

WEST COAST

COMMUNITY

VOLUNTEERING

STRATEGY



SUPPORTED BY



volunteering
TASMANIA



West Coast Council recognises the ancient and ongoing histories of the Mimegin, Palawa and Pakana Tasmanian Aboriginal People and we recognise their Traditional Ownership and Custodianship of lutruwita/Tasmania.

We recognise their traditional ownership and custodianship of these lands. We recognise and respect the enduring histories and stories of this Country's First People.

We recognise that Palawa and Pakana life, culture and language, was, and always will be, based on a deep and continuous connection to family, community, land, sea and waterways. We recognize these deep spiritual connections, and we value the Palawa and Pakana's unique ability to care for Country.

We pay our respects to the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elders, past, present and future, who hold the memories, traditions, culture and knowledge of Country.

MAYOR'S WELCOME

People think they know Tasmania, but they don't know us. The West Coast is a unique, rugged, untamed land where paths are made, not followed.

The same could be said of our volunteers, forging a path together. I'm a volunteer of 48 years for Queenstown Scouts including years as a youth member, 19 years for the Queenstown Lion's Club, 13 years for The Unconformity Board, as well as many educational boards, I see the intrinsic value of our West Coast volunteering community every day.

However, with the changing nature of communities, especially small and rural communities how we connect, support and volunteer is changing. Many of our community events are dependent on volunteers and the vital contribution they make, and as such it is crucial that steps are taken to ensure that an adaptable and also robust volunteering workforce not only remains but flourishes on the West Coast.

This co-designed Community Volunteering Strategy aims to support our West Coast volunteering community in a place-based manner, that is relevant to who we are and where we live.

Shane Pitt, proud West Coast Volunteer



Queenstown Scouts

VISION

West Coast volunteers make our community better by helping out and making positive changes. Everyone here can join in, do their part, and reach their goals. Our volunteers are appreciated and supported, making our community stronger. By working together, we grow and transform, creating a place where everyone belongs and can succeed.



Queenstown Lions Club volunteers

The development of a community volunteering strategy is a vital part of empowering (remote) communities such as the West Coast.

PROCESS

Why a volunteer strategy?

A volunteer strategy for the West Coast aims to:

- Bring together all members of our community who volunteer, would like to volunteer or would like to be more involved or connected with their community.
- Identify and address challenges to improve the capacity of volunteering organisations and groups to recruit, retain and recognise volunteer work and commitment.
- Help community members feel more connected and supported, especially when they need assistance.

This strategy is an opportunity to change the perception that people (especially young people) don't see themselves in volunteer roles.

How was the strategy designed?

The volunteer strategy was designed over a six-month period through four workshops across Queenstown, Rosebery and Zeehan. Over 25 Community members attended to discuss, share and work together to identify challenges and ideas to support and promote volunteering across the West Coast. Four themes or areas outlining challenges, actions and processes were identified and are included in the strategy:

- Capability, Support and Coordination
- Connection and Communication
- Community volunteer support
- Environment



Strahan Picnic Volunteers

We're getting awesome results and ideas. Great team creation and community building.

It was an excellent collaborative (process), incorporating everyone's thoughts and ideas and plenty of opportunity to discuss.



MTB Volunteers

How will this strategy be implemented?

The strategy will be used by a working group(s) who are committed to supporting and improving volunteering in their community(ies). The strategy will be used to develop an action plan of practical steps and involve the engagement of as many stakeholders as possible. The strategy can also be used by volunteer organisations and groups wishing to work together to support volunteer recruitment, retainment and recognition.

CAPABILITY, SUPPORT AND COORDINATION

What the community said:

There is a need for coordinated training and skill development within volunteering organisations and greater sharing of resources to support volunteer management. Volunteer requirements, including the costs involved, can be a barrier for organisations and individuals.

Key challenges:

- Limited or lack of opportunities to share resources and training opportunities across organisations, groups and townships.
- Exclusion, sharing and volunteer management skills.
- Red tape and the legalities to volunteer are too hard to deal with for both organisations and individuals.
- Individual costs to volunteer can stop some people volunteering.
- Organisations lack funding to support administration and volunteer costs.

Actions	Process
Invitation to key stakeholders to partner on a united approach to support volunteering	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organisations and service providers work together to agree on focus areas. • Consider MOUs between organisations/groups to support volunteering. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Stakeholders include industry (e.g. mining, aquaculture, energy, tourism etc.) community sector, government, other organisations and NGOs.
Explore support from company or industry stakeholders, e.g. workforce volunteers, financial support to volunteer organisations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outline benefits to all stakeholders and an agreed process to act. • Look for opportunities to coordinate, share training and capacity building opportunities (e.g. partner with MMG, industry.) This could be training facilities, training registrations, etc.
Develop and provide a volunteering toolkit to volunteering organisations, industry, etc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with key stakeholders to develop a user-friendly plain English toolkit. For example, to include templates, policy examples, induction checklists, volunteer management tips, etc.
Reimbursement of volunteer costs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seek industry, government or grant support to cover volunteer costs and administration, e.g. WWVP cards, petrol vouchers, etc.
Shared volunteer support approaches	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish a Hot Line for volunteering support (Council or 'link' worker). See also 'Environment' section.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bring volunteer managers together for short training/sharing sessions. • Use individual strengths in the community and ask them to share skills with others, e.g. grant writing.
<p>Undertake Volunteer Organisation mapping (by the Volunteer working group, with council assistance)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organise template/set up for volunteer organisations and groups to explain what they do, volunteer numbers they have and/or need, volunteer roles available, key contact numbers, etc. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ This can enable the delivery of maximum targeted support to organisations and individuals; ○ Mapping needs to be done by meeting volunteers/ organisations in the places where they work. • Community noticeboards, new resident welcome packs, etc. can use the information gathered from organisations using the template.



Ralph Burns, Volunteer, Galley Museum

(The strategy) is contemporary in approach and open for individuals to contribute when and where and how they can...and to be valued.

CONNECTION AND COMMUNICATION

What the community said:

There is a need for greater connection within and between communities and to be inclusive of everyone. There is a lack of communication about what volunteering is and local opportunities to volunteer.

Key challenges:

- Lack of awareness and promotion of what volunteering opportunities exist.
- People find it hard to change old ways and to try things differently.
- A fear of not having the right skills or experience to volunteer.

Actions	Process
Education and raising awareness of community and volunteering to existing and new residents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Key Stakeholders to develop 'Volunteering Pack' <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Can be included in existing welcome packs given to new residents/renters. ○ Can be distributed to new workers in mines/industry to encourage community participation/reduce isolation.
Advertise and promote volunteer opportunities that are inclusive for everyone, e.g. families, senior citizens, young people.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community noticeboards/kiosks, pop-up shops, local media and social media/Facebook page opportunities (and keep these updated) • Develop and update an events calendar/community directory which lists local volunteering opportunities • Community group 'champions' or 'link' person in each township to promote volunteering, spread the word, have conversations, etc.
Work with existing groups/organisations or spaces to promote volunteering and connection, e.g. Neighbourhood House, Men's Sheds, RSLs, sporting groups, churches, etc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaborate together for events or share organisation events widely to all communities. • Use organisation noticeboards or media platforms to share volunteering opportunities and benefits of volunteering.

This strategy is really inspiring and believing in the ways that volunteers can address the social problems. It's so important to have volunteers onboard, (it builds) a real sense of community.

Raymond Arnold, Volunteer,
Galley Museum



COMMUNITY VOLUNTEER SUPPORT

What the community said:

There is a lack of flexibility, knowledge and understanding in the types of volunteer work available and roles that encourage people to volunteer. People don't feel valued or recognised for the volunteer work they do.

Key challenges:

- The benefits of volunteering, the training offered or incentives to volunteer are not known.
- People are busy with family, school or other interests and don't think they have time to volunteer.
- Young people don't see themselves in volunteer roles.

Actions	Process
Outline the clear benefits of volunteering and the role	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Volunteer organisations provide an information pack. For example, include position description, list of resources, incentives, etc. • Offer flexible options (regular volunteer or one-off volunteer opportunities, family opportunities, outside 9am – 5pm options, etc.)
Make volunteering meaningful	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognise volunteer contributions (e.g. Spirit Awards) • Promote learning new skills, social connections, new friendships, etc. • Recognise experience, prior learning and interests and match or tailor volunteer roles to suit individuals. • Provide a mentor or buddy system. • Provide flexible roles, make it fun and encourage the community to connect (e.g. Strahan Picnic). • Welcome feedback and provide opportunities for feedback.
Grow youth participation	<p>Show the benefits of learning skills for career pathways etc.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with young people and understand their interests in order to identify volunteer opportunities. • Volunteer expo or school program. • Link to the Youth Volunteer Army (Volunteering Tasmania program).

ENVIRONMENT

What the community said:

There is a sense that townships are not visually inviting, with a lack of vibrancy, pride and care in the communities. For some, there is a sense of not being welcome or being seen as an outsider. Not all townships have a central space to meet people, volunteer or share resources.

Key challenges:

- Lack of central places that people can access and share resources such as internet, computers, printers, etc.
- Lack of building or spaces to find out about volunteer opportunities.
- Limited events or social opportunities for adults, families and young people.

Actions	Process
Make better use of existing centres or available spaces	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaborate on access to shared spaces. For example, explore and set up a dedicated space in each township for volunteer resources and opportunities, access to computers, internet, printing, etc. (e.g. Neighbourhood centres, libraries, local and relevant businesses, etc.). • Consider the “The Right Place” initiative and how this could be used:The Right Place - Connecting People with Health and Community Services. • Use centres to collect volunteer applications. • Improve the look and vibrancy of our towns
Make the most of social events, show a welcoming community and promote volunteering	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welcome BBQs for new workers/residents to develop personal networks. • General community lunches, family days, BBQs to promote and/or recognise volunteering or volunteering opportunities. • Annual gathering/special days (e.g. Gem Show, Volunteering Expo in National Volunteer Week).
Childcare centres in townships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore what is available, what can be used to promote volunteer opportunities



**Jenny Bowie, Volunteer,
Tullah Progress Association**



**Mark McDermott, Volunteer,
Strahan Fire Brigade**



Youth MTB Coaching

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT AND THANKS

A special thank you to the community members who gave up their time to participate in workshops and working groups, to have community conversations and listen to community voices. This included individual community members and members representing: Mt Black Men's Shed, Rosebery Community Consultative Committee (RCCC), Health West, SES Tasmania, SES Northwest, Hydro Tasmania, Ambulance Tasmania, MMG, Avebury Mine and Council.

RESOURCES

VT website | [Home - Volunteering Tasmania](#)

VA website | [Home - Volunteering Australia](#)

[Rosebery Neighbourhood House](#) | [Neighbourhood Houses Tasmania \(nht.org.au\)](#)

[Zeehan Neighbourhood Centre](#) | [Neighbourhood Houses Tasmania \(nht.org.au\)](#)

[Queenstown Library - Libraries Tasmania](#)

[West Coast Council](#) | [West Coast Council](#)

<https://volunteeringtas.org.au/future-of-volunteering/youth-volunteer-army/>

