



## Moving Heritage Volunteering Forward

### **Who are we?**

Recently a group of professionals who are passionate about volunteering in the Heritage sector have started to meet and discuss Heritage Volunteering. We got together because we wanted to stop talking about “how to write a role profile” and start taking action to move the sector forward strategically. The discussions were so interesting and the networking was so valuable that we decided to see if we could create a sustainable way of doing this.

It started with Matt from the Science Museum Group, Danielle from Imperial War Museums, Richard from Ironbridge Gorge Museums Trust and Alex from Birmingham Museums Trust, but now there are people from all over the UK sitting around a table and trying to work out how to best champion and support heritage volunteering. Some of the involved organisations now include; NCVO, National Trust, Heritage Railway Association, HLF, English Heritage and Museum Wales. We're not saying we're the experts – it just happens that we all managed to get talking and realised we could work together to achieve something big.

### **What are we trying to do?**

We've been chatting to our followers on twitter, having discussions at various regional meetings and engaging as many people as possible about what the sector needs. As a result we're now trying to create a network of regional meetings across the UK that will get people in the sector talking to each other – reducing the isolation felt by many, but also in order to create a UK wide network that can feed into an annual national meeting.

We want to have all regions represented so that we can have valuable sector wide discussions resulting in action. We're trying to pull together enthusiastic people to look at bigger strategic goals, so we can tackle things like:

- Evaluating the impact of volunteering on participants' wellbeing
- Hosting a bank of free online resources that everyone can access; signposting best practice toolkits but also new research papers and useful news stories
- Supporting Universities to incorporate basic volunteer management training into relevant degrees
- Building an evidence bank so that we rely less on organisationally specific data, anecdotal feedback and outdated research

Overall our more general aims are:

1. **Facilitating networking and ideas sharing**
2. **Signposting useful resources to support good practice**
3. **Giving heritage volunteering a voice at all levels**

To support this we've set up The Heritage Volunteering Group; a strategic steering group made up of sector wider (and beyond) individuals that are willing to give their time and skills to make this big dream happen. Even with that support, this is still a big challenge, but we're up for it! If you are too then we want to hear from you...

**Do you run or belong to a current heritage volunteers regional network or forum that might be interested in working with us?**

Please email us via: [heritagevolunteeringgroup@gmail.com](mailto:heritagevolunteeringgroup@gmail.com)

**Or perhaps you'd like to join our mailing list and hear more as we develop this idea?**

Just let us know via: [heritagevolunteeringgroup@gmail.com](mailto:heritagevolunteeringgroup@gmail.com)

**Are you on twitter and interested in keeping in the loop on social media?**

Follow @HeritageVols

**Are you keen and able to give your time and skills to The Heritage Volunteering Group?**

Join the mailing list so we can let you know when we are on the look out for more members to help drive things forward!

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