



Valuing Volunteers

April 2013 to March 2014

First Printed August 2014

Introduction

Volunteers are crucial to the operation of Southwark Carers. Without the involvement, variety and commitment of our volunteers, we would not be able to run the broad number of services, nor operate in quite the same way that we do at present. It is important that we recognise the value of our volunteers and what they bring to the organisation and that is the focus of this report.

This is the second year of formal reporting on the value of volunteers, building on the work done by the previous Volunteer Co-ordinator. By publishing an annual report, we hope to show what volunteers bring to the organisation, how much we value them and we are doing to develop the way we work with our volunteers as an organisation.

History

For over 30 years, Southwark Carers has provided information, advice and support to Carers across the borough. We also aim to raise awareness of the rights and needs of Carers in Southwark. Working in partnership with other local organisations, we ensure that Carers get as much support as possible as well as offering a wide range of free services for the Carers registered with us.

Southwark Carers has been using and involving volunteers right from the start to provide services for carers. From trustees guiding the charity in its first steps through to counsellors offering emotional support. Volunteers have been offering services or putting on events that benefit people.

One member of staff recalls two volunteers, Rob and Audrey who came in and helped out when there were only three members of staff!

Useful Contacts

Southwark Carers

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Staff and volunteers raise awareness during Carers Week 2013

Why do people volunteer?

We have looked at our existing volunteers and asked why they are volunteering for this particular charity and in these particular roles. The most interesting answers were:

"I have to do the role in order to gain a professional qualification and I liked this charity as it was a different area to others I've worked in. Also I only live five minutes away so its really convenient!"

"It gets me out of the house and I love a bit of banter with the staff and other volunteers. It's a good routine and gives me work experience as I was going brain dead."

"The role helped give me strength and experience to help face the things life threw at me you know? It also helped me grow as a person. Besides, it had to be this place to volunteer at as they'd help me so much."

From these answers we can see that volunteers have a wide variety of reasons to volunteer for us as well as the reason why it was this charity that they volunteered for. This will be taken into account at the monitoring meetings to ensure that volunteers feel as valued as possible.

Value of volunteers

There are several ways we can work out the value of volunteers to Southwark Carers:

- Economic, where we would find the equivalent in pay
- Marketing/Media Reach, where we look at the value of word of mouth advertising
- Services, where volunteers are running services on behalf of the charity
- Expenditure versus value, where we look at how much value we get back for every pound spent

Economic

All amounts are worked out using Payscale.com, a Human Resources website that tracks the average wage in the UK based on listed contacts. This will give us an equivalent for the hours and roles that volunteers undertake.

If we were to pay each of our volunteers for their time, the total value would be £198397.92 for a total of 655 hours by over 20 different volunteers. Several people volunteer in more than one role, giving us even greater value for money.

At Southwark Carers during the period of this report, there were six areas of volunteer involvement:

- Trustee board
- Counsellors
- Administrative support
- Community Engagement
- Social Activities
- General delivery and transport

Economic breakdown

Trustee Board

On average each board member donates 4 hours of their time a month, which includes preparation for meetings and a 2-hour meeting. A Trustee position is the equivalent to someone in a Senior Management position and would command an hourly rate £32.14 per hour.

April 2013 to March 2014	6 trustees	24 hours per month £771.36 per month
		Total: £9256.32 per year

Volunteer Counsellors

The counselling service aims to accommodate at least 12 counsellors at any one time, which enables Southwark Carers to provide roughly 35-40 hours per month per counsellor. As a fully qualified counsellor, they would be earning around £30 per hour.

April 2013 to March 2014	12 volunteers	480 hours per month £14400 per month
		Total: £172800 per year

Reception volunteers

Since September 2012, Southwark Carers have increased the involvement of volunteers through assistance in the office with administrative tasks, providing essential support to staff members. At capacity we are able to offer up to fifteen, 4-hours volunteering slots per week. A full time receptionist would earn around £10.71 per hour.

April 2013 to March 2014	5 volunteers	80 hours per month £856.80 per month
		Total: £10281.60 per year

Community Engagement

Between June 2013 and November 2013 we have had one volunteer increasing the communities awareness of how Southwark Carers can support carers in the borough but also identifying suitable community events to attend. As a community support worker, they would earn around £15 per hour.

April 2013 to March 2014	1 volunteer £240 per month	16 hours per month
		Total: £1440 per year

Social Activities Group Leader

We have three activities (Film Club, Knitting & Nattering and Sewing Club) that take place on a monthly basis. These are lead by volunteers and on average, each activity runs for 2 hours. We also have a film club that puts on 13 showings a year (1 per month and 2 at Easter). As a Workshop Facilitator, they would earn around £20 per hour.

April 2013 to March 2014	1 volunteer	12 hours per month
April 2013 to March 2014	1 volunteer	3 hours per month
May 2013 to July 2013	1 volunteer	8 hours in total
		£300 per month
		Total: £3820 per year



General delivery and transport volunteer

The husband of a member of staff has been picking up and dropping off various items and helping out with the transport of people. Between April 2013 and March 2014, he did around 5 days of volunteering. As a taxi driver, he would earn around £20 an hour.

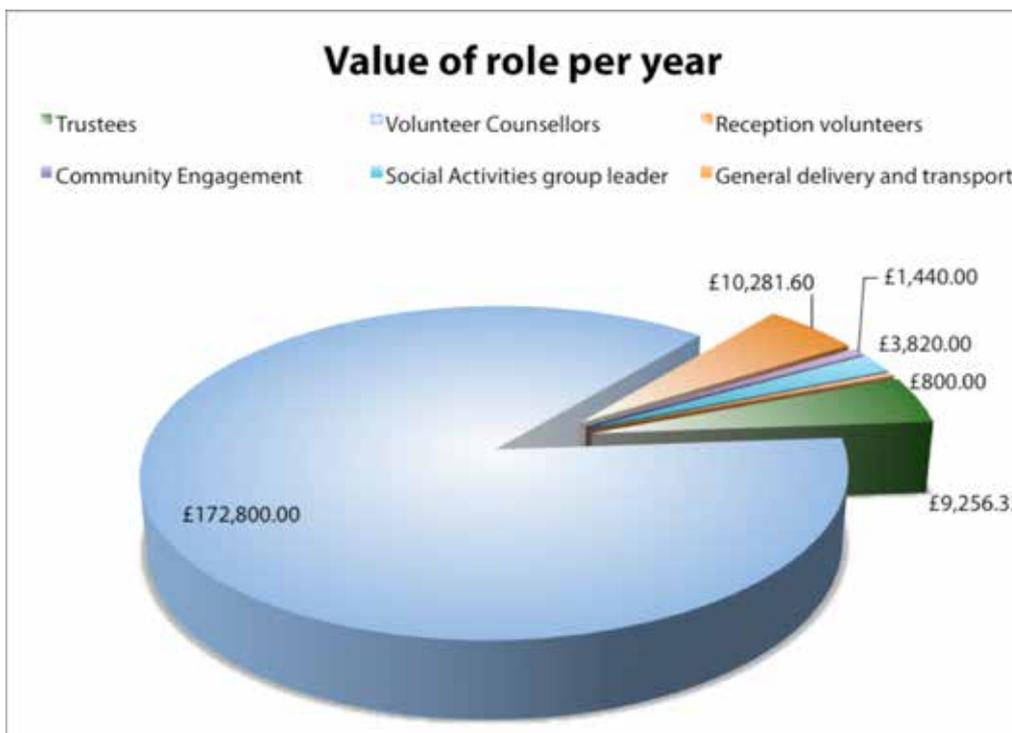
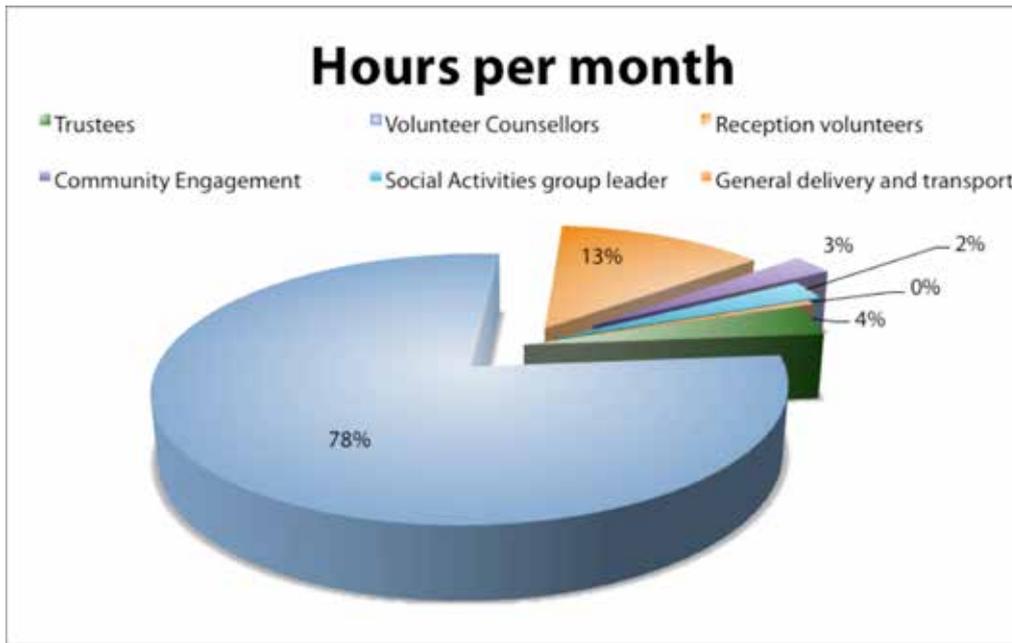
April 2013 to March 2014

1 volunteer

3.33 hours per month

£66.66 per month

Total: £800 per year



Marketing Value

In addition to the direct value of volunteer involvement, we need to consider the media reach and community engagement value as volunteers do talk about the organisation and the work we do.

Based on a study done by InSight in 2011, the average person has 12 regular contacts or friends, defined as someone they will talk to at least once a week. The average family members in irregular contact, usually once or twice a year, would be around 30 people. If we include social media, the number increases dramatically. The average person has 144 "friends" on Facebook, whilst on Twitter it is 59. So on average, each volunteer will inform roughly 245+ people about their role and of the organisation. We have 27 active volunteers so have a media reach of approximately 6885 people.

In addition to the 245 people each volunteer has direct contact, each of those people will also have around 245 people they speak to. In marketing, it is known that word of mouth spreads to at least 2 degrees of separation. So for every person who talks about Southwark Carers, they will mention their role to 245 people, who will talk to their contacts, a total of over 1.5 million people. It is unlikely that there will be any further penetration beyond 2 degrees.

To run a marketing campaign that would reach the lower figure of 6885 people (75 p per leaflet £5163.75, £65 using Royal Mail to distribute) would cost around £5228.75 per campaign. For the larger number, it would cost around £112.5 million.

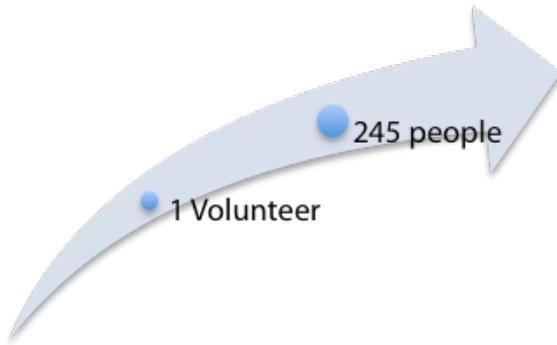
Value

£5228.75

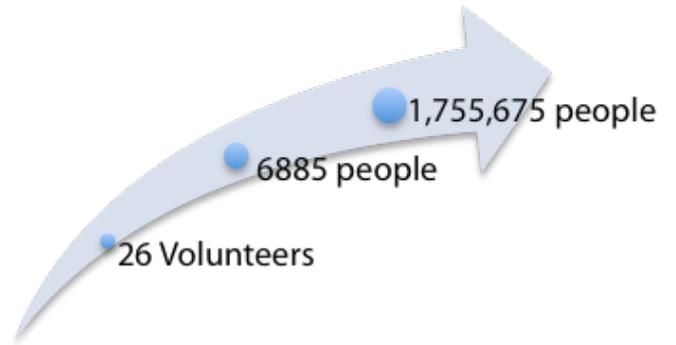


Two Southwark Carers volunteers on a night out to celebrate Volunteers Week 2014

Media Reach



1 volunteer reaches 245 people



27 volunteers potentially reach over 1.7 million people

Services

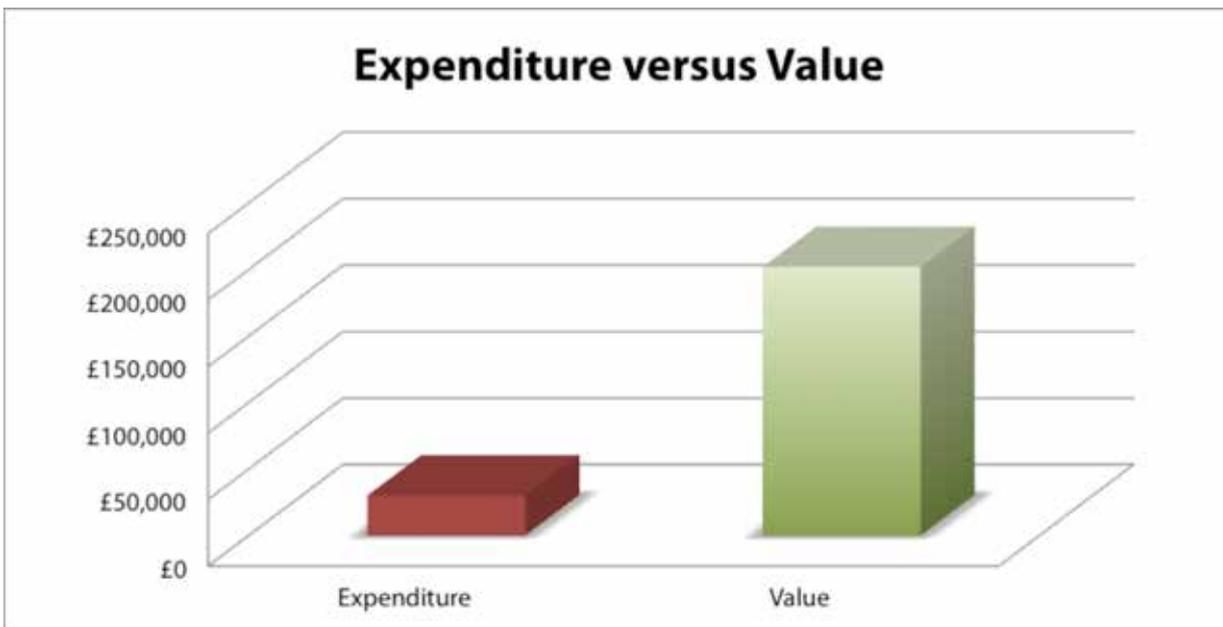
Through our volunteers, we offer the following services:

- Counselling
- Social outings
- A wide range of social groups such as Knitting, Film club, book club, ADDitude group and Carers Catch-up

All of these services are provided by volunteers and run by volunteers for carers.

Expenditure versus Value.

Another way of looking at volunteer value is to take all the expenses incurred in recruiting, training and supporting volunteers and compare it to what we get out of them. For example the expenditure of around £30000 a year includes the wages of the volunteer co-ordinator, volunteer expenses, advertising for volunteer roles and induction/training. Compared this to the £200,000 value we get out of volunteers, it means for every £1 we spend, we get back £7 worth of work (or value).



The year ahead

New volunteer Roles

In May 2014, a new volunteer co-ordinator was recruited and will be instigating two things: a new monitoring scheme to help retain existing volunteers and a recruitment programme to attract up to 60 new volunteers in a variety of exciting roles. Below are the roles that are currently under discussion and will need to be formalised this year.

- Volunteer Counsellor
- Receptionist
- Volunteer Counsellor Administrator
- Social Media
- Events
- Fundraising
- Support Group Leader

Where we had a volunteer under community engagement, it is planned to split this role into three sections, Social Media, Events and Fundraising. This enables a volunteer and the charity to shift focus depending on current need, rather than only using a volunteer as and when a need for that particular role comes up.

It is hoped that around 60 new volunteers will be recruited into a variety of roles, offering over 125 hours per week. These new roles alongside the existing ones will enable Southwark Carers to offer even more support to carers in the years ahead as well as enable Southwark Carers to reach more people.

Volunteer retention

We will be looking at ways to retain existing volunteers and ensuring we keep as many of the new ones as possible. Several ways include:

- Team building between volunteers and staff
- Regular informal chats between the volunteers and volunteer co-ordinator
- Quarterly group supervision meetings at which further training needs and volunteer satisfaction will be monitored
- Recognising volunteer contribution at an annual event during volunteers week

Looking to the Future

All volunteers will receive an induction, appropriate training, a volunteer handbook containing all the information that they will need in order to carry out their role and regular support and supervision with the volunteer co-ordinator or counselling supervisor, as appropriate.

We are also looking at how Southwark Carers could gain the "Investing in Volunteers" accreditation. This would ensure that the charity is set up to provide the best possible volunteer experience and that we prove how committed we are to our volunteers.

Staff will be offered a short training session to enable them to interact with volunteers in better way. The reason for the training session is that not all staff members have worked with volunteers before. They are therefore not sure what is acceptable to ask a volunteer to do, or how to ask them.

We aim to get staff and volunteers working better together and this session will be the first step towards doing this.



Summary

We had a total of 26 active volunteers over the April 2013 to March 2014 period. Several volunteers were lost through either natural wastage (volunteers moving onto other roles such as paid jobs within or outside the organisation) or the role itself came to an end (such as the Community Engagement role). As of June 2014, we have 20 active volunteers in 4 different roles.

Total Value of Volunteer Involvement April 2013 till March 2014

£203626.67

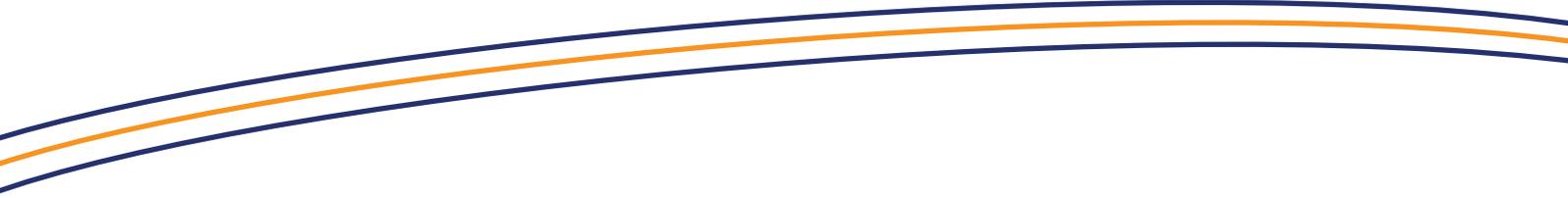
The value of these volunteers cannot be underestimated. Alongside the economic and marketing value, is the connection between volunteers and the people the charity is set up to benefit. This connection enables the charity to receive feedback, to know that what we are trying to achieve is appropriate and/or effective.

These volunteers also enable the charity to offer a wide range of services and events, without which we would need to raise over £200,000 a year, almost a third of our current income. This would require a full time fundraising team bringing with it a higher fundraising target to cover the increased salary and more staff in support and managerial roles. Effectively, the entire makeup of the charity would have to change.

Instead, we have a team of dedicated volunteers enabling us to focus on the 24000 carers in Southwark. Enabling people from all over the borough to access everything from counselling to reflexology, from learning how to knit to discussing how to deal with difficult behaviour. By increasing the number of volunteers we have, the charity will be able to reach even more carers, cementing Southwark Carers' role in the borough for many years to come.



A volunteer taking part in one of our activity groups to support carers.



Southwark Carers

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