



# Experiences of Becoming and Being a Volunteer

## *A Volunteer Feedback Report*

Written by:  
Prof Catherine Leyshon, Dr  
Michael Leyshon, Timothy  
Walker; University of Exeter.

<http://geography.exeter.ac.uk/cges/>

Funded by:  
Economic and Social  
Research Council – Impact  
Acceleration Account.

<http://www.esrc.ac.uk/funding/funding-opportunities/impact-acceleration-accounts/>



## **Executive Summary**

Volunteers are integral to many services delivered by a wide range of organisations. The sustainability of these services is dependent on an effective volunteer recruitment process and appropriate volunteer training programmes. Gathering feedback about becoming and being a volunteer is therefore a crucial exercise to enable organisations to maximise volunteering potential in Cornwall. In 2015-2016 the [Volunteers in Communities](#) (VIC) team worked collaboratively with Age UK Cornwall to collect insights from 100 volunteers about their current recruitment and training processes. The data was collected at three volunteer celebration events at Liskeard, St Erme and Penzance. This report analyses the data, draws out key themes, and makes a number of recommendations about how recruitment and training policy can be improved from the perspective of the volunteer. While the data is drawn from Age UK Cornwall volunteers the implications of the research findings and recommendations have resonance for the all voluntary sector organisations.

## **Recommendations**

Based on the compliments, complaints and suggestions gathered from 100 volunteers the following recommendations are made about recruitment and training policy:

### **Recommendations for volunteer recruitment policy:**

1. Taster days should be tailored to a particular volunteering role and be offered as an immediate opportunity for engagement for any interested volunteer.
2. The time commitment required for a volunteering role should be clearly explained in adverts.
3. Volunteer opportunities in programmes such as Living Well need to be better advertised and described with more clarity.

### **Recommendations for volunteer training policy:**

4. Volunteer drivers should be offered the opportunity to meet the transport logistics team. This would enable drivers to understand how the system works and the logistics team to understand, and take on board, the volunteers' perspectives.
5. Refresher courses for first aid and manual handling training should be regularly and consistently offered to volunteer drivers.

6. The mandatory training requirements should be stated in the initial volunteer role advert and the opportunity for refresher courses made clear in the induction process.
7. Informal and unofficial volunteer meetings should be encouraged as provide effective spaces for learning and peer support.

### **Recommendations for volunteer managers:**

8. An annual volunteer celebration event should be delivered and in which volunteer achievements are showcased and an opportunity for feedback provided.
9. Induction handbooks should dedicate a page to explaining what the host organisation does in a wider context and how volunteers are central to this work.
10. An info-graphic summarising the latest volunteering achievements should be part of the monthly newsletters.
11. Feedback from volunteers about the recruitment and training processes needs to be more regularly gathered and used to inform management. It is particularly important to gather feedback from volunteers within the first three months to capture their first impressions.
12. Volunteering roles in which risks are low – for example where there is no lone-working or where contact with a client is in a group or public setting – should have a different, and faster, signing up process. Using verbal references should be trialled.
13. Volunteers should be kept up to date as to how their application is progressing.
14. Further research should be conducted to establish how the task of volunteer recruitment and training is best managed within a host organisation. This research needs to specifically examine the pros and cons of a geographically organised process compared to a centralised approach.

## Table of Contents

<b>Executive Summary .....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Recommendations .....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Table of Contents .....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>1.0: Introduction .....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>2.0: Methodology .....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>3.0: Findings .....</b>	<b>5</b>
3.1: Agreements and Disagreements .....	5
3.2: Becoming a Volunteer.....	7
3.3: Being a Volunteer .....	11
<b>4.0: Discussion and Recommendations.....</b>	<b>15</b>
4.1: Practical recommendations for volunteer recruitment policy:.....	15
4.2: Practical recommendations for volunteer training policy:.....	15
4.3: Celebration Service and Gathering Volunteer Feedback.....	16
4.4: Recruitment and Training Processes.....	17
4.5: Organisational Management of Volunteer Recruitment .....	18

**Suggested citation:**

Leyshon, C, Leyshon, M and Walker, T (2016) Experiences of Becoming and Being a Volunteer – A Volunteer Feedback Report. University of Exeter

Please cite this report appropriately.

## **1.0: Introduction**

Volunteers are integral to the sustainability of many services delivered by Age UK Cornwall and Isles of Scilly. Effective volunteer recruitment processes and appropriate volunteer training programmes are crucial for building an engaged and happy volunteering community. Age UK Cornwall's protocol for improving recruitment and training processes is guided by the philosophy of coproduction. In essence coproduction is about enabling volunteers to shape how they are both recruited and trained. In 2016, funded by an Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) Impact Acceleration Award (IAA), the [Volunteers in Communities](#) (VIC) team assisted Age UK Cornwall to examine and review their current recruitment and training processes. This report is the output from that review and is based on the feedback gathered from 100 Age UK Cornwall volunteers.

## **2.0: Methodology**

To capture volunteer's perspectives, and suggestions for improvement, on Age UK Cornwall's recruitment and training process a feedback exercise was developed by the VIC team. This exercise was conducted in 2015 at three Age UK Cornwall volunteer celebration events in Liskeard, St Erme, and Penzance. The exercise involved gathering responses to statements about becoming and being a volunteer. The statements (see Figure 1 and Figure 2) were based on two recommendations from VIC's core report on the Living Well programme; '[How does change happen? A qualitative process evaluation](#)' (Leyshon et al., 2015). The two recommendations were: 1) "we recommend that taster days might encourage more people to volunteer than adverts in the newspaper"; 2) "we recommend that the training needs of volunteers should be enhanced and evaluated regularly". To animate these recommendations they were accompanied with volunteer quotes from the Living Well report (Leyshon et al., 2015). The recommendations were printed as A1 posters and placed on easels at the volunteer celebration events. At the events volunteers were asked to think about the recommendations and accompanying volunteer quotes, and to write their responses on a sticky note. The volunteers were then asked to place their comment under the column 'Yes, I agree' or in the column 'No, I would say...'. The cumulative result of this exercise was 100 volunteer responses to the

recruitment and training based statements. The quantitative and qualitative aspects to this data are now analysed in the Findings section.



Figure 1: Recruitment Question Poster

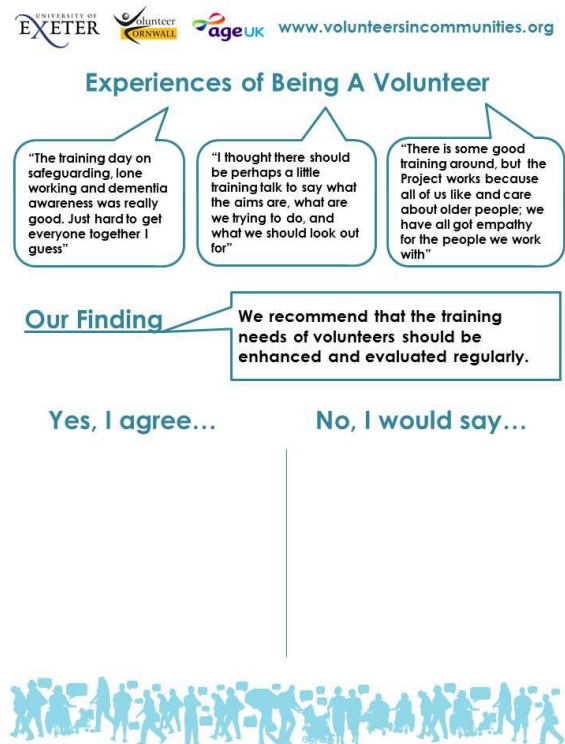


Figure 2: Training Question Poster

### **3.0: Findings**

The Findings section is split into three. Firstly, the results on volunteer's agreement or disagreement, to the recommendations, are discussed. Secondly, the themes within the data around 'becoming a volunteer' are drawn out and analysed. Thirdly, the themes within the data around 'being a volunteer' are drawn out and analysed. In each of the 'becoming' and 'being' sections the 'suggestions for improvement' from the volunteers are listed.

#### **3.1: Agreements and Disagreements**

Figure 3 and Figure 4 show the overall volunteer responses to the recommendations about recruitment and training. Figure 3 shows that 66% of volunteers who responded to the question about taster days agreed that "taster days might encourage more people to volunteer than adverts in newspapers"; 33% of volunteers disagreed with this recommendation. Figure 4 shows that 80% of volunteers agreed

that “training needs of volunteers should be evaluated and enhanced regularly”; 20% of volunteers disagreed with this recommendation.

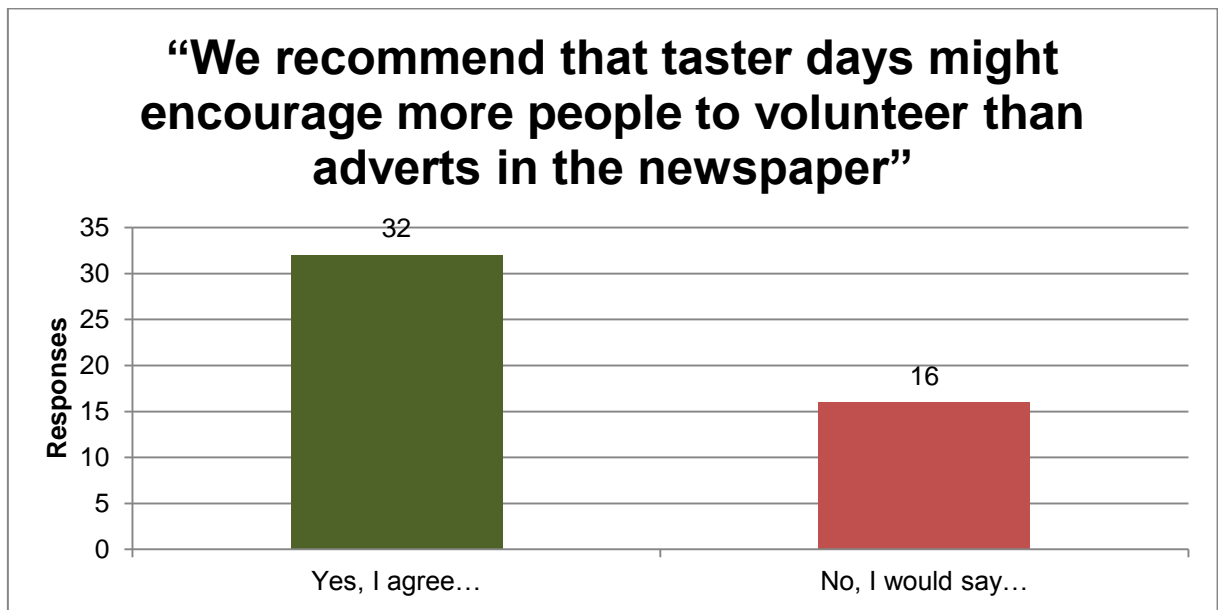


Figure 3: Volunteer responses to recruitment recommendation



Figure 4: Volunteer responses to training recommendation

**3.2: Becoming a Volunteer**

The 32 volunteer responses under the ‘Yes, I agree’ column were categorised into four themes, see Figure 5. The verbatim responses which constitute these themes are listed in Table 1, 2 and 3.

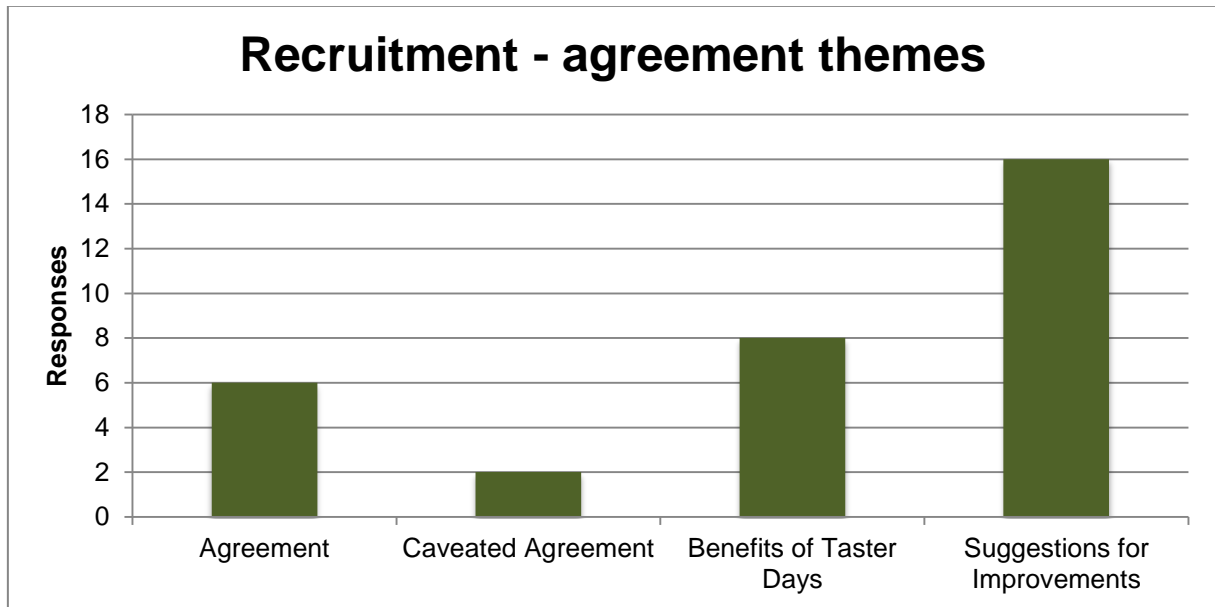


Figure 5: Overview of agreement themes in responses to recruitment recommendation

Table 1 lists the responses from volunteers under the theme ‘agreement’ and ‘caveated agreement’. The consensus within this theme was that the taster day was an effective tool for recruitment but they should to be tailored to the specific volunteering role.

<u>Themes</u>	<u>Responses</u>
<b>Agreement</b>	Yes, making it fun and with good food at taster days!
	Yes to a taster day, that would have been great
	It’s best to join and then do volunteer training. A buddy system or taster day to see what its really like would be good
	We found that taster days were really useful for our group
	Yes to taster day experience; before signing up
	Yes to taster day!
<b>Caveated agreement</b>	Yes, but taster days need to be tailored to the type of volunteering role. Put volunteer’s needs first!
	Yes, stands at events are also a good way to have a chat and find out what the role is about

Table 1: Agreement and Caveated Agreement



Table 2 lists the responses from volunteers under the theme ‘benefit of taster days’. Eight volunteers listed reasons for the effectiveness and importance of taster days. The primary benefit cited was “gaining actual experience” in the role. This was important for volunteers because it enabled them to scope the amount of commitment required by them before officially signing up. It can also be drawn from these responses that ‘not knowing’ the extent of commitment required for a role is a barrier to volunteer recruitment.

<u>Theme</u>	<u>Responses</u>
<b>Benefits of taster days</b>	Taster days reduce the fear of the unknown by providing volunteers with actual experience of what they will be doing; not a just a job description
	It is easier to say no to volunteering than yes, taster days are one way to pass that
	Yes to taster day! Forming friendships and real experience gives a good base for knowing about and then committing to personalised care with old people
	Yes, need to know what the commitment is before sign form – nice to talk to someone about the role
	When you start you realise that volunteering is not just good for others but actually good for you
	Yes, people fear breaking commitment. It would helpful if people knew what they were signing up to
	Taster days definitely; helps pull on their heart strings, tell them they will be old soon
	Need to make the volunteer role boundaries clear in the beginning – so a taster day might be good for that

**Table 2: Benefits of taster days**

‘Suggestions for improvement’ was the largest theme in the responses and within which there were four sub themes, see Figure 6. The verbatim responses which constitute these sub themes are listed in Table 3. The speed and process of recruitment was most frequently cited as an area for improvement. In particular the time delay between signing up and actually volunteering was noted as a barrier to rates of recruitment; but it also negatively affected the experience of being recruited. Volunteers saw this delay as stemming from the thorough administrative process. Further, volunteers thought that ‘all these official forms’ were not reflective of the actual risks associated with their role. The suggestion is that the official recruitment process should be tailored to each volunteering role; with the low risk roles, such as advocacy or day centre volunteering, not requiring as much ‘paperwork’. Better volunteer role advertisement, media coverage of what volunteers do, and better role descriptions in adverts were also key suggestions for improvement. In particular it

was felt that the profile of the Living Well programme needed to be raised along with a branding effort to make it distinct from a befriending volunteer role.

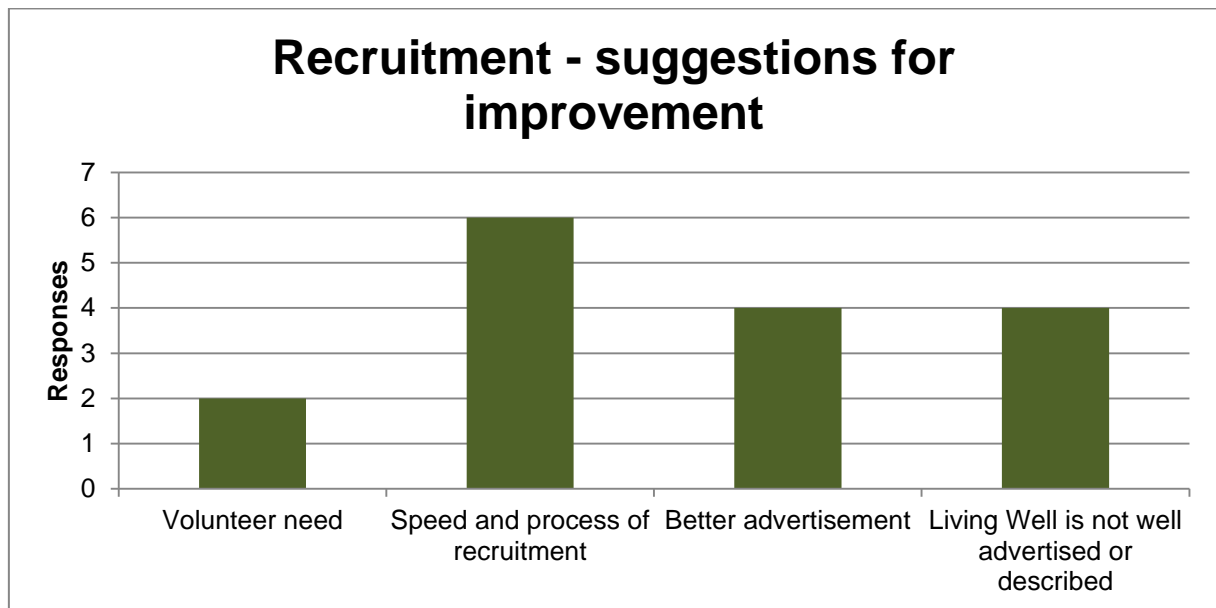


Figure 6: Suggestions for improvement in recruitment

<u>Sub Theme</u>	<u>Suggestions for Improvement</u>
<b>Recruitment campaigns should emphasise need for volunteers in Cornwall</b>	I joined because I saw the need Yes, but I joined through a friend and meeting the issues head on; seeing the need. Need press officers to push needs and goods of volunteering
<b>Speed and process of recruitment</b>	There was a long time between when I was thinking about volunteering and doing it; got to pounce and grab people in a that moment of thinking about it My experience of the delay between signing up and joining was terrible; need to use volunteers instantly and build relationships Need to shorten the signup process. So much admin and computer work before it starts. Taster experience...Yes! Recruitment process is too long Recruitment currently works from the top down. It should work from the bottom up with volunteers at start, official forms should be put off until actually volunteering With living Well it's not a vulnerable situation in the beginning so you don't need all these rules which put people off
<b>Better advertisement</b>	Need television adverts about what volunteers actually do, more media coverage Largest numbers of volunteers are old, that needs to be taken into account better Adverts in papers need to better describe the role – got to get the wording right There is a huge untapped volunteer resource – this needs to be capitalised on
<b>Living Well is not well advertised or described</b>	Better signposts to Living Well and what it is Communication! Cross volunteering, I would volunteer for Living well but no one's heard about it – missed opportunity Taster days, yes. But the adverts in papers about Living Well need improving – it's about wording, it's got to sell itself Need to make Living Well distinct from befriending

Table 3: Suggestions for improvement

The 16 volunteer responses under the ‘No, I would say’ column were categorised into two themes, see Figure 7. The verbatim responses which constitute these themes are listed in Table 4. The consensus amongst these responses was that newspaper adverts are effective in reaching potential volunteers who are not online. This of course does not mean though that using taster days or online media spaces for recruitment would be ineffective for reaching a different potential volunteering cohort.

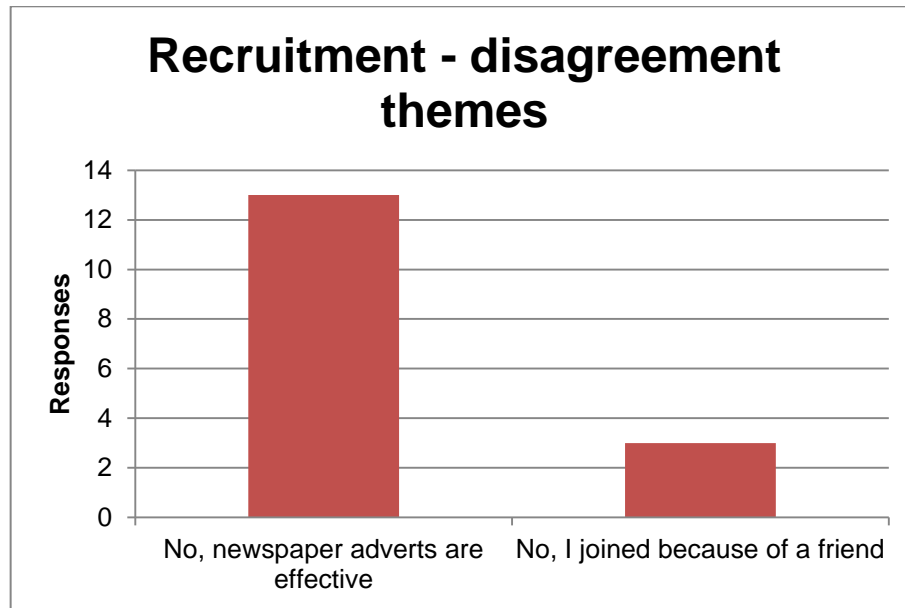


Figure 7: Overview of disagreement themes in responses to recruitment recommendation

<u>Themes</u>	<u>Responses</u>
<b>No, newspaper adverts are effective</b>	No, I found out through West Britain
	No, papers are the best media I think
	A friend told me, but newspaper adverts are actually effective
	West Britain is where I found out about the role; it's free right? Little effort too
	No I saw advert in West Britain
	No, saw advert in West Britain
	No, I saw it in the Cornishman
	No, in the Cornishman
	No, I initially phoned the red cross who passed me on to Age UK who then passed me on to TAPS
	No, Cornishman
	You have to remember that not everyone is on Facebook. Paper adverts work for me
	Map where elderly people congregate and you should put paper adverts there
	No, I didn't find it intimidating. Everyone was really friendly
<b>No, I joined because of a friend</b>	A friend told me and that was enough
	No, it was a community connection why I joined
	Yes, but I found joined through a personal connection – word of mouth

Table 4: Key points of disagreement

### 3.3: Being a Volunteer

The 43 volunteer responses under the 'Yes, I agree' column were categorised into four themes, see Figure 8. The verbatim responses which constitute these themes are listed in Table 5, 6 and 7.

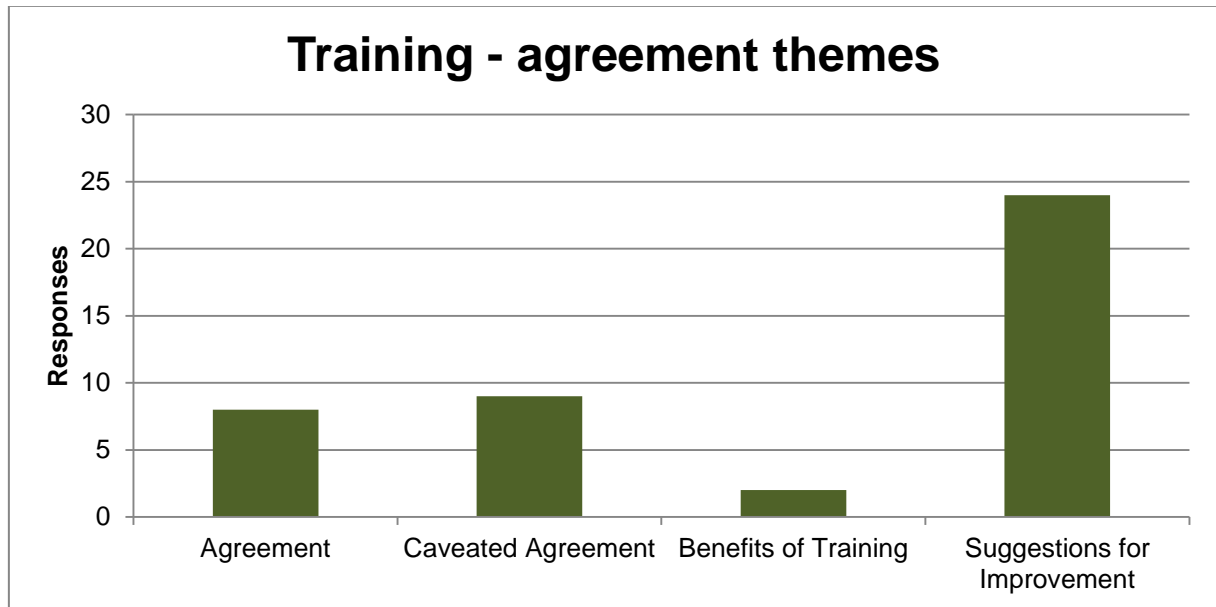


Figure 8: Overview of agreement themes in responses to training recommendation

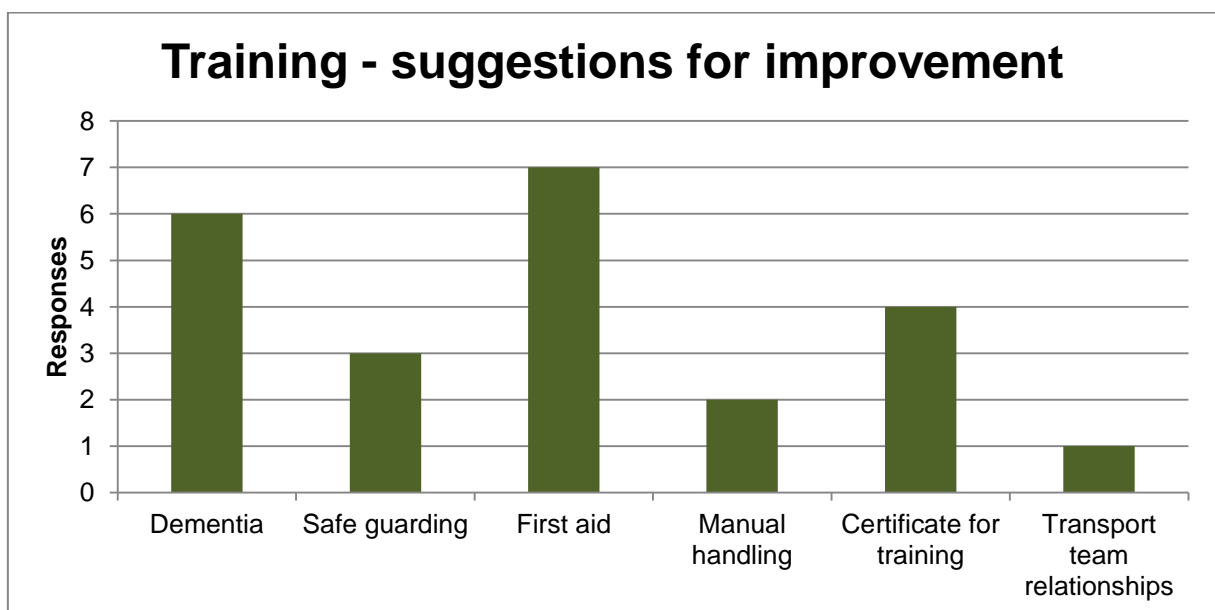
<u>Themes</u>	<u>Responses</u>
<b>Agreement</b>	Continuous training and updating is good; but make that clear in initial job role description
	I believe that volunteers good intentions can be enhanced with training and support
	Yes, imperative we are dealing with very vulnerable people; there is a liability in helping people
	You always need more training, can never have enough!
	There was a delay of 7 months before I went anywhere and quite frankly did not know enough for my role
	Training is always useful – you don't know what you don't know
	As a driver for CPP in rural areas I am going to sign up to all the training
	Yes, definitely where the volunteer role involves medical stuff
<b>Benefits of training</b>	It can be lonely being a driver, informal opportunity for meeting would be a way to feel part of a team
	Actually enjoy training because I feel part of the team

Table 5: Agreement and benefits of training

<u>Themes</u>	<u>Responses</u>
<b>Caveated agreement</b>	Yes, but the training must be tailored to your role. Nothing worse than going to a day which is not relevant
	Training regularly is important. But not necessarily official; peer support groups and informal chats are good too
	Training prepares you for passing a risk assessment. But actually needs to prepare you better for the reality volunteering with the elderly
	The barrier to training is the volunteer thinking that's more commitment; what you should do is call it an information afternoon.
	Yes, but best training is from our peers when we work together
	Peer support, informal coffee morning is what I want with my volunteering role, I feel quite alone
	Yes, but more clarity and identity to Living Well project – how it's a distinct role
	Yes, the training I received was not enough and could have been improved
	I would say no to more training but actually enjoyed the refresher courses

**Table 6: Caveated agreement**

The consensus within the responses listed in Table 5 and 6 is that 'regular evaluation and enhancement of training' is a sensible recommendation. Volunteers explained that along with the benefits of upskilling the volunteer training days can also be a socially enjoyable event. However, volunteers also listed a number of caveats: 1) ongoing training requirements should be stated in the initial role advert; 2) training needs be tailored to the role; 3) informal and unofficial volunteer meetings are also effective spaces for learning and peer support. The largest theme in the 'agree' column was that of 'suggestions for improvement', within which there were six sub themes, see Figure 9. The verbatim suggestions are listed in Table 6.



**Figure 9: Suggestions for improvement in training**

<b><u>Sub Themes</u></b>	<b><u>Suggestions for Improvement</u></b>
<b>Dementia</b>	The training I had was very useful; but only one day on dementia, it would be good to have more on that please Training on being able to recognise the sign of dementia Old people are contagious; no training possible for difficult old people problems in the everyday Depends on elderly client. Only recently come into contact with dementia and now feel like I need more! I would like more in the care package training – especially around dementia Yes Living Well does not currently do enough induction on dementia
<b>Safe guarding</b>	Yes, especially around safe guarding Driving the vulnerable is difficult we have to make the judgment and it's our responsibly Training on how to recognise what people are 'not' saying as well as those obvious health problems
<b>First aid</b>	The only thing that worries me is first aid! I Don't want to do the wrong thing Yes, I feel vulnerable that I have no first aid training and knowledge Training well worth doing! First aid would be good but I've got a medical background; so depends on volunteer Yes, I like to keep up with things. Basic first aid for example changes all the time Maybe even a de-fib in the vehicles – you can find yourself in the middle of nowhere – they would be a good investment Drivers should regularly do first aid updates. You may get caught out – so that's it's really important to know the basics at least Some drivers would not want to take on regular first aid training
<b>Manual handling</b>	Training day on handling the elderly would be useful 4 years ago I last did some training, could really do with some around manual handling
<b>Certificate for training</b>	Getting a certificate at the end is nice too. Those with low self-esteem it helps, at least some recognition. It's nice to have a certificate at the end sense of achievement Training and skills development is good for going on to later employment I found. Better to integrate that and get a good certificate Formalised recognition and something for our CV would be good
<b>Transport team relationships</b>	Having a good relationship with the transport office is very important for the exchange of information – I have that - it really helps knowing who's on the end of the line

**Table 7: Suggestions for improvement**

Figure 9 shows that there are four areas where volunteers would like more training and two areas of the training process which could be improved. First aid was the most asked for training, this was mostly from drivers who pick up the elderly and vulnerable from rural areas. Drivers also asked for training in manual handling as getting clients in and out of vehicles can be challenging on their own. Further dementia and safeguard training was asked for particularly by befrienders and Living Well volunteers. In terms of training process, four volunteers suggested that getting a

certificate or some sort of formalised recognition would be a great step forward; especially for those trying to get back into work. The final point which was discussed at length by volunteers at all events was the importance for drivers to have a good relationship with the individuals in the transport logistics office. Some volunteers had visited Boscowan House and met the transport team. There was a strong sense that the relationship between drivers and transport office was important for not just efficiency but also the happiness of the volunteer.

The 11 volunteer responses under the 'No, I would say' column were categorised into three themes, see Figure 10. The verbatim responses which constitute these themes are listed in Table 8.

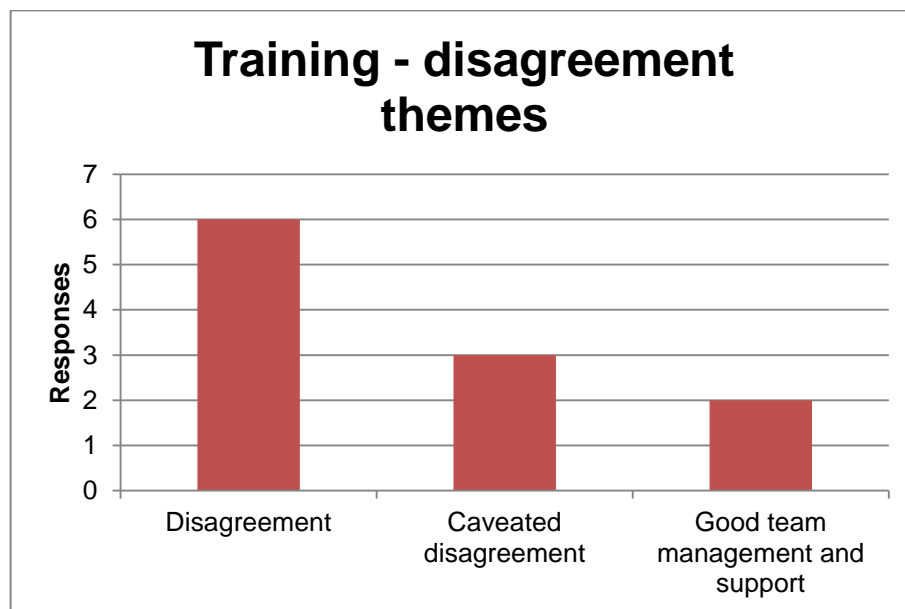


Figure 10: Recruitment – disagreement themes

Many of the responses put in the disagreement column were actually positive points. For example, one reason why volunteers did not want more training was because they had received sufficient training so far; another reason was that volunteers explained that they currently have good support from their teams. The key point is that training needs to be well tailored to the volunteer role.

<u>Themes</u>	<u>Responses</u>
<b>Disagreement</b>	Not with befriending, you just need to know how to talk about cows and chicken mostly
	Not for drivers; all you need to be is a good talker and listener
	No, I'm a confident person from a career background. For example my job involved safeguarding
	No, I have done MIDAS and also have a good first aid background
	No not really, I have easy and lovely clients
	I hate training courses, just want out!
<b>Caveated disagreement</b>	Good training in the beginning has been sufficient for me
	No depends on volunteer; it's definitely not one size fits all with volunteer training
	Not meant to talk about medical stuff with elderly so it's just about treating with empathy and dignity in my role
<b>Good team management and support</b>	My team is managed very well, so it's easy to ask about issues or pass issues on. I feel like the training is best done that way on the job
	Our Living Well coffee morning is really successful – I enjoy that once a fortnight – allows us to share problems and fellow volunteer support

**Table 8: Disagreement and caveated disagreement**

## **4.0: Discussion and Recommendations**

The findings above are responded to in two ways. Firstly a number of practical recommendations are drawn from the compliments, complaints and suggestions in the data. Secondly the wider and more strategic implications of the findings are drawn out and discussed. The preceding discussion to the strategic recommendations was the result of various meetings with the volunteer managers, within the care and transport departments, at Age UK Cornwall.

### **4.1: Practical recommendations for volunteer recruitment policy:**

1. Taster days should be tailored to a particular volunteering role and be offered as an immediate opportunity for engagement for any interested volunteer.
2. The time commitment required for a volunteering role should be clearly explained in adverts.
3. Volunteer opportunities in the Living Well programme need to be better advertised and described with more clarity.

### **4.2: Practical recommendations for volunteer training policy:**



4. Volunteer drivers should be offered the opportunity to meet the transport logistics team. This would enable drivers to understand how the system works and for the logistics team to understand, and take on board, the volunteers' perspectives.
5. Refresher courses for first aid and manual handling training should be regularly and consistently offered to volunteer drivers.
6. The mandatory training requirements should be stated in the initial volunteer role advert and the opportunity for refresher courses made clear in the induction process.
7. Informal and unofficial volunteer meetings should be encouraged as provide effective spaces for learning and peer support.

### **4.3: Celebration Service and Gathering Volunteer Feedback**

The volunteer celebration events proved to be successful in two ways. Firstly they served as a meaningful and effective way to thank volunteers for their service. Secondly the events proved suitable spaces to gather feedback from the volunteers about their compliments, complaints and suggestions. The consensus amongst Age UK managers and the VIC team was that the events should become annual. It was also agreed that the events could be improved in the following ways: 1) a short presentation communicating the numbers behind what volunteers have achieved (miles driven, visits made *inter alia*); 2) personal stories from beneficiaries about how volunteers have improved their lives. The aim is to increase the sense of achievement and pride amongst volunteers about how they have positively affected lives. Any effort by Age UK to better communicate success and create a clear narrative about how volunteers are changing lives would of course be more effective if regular. As such there is also value in using other methods to do so; for example info-graphics summarising achievements. Based on the successes and lessons learnt from the volunteer celebration events it is recommended that:

8. An annual volunteer celebration event should be delivered and in which volunteer achievements are showcased and an opportunity for feedback provided.
9. The induction handbook should dedicate a page to explaining what Age UK does in a wider context and how volunteers are central to this work.
10. An info-graphic summarising the latest volunteering achievements should be part of the monthly newsletter.
11. Feedback from volunteers about the recruitment and training processes needs to be more regularly gathered and used to inform management. It is particularly important to gather feedback from volunteers within the first three months to understand an first impressions.

#### **4.4: Recruitment and Training Processes**

The findings on the recruitment and training sparked a wider discussion amongst Age UK volunteer managers about their existing processes. The key suggestion from volunteers was that the process of recruitment needs to be sped up and that training needs to be well-tailored to the particular role. Volunteer managers agreed that the risk of having a slow or unclear process of recruitment is that potential volunteers may become disinterested or leave with a poor experience. The risk of having a poorly tailored training process is that it ineffectually uses volunteer service time.

One of the barriers to a speedy recruitment is the reference process. For example it is typical for a DBS reference to take one month. A possible solution discussed with the volunteer managers is for low risk roles to use verbal rather than written references and for them to be structured in way which demonstrates the skills and behaviours that are actually needed for a particular role. This solution stemmed from acknowledgement that each different role requires certain skills and crucially these skills are not always best captured in the current reference process. For example, as the Age UK Team Manager for transport said “the skills of being empathic, patient, supportive and having the ability to converse about every day happenings are often more important than professional qualifications” (HN, 2016). This consideration was suggested by Age UK Care Coordinator that, for example, “the verbal references for the Living Well programme could be tailored around the Living Well principles” (JA, 2016). This suggestion would have two positive effects. Firstly the verbal reference system would speed up the administrative process of recruitment and secondly it would encourage the volunteer to consider how their role is contributing to a wider healthcare service need and philosophy of delivery.

However, there will always be some volunteering roles where speed of some recruitment processes, e.g. where a DBS is mandatory, will not be adaptable. One practical suggestion to improve the current process would be for a system to be developed where the volunteer could be regularly updated about their application process; perhaps similar to postal companies where the order/application can be tracked. The rationale being that a volunteer's interest would be sustained through

the time gap between applying and volunteering. Based on the findings from this research and subsequent conversations it is recommended that:

12. Volunteering roles in which risks are low – for example where there is no lone-working or where contact with a client is in a group or public setting – should have a different, and faster, signing up process. Using verbal references should be trialled.

13. Volunteers should be kept up to date as to how their application is progressing.

#### **4.5: Organisational Management of Volunteer Recruitment**

The issues which have arisen, and been discussed with Age UK Cornwall, as a result of this feedback report has instigated a larger and more strategic conversation about the organisational management of the volunteer recruitment. In particular, the desire from volunteers that the recruitment process should be sped up has encouraged volunteer managers to consider how the current process works and how it could be improved to be more expedient and consistent. The current process and responsibility of recruitment is shared across local teams, is geographically based and project specific; with no one person accountable for the effective recruitment of new volunteers. An alternative approach, discussed with the volunteer managers at Age UK Cornwall, is that of a central and designated volunteer recruitment officer in appointed. The rationale behind this is that it would improve the speed of recruitment, ensure consistency in process, and enable a more personable relationship with a prospective volunteer. The associated benefits might be that a designated recruitment officer is better positioned to coordinate sharing volunteers with partner charities and an on-hand person to meet and discuss roles with a keen volunteer.

14. Further research should be conducted to establish how the task of volunteer recruitment and training is best managed within Age UK and with local partners. The research needs to specifically examine the pros and cons of a geographically organised process compared to a centralised approach.

#### **Research Team Contact Details:**

Prof Catherine Leyshon [cbrace@exeter.ac.uk](mailto:cbrace@exeter.ac.uk)

Dr Michael Leyshon [mleyshon@exeter.ac.uk](mailto:mleyshon@exeter.ac.uk)

Timothy Walker [t.walker@exeter.ac.uk](mailto:t.walker@exeter.ac.uk)



#### **Acknowledgements:**

Volunteers in Communities would like to acknowledge the ESRC for funding this project through an Impact Acceleration Award. Thanks to: Ian Jones (CEO Volunteer Cornwall) and Nigel Clark (Director





Peter Lanyon Building  
University of Exeter  
Penryn Campus  
Treliever Road  
Penryn  
Cornwall  
TR10 9FE  
UK