The data was gathered during Autumn and Winter 2025, and projects were facilitated through local charities: Break, Fen Zen, NANSA and Opening Doors.

**VOLUNTARY  
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Norfolk and Waveney Integrated Care System

# INNOVATION FUND

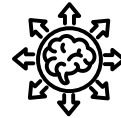


# KEY RECOMMENDATIONS FOR SUPPORTING VOLUNTEERS WITH HEALTH INEQUALITIES

- Provide pro-active, person-centered support from someone the volunteer trusts, to help address key barriers and embed vital enablers



- Ensure your organisation is trauma, neuro-divergent and care informed



- Provide clear and accessible role descriptions and task instructions



- Offer support with transport arrangements and any financial concerns. Also include snacks and drinks



- Offer the ability to volunteer alongside a friend



- Ensure volunteers have appropriate equipment and reasonable adjustments are offered

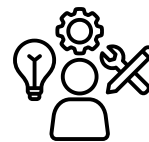


- Nurture the social bonding that plays a key role in successful volunteering by creating space and time for forming social connection.



# FURTHER RECOMMENDATIONS

- Provide a clear outline of the specific benefits of the volunteering opportunity, highlighting the transferable skills and potential route to employment or other opportunities
- Be clear about the difference their volunteering will make in the community
- Build in time and genuine commitment for co-production and collaborative planning of roles and tasks, and for reflection
- Make sure that the volunteering opportunities are enjoyable for the volunteers
- Ensure there is trust and familiarity with the organisation, support worker and the setting before volunteering begins to help address anxiety and lack of confidence



# GENERAL COMMENT

All volunteer-involving organisations are encouraged to broaden their volunteer base and support people with health inequalities so that they can reap the many benefits of volunteering. It requires a commitment to putting certain measures in place and adapting existing systems but the benefits of doing so will be the time, individual perspectives, enthusiasm and insights this will bring.

Organisations should take these factors into consideration and read the full Get Involved Innovation Fund Interim Report and the Community Voices Report (specifically about care experienced young people) from Norfolk & Waveney ICS and Break charity that are available [here](#).



# VOLUNTEERING FOR HEALTH

This research was developed through Volunteering for Health, a national programme funded through a partnership between NHS Charities Together, NHS England, and CW+. The Norfolk and Waveney Partnership is one of the fifteen local partnerships.

This initiative explores new ways to extend the benefits of volunteering to everyone, particularly people who may not usually take part. The project aims to support more diverse volunteers, encourage existing volunteers and volunteer managers, and help more health and social care organisations offer volunteering opportunities.

The Get Involved Innovation Fund provides funding and advice to help organisations explore new ways to support people who face

barriers to volunteering, specifically:

- Adults who have learning disabilities
- Autistic or neurodivergent adults
- Looked-after children / care experienced young people

The Interim Report is based on feedback from four grant-funded organisations from the first round of awards (Summer 2025) and the Community Voices Report was commissioned by Norfolk & Waveney Integrated Care Services and Voluntary Norfolk (2025/6). It was undertaken through Break charity and the young people and families they work with.

To find out more about the programme, please visit [Volunteering for Health - Norfolk and Suffolk](#) and [Volunteering for Health - CW+](#).