

Involving Young Trustees Toolkit for Organisations



This toolkit is aimed at organisations who want to recruit young people as trustees. Research has shown that the average age of a trustee in the UK is 57.

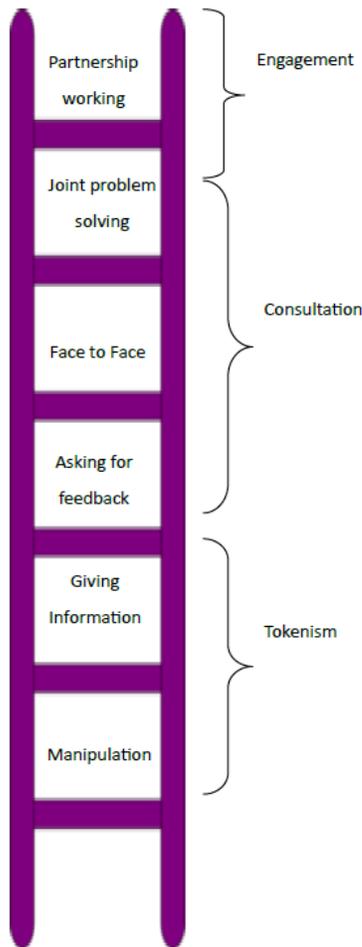
Youth Volunteer Advisors from North Wales have created this toolkit to help you have more involvement from young people.

Ladder of engagement

Where are you at the moment?

Citizen Engagement Matrix

For typical engagement activities



Type of activity	Hall marks	Power of public service/ decision maker	Citizen power
Co-production projects, agreed partnerships between people in authority and citizens, Citizen panel on public sector partnership boards, jointly written documents	Long term relationships between services and citizen, numerous points of contact, partnership leads to further engagement on wider range of issues, citizens are seen as assets	Power to provide resources, decisions are made together, responsibility is shared, service allow citizen to set agenda Services have deeper understanding of citizens	Power to provide resources, decisions are made together, responsibility is shared, citizen can set agenda and priorities, community act as hosts Citizens have knowledge of services enabling informed engagement
Task and finish groups, planning committees, working groups One off workshop event	The terms of engagement are set around a specific issue. Time is spent developing ideas together. Services do not 'protect' citizen from difficult issues. Takes place in mutually accessible space	Services allow citizens to influence the process as well as the decision, services know that involving citizens will improve outcomes	Citizen and service have equal power around issue in hand, a deeper understanding of the issue citizen contribution is valued and can be tracked through process and in the outcomes. Citizens can review outcomes and revisit developments
Service provider attendance at community event Consultation event hosted by services,	Conversation between service and citizen, services are prepared to answer questions honestly and record the views expressed. Good consultation should offer creative ways of gaining citizen view	Service can choose whether or not to respond to new issues raised , following the event services have complete control over what happens next and what is done with the citizen views	Citizen can raise issues not asked for, Citizen can ask questions, citizens can have two way conversations with services but can't ensure their view has influence
Surveys, feedback forms, comments box, Service provider requests issue is discussed in formal community meeting, service uses third party to conduct consultation	Issues and topics are set by services at a time convenient for the service. No wider context is provided, often no explanation as to what might happen next. Citizen can't influence how accessible the activity is	Service gets a citizen perspective on a chosen issue, service can use this to improve / change service, but can also 'park it' . It's within the power of the service to keep citizens informed	Citizen can offer their view on specific issue, difficult to follow process beyond feedback stage, citizen has less to gain than service.
Newsletter, announcements, campaigns, information packs about changes or options with survey	One way conversation controlled by service. Often not very accessible. Can include survey, but because all aspects of information are controlled by service, the survey's ability to have impact can be very limited	Information is what the service wants the citizen to know, not what the citizen wants to know. Information can be presented in a bias way, or can be honest	Power to receive information
Citizens are hand-picked, information on issue is limited and prescribed by service. 'Rubber stamp' type activity.	Short time frames, inaccessible information, lack of openness or transparency, citizen has no say in how they engage. Decision has already been made, citizen has prescribed contact with service	Power to 'lead' citizen in a certain direction. Power to dictate type of involvement. Power to dictate who is involved.	Power to respond or decline. Citizen is not aware of decision making process, has no way of getting back in touch or following up, is dependent on service goodwill

Benefits of involving young people

Young people represent a significant proportion of the population , and a diverse board will have the best range of talents to work effectively.

Charities can benefit from the expertise and guidance of young trustees in ways that they otherwise would have to pay for.

Having a more diverse board that includes young trustees helps with succession planning.

A chance to be equitable and support a selection of society.

Young trustees are often hungry to learn and make a difference - when given confidence they may ask questions others won't



Benefits of involving young people

Diverse boards benefit from a greater range of skills, which can result in greater scrutiny and better informed decision making.

Increases public confidence in an organisation by having a range of people represented and can encourage greater support from the public.

Engaging young trustees means charities are making friends for life and could build consistency for the future.

Charities can demonstrate that they recognise the contribution at higher level decisions and so demonstrate a more inclusive society



How to Recruit Trustees

- Volunteering Wales website
- County Voluntary Council website.
- Recruitment sessions.
- Stalls at community days/events.
- Volunteer Taster sessions.
- School/college/university visits and presentations.
- Social media.
- Word of mouth.

All of the above are methods which have proven to be successful in recruiting trustees. Some volunteer advisors have recently started to use social media as a platform to advertise volunteering opportunities.

Instagram, facebook and twitter are all useful.



Recognising young Trustees

- Millennium Volunteer's Scheme.

- Star Awards Scheme (Wrexham).

-Gwynedd Volunteers Scheme (Gwynedd).

-Volunteers' Week

-Special Events

GWIRFODDOLWYR Y MILENIWM



MILLENNIUM VOLUNTEERS



Overcoming the barriers

Meeting location

Young people can find it a barrier to be able to get to meetings, so, some organisations have Skyped young trustees in or have consulted with other board members to see if they could car share. Other options of support would be to look at a venue close to the young trustee or provide the young trustee with local timetables and then pay their expenses to attend the meetings.

Active Listening and Involvement

If organisations are looking for young trustees to join the board, jargon and their level of involvement can be a barrier for both young people engaging and getting involved in the first instance. An organisation in North Wales has made agendas and topics for board meetings accessible for young trustees and young people to get involved as they explained that without their input, projects would not be the same and youth led. They have done this by asking the young trustee what they would like to discuss and discussing points of the meeting prior, "it's all in the preparation".



Overcoming the barriers

Experience

Young people have experiences that they could and would like to share with other members. Speaking to a young person about being a trustee can give them the confidence to know that you are committed to them and their development.

Some young people may not have the experience of being in large meetings or projecting their voices to crowds, however, their knowledge can be very useful to organisations, especially if the work they do is youth led.

Meeting time

Time can be a major barrier for organisations to take on young trustees. However, organisations that have young trustees have found that resources such as Skype can be useful to bring a young trustee into the meeting or have discussions with them prior to the meeting on the agenda topics. If the young trustee is a major part of the board then organisations have also changed times to later evening meetings or weekends to suit the needs of young people.



Methods of involving young people

Our research shows that young people are unable to become full trustees for many reasons. Here are some other ways to involve young people in your decision making process.

1. Board member mentor

Ask a more experienced board member to be a mentor for a new young board member. Give general advice and ensure the young person has an opportunity to speak in the meetings.

2. Co-opted board member

Sometimes it is easier to involve young people on the management board by having them as co-opted board members. This means they could become involved before the age of 18, and they could commit for a shorter period of time. A young person is more likely to become involved with a shorter commitment period. Co-opted board members are able to contribute to discussions but are unable to vote.

3. Sub-group

Young people who do volunteer on panels, committees and management boards tend to volunteer where there are other young people, therefore it could be better for your organisation to set up a sub group for young people to discuss issues.

They could send a representative to the board meeting, who could feed back at the beginning, or have a member of staff to feed back on their behalf.

4. Informal

Ask project workers / senior volunteers to collect information and opinions from young people and feed this back to the management board.

Policies and Young People

Looking at policies isn't for everyone. This is true for any age group and not just under 25 year olds! Policies are often lots of words on a page and can sometimes be very lengthy. Where this will suit some people (depending on the way you learn), it will be a nightmare for others! The title of this section 'Policies and Young people' is misleading because these suggestions may be useful to spice up any Trustee board meeting:

Break down a policy into paragraphs. In twos or threes discuss the paragraph (make notes on it) and then rotate it to the next group. At the end piece the policy back together.

Get trustees on board with policies that interest them eg somebody might have a specific interest in social media

Play games with the policies to get to know them! eg split into two groups, one group has to make up 3 questions (easy, medium and hard) for the other group to answer. Have a scoreboard at the end to see which group wins.

Make bitesize policy summaries for new trustees. You don't want to overload people with information at their first meeting.

If you want general information about volunteering policies, go here: <http://www.wcva.org.uk/volunteering/working-with-volunteers/model-policies>

What young people say

I wasn't aware that it was an option, I was never asked.

I was in charge of social media as a trustee. I feel the organisation benefited a lot from having me on board.

I feel that I'm not being listened to or taken seriously.

Its difficult to get the time but meetings in the evening are easier to attend

Case study

Elain (21)

Elain volunteers on numerous boards within a youth organisation in Denbigh. She feels it is important for her to volunteer on committees to ensure that the youths' voice is heard. She feels that sometimes the voice of young people can be lost, even within youth led organisations.

Volunteering on committees has massively improved her confidence, and has given her skills which have helped in her professional life.

She said that sometimes she is the only young person in meetings, and these ones can be a bit boring. She also says that travelling long distances and attending meetings after a day's work can be difficult.

She carries on because she is passionate about the organisation.

Case study

CellB

Cellb is a multi-functional creative arts venue. They have a cafe, hostel and cinema and run various youth activities in Blaenau Ffestiniog (gwallgofiaid).

The board of directors have a subcommittee of young people who help with running the organisation.

Rhys tells me the sub group of young people really have 'teeth', as their opinion is taken very seriously by the board of directors. The young people feel that board meetings can be boring but by having a subgroup the meetings are more interesting and accessible for young people.

The sub group helps young people gain confidence with communicating on this level. All of the ideas in cellB come from the young people, without them it would not exist. They feel a sense of ownership, which keeps them involved.

Case study

TAPE

TAPE is a community arts charity which offers creative opportunities for everyone.

They have an 18 year old who is a co-opted board member.

He will become a full board member after finishing his university studies.

He attends board meetings and represents the interests of young people. They recruited him because he had been going to the youth club in TAPE for 5 years, and had then started volunteering weekly. The board saw him as such an asset to the organisation that they asked him to become a board member. TAPE try to be as inclusive as possible and their board meetings are available as audio minutes. Youth involvement is ingrained in the way they work, and there is always an open discussion and understanding that there is a place for young people to be trustees. Often organisations don't think that young people have enough expertise to be a board member, but their expertise can be as a representative for young people. They feel that having a young trustee means that they have a good advocate for other young people, helping the organisation grow.

Case study

Snowdonia Donkeys

Snowdonia Donkeys promote health and well-being through working and walking with donkeys in the local environment of North Wales. They have three board members who are under the age of 25. They tend to recruit board members from their volunteer group, by asking them if they want to be involved. Having young trustees is invaluable to them, and has helped them with their social media as well as training the other trustees on using dropbox etc. They say that being able to differentiate between trustee roles helped them recruit, as well as offering a shorter time scale to be a trustee (3 months). They tend to hold meetings in informal settings so that young people feel more comfortable, and try to be flexible around the needs of the young trustees. They feel it is important for volunteers to have ownership over the organisation, and it's vital their voices are heard.

Useful Links



Anglesey:
www.medrwnmon.org
01248 724944



Gwynedd:
www.mantellgwynedd.com
01286 672626



Conwy:
www.cvsc.org.uk
01492 534091



Denbighshire:
www.dvsc.co.uk
01824 702441



Flintshire:
www.flvc.org.uk
01352 744000



Wrexham:
www.avow.org
01978 312556

Useful links

Young Trustees Guide

https://www.cafonline.org/docs/default-source/about-us-publications/youngtrusteesreport_1682a_web_080915.pdf?sfvrsn=8



Young Trustees Cymru
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This toolkit was created by North Wales
Volunteer Centres

