

Dear Colleague

Campaign for National Volunteers Month - June 2014

I am writing to ask for your support for an idea that we have had in Gateshead, based on a very successful year of volunteering activity in 2013 and, in particular, Gateshead Volunteers Month held in June. Led by the Council and GVOC (Gateshead Voluntary Organisations Council), we developed and supported a very intensive programme of volunteering activity ranging from very local, neighbourhood based events in our community centres and libraries to large international sports events such as the European Team Athletics Championships. We developed a volunteering "totaliser" where we captured the number of hours of volunteering during the month. Nearly 35,000 hours of volunteering took place by 4,242 volunteers. As a result of the month of activity 387 new volunteers were recruited from the community.

In November, Gateshead Council unanimously agreed a notice of motion to lead a national campaign to extend National Volunteers Week to a National Volunteers Month in England as part of the 30th Anniversary of Volunteers Week in 2014. We believe that, by joining the campaign and extending volunteers week to a full month, Local Authorities could positively promote volunteering in their areas. We believe this will help build strong, resilient communities where everyone can make a recognised contribution and help deliver economic growth and wellbeing. For Local Authorities volunteering can help increase capacity, add value to services and provide different approaches and creative solutions. If you decide to join the campaign we can offer advice about how to plan for and organise a programme of events for a month.

We have written to the Chief Executive and President of National Council for Voluntary Organisations (NCVO) and all our local MPs promoting the Council's campaign. Nick Hurd, the Minister for Civil Society, has given full support to the campaign.

We would welcome your support for this national campaign by letting us know if you would like to take part. I would be grateful if you could respond by 7th March 2014, to michaelbrown@gateshead.gov.uk or by telephone on (0191) 433 2499. We look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely



Jane Robinson, Chief Executive
Gateshead Council



Gev Pringle, Chief Executive,
Gateshead Voluntary Organisations Council

Gateshead Council Civic Centre Regent Street Gateshead NE8 1HH
Tel 0191 433 3000

Chief Executive • Jane Robinson