

Unit: Supervise and Support Volunteers

Top Tips for Volunteer Supervision and Development

Good Practice in volunteer involvement recommends that you spend time with your volunteers to carry out a form of review or supervision session. How often you do this or the format that you decide to take really should depend on the following:

- The needs of your project
- Your individual management style
- The roles being carried out by volunteers

A simple Google search will bring up a variety of volunteer supervision forms for you to gain ideas from; but it is important to be discerning and to create a structure that will support the individual volunteer, as well as meeting the requirements of your project.

Here are some ‘Top Tips’ to get you started – make sure you capture your own thoughts and suggestions by adding to the list here or by using your reflective journal:

- One approach is to think about it in terms of the questions you want to ask. Consider – what do you want and need to find out about?
- Make sure the format is relevant and consistent to the type of role – some will need more time and frequency than others.
- Don’t simply use what you already have in place for paid staff. Make sure your format is reflective of volunteering and is more tailored to the role and individual volunteer.
- Think about how you want and need to capture the discussion and feedback and make sure the volunteer has access to a copy.
- Enable volunteers to create their own development path. Make sure the format remains consistent, yet flexible, reflecting any changes and developments for the volunteer and for the organisation.
- Provide an opportunity for the volunteer to discuss their achievements, how they feel about their volunteering, where they see they fit into the organisation, what they want to change or develop about their role and any feedback they have for you as a manager.
- Manage expectations as well as providing encouragement and be clear with feedback for individual volunteers and about what’s possible.