

Trustee Report 2024-2025

OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES

Charitable Objectives

The objectives of Craigavon & Banbridge Volunteer Bureau as set out in our Articles are to advance community development by promoting and providing volunteering opportunities and activities for the benefit of individuals and communities throughout the Craigavon and Banbridge area and by supporting and developing the work of community and voluntary groups and organisations in charitable activities which seeks to improve the quality of life of the inhabitants of Craigavon and Banbridge.

Craigavon & Banbridge Volunteer Bureau aims to advance education and training for the public's benefit by delivering training and mentoring to volunteers, staff and directors/management and committee members of volunteering -involved organisations in the area of benefit.

Craigavon & Banbridge aims to promote personal development with a view to enabling the community to enhance their social and personal skills and participate in valued roles in the community.

Public Benefit Statement

In setting our objectives and planning our activities for the year, the trustees have given careful consideration to the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland's guidance on public benefit to ensure activities have helped to achieve the charity's purpose and provide a benefit to the beneficiaries.

Summary of Main Activities

The Volunteer Centre has developed and evolved over the years to make sure we provide the right service provision specific to the individual or the group. For those who wish to volunteer, we offer a one to one person centred approach which enable us to assess each individual's needs. We advise the individual in choosing the most suitable placement for both volunteer and organisation.

In closely liaising with placement organisations, volunteer roles are identified and developed in order to match suitable volunteers with suitable volunteer roles. In turn, any support needs are recognised and addressed. We are vigilant to all new services and initiatives, and when appropriate we inform them of who we are and how we can help.

Craigavon & Banbridge Volunteer Centre is a registered umbrella Body with Access NI, providing a discreet, professional vetting service for volunteers involving organisations within the Craigavon and Banbridge area. We have been providing this service since the inception of Access NI in April 2008. The centre has dedicated and knowledgeable staff who are on hand to provide organisations with the necessary guidance. We are committed to helping volunteers access opportunities, helping to reduce barriers to participation.

Overview of Activities 2024-2025

VISP Programme

This programme has continued to go from strength to strength and volunteers have continued to register on a regular basis. Our ever increasing building of partnerships and networks within the community has ensured ongoing available volunteer opportunities. There has been a marked increase in volunteers wishing to support those most vulnerable in the community by getting involved with volunteer opportunities such as supporting food banks and providing telephone support and befriending roles, animal rescue centre and child care organisations. The Bureau has worked hard to ensure we meet the needs of all the community. The success of this project is reflected in the increase of 330 new volunteers registering, 97 new volunteer opportunities created and the development of 17 new community placements over the past year.

The Bridge Project

This Project has continued to work with volunteers who have severe disabilities such as learning difficulties, poor mental health, sensory or visual difficulties and physical disabilities. The participants on this Project are usually very isolated and lonely and their volunteer role gives them a much needed structure to their day. Each new volunteer

is offered an identified training action plan, prior to taking up a therapeutic placement. This training is essential to their own development and helps them feel confident in their placement.

The Project is very successful and has around 198 volunteers registered. Several of the volunteers who are involved in this project have recently registered to become volunteer mentors on the Bridge Project as they wanted to support other people with a disability to ensure they had as positive an experience as they had.

Accessni

Over the past year the Bureau has continued to support over 102 groups by carrying out accessni checks for over 420 individuals throughout the Craigavon and Banbridge locality. An audit was carried out by the accessni justice department and we were delighted to receive our certificate of compliance in June 2023.

Social Interaction Volunteer Programme

CBVB has continued to operate a social media programme through facebook which reaches over 3,500 individuals and around 230 Community groups. This connects us from opportunity through to placement. This also allows us to reach a very diverse range of groups enabling us to place volunteers within the wider community. Whether it's sports, volunteering with the elderly/children, charity shop, youth work, we find the groups connecting with us are providing more and more opportunities given the success of our page to date. This invaluable service provides meaning and purpose to people's lives. In measuring the impact of creating more public awareness this has changed the lives of those people, who would otherwise not have known about the volunteer opportunities available had they not used this type of media. Social Media (facebook) has created a vehicle to increase the already existing partnership work with organisations across the Craigavon and Banbridge locality.

Partnership and Collaborative working

As Manager I have invested a lot of time on appropriate partnerships raising the profile of the Bureau and creating links with decision makers I sit on the Following partnerships.

- Vice Chair of Community Voluntary Sector Panel
- Vice Chair for the Leadership and Engagement theme on Strategic Partnership for Community planning.
- Loneliness Network
- Peaceplus partnership
- Age Friendly Alliance Group
- VCNI Network for Volunteer Centres.
- CTSC
- Regional group for Leadership Programme

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Management Committee, Staff and volunteers for all their support without which I could not do my job.

I would also like to thank our funders DFC, SHSCT, ABC Council, and the National Lottery Community Fund.

Donna Stewart

Manager