

SUCCESS STORY

Featured Organisation: Chiltern Open Air Museum

The volunteers of Chiltern Open Air Museum past and present have worked tirelessly to achieve the practical implementation of the charity's mission statement: "To tell the story of the unique heritage of the Chilterns through buildings, landscapes and culture for the enjoyment, inspiration and learning of present and future communities." Since the idea of an open air museum was suggested by volunteers from the Chiltern Society in 1973, volunteers have remained central to what we do; in 2015 volunteers collectively contributed over 27,600 hours to the Museum.



CHILTERN
OPEN AIR
MUSEUM

What was the challenge?

I attended a Community Impact Bucks *Inspiring Your Volunteers – Creating Strong Teams* training day for two key reasons. Firstly, to gain a better understanding of various aspects of volunteer management, so that I could better critically assess the different processes that our volunteers go through. Secondly, to look at what other organisations are doing, with a view to potentially incorporating some of their ideas into what we do.



Support from Community Impact Bucks

Community Impact Bucks' training day helped me concentrate on the details of our volunteer programme. I have looked at our recruitment process following the suggestion that it could be seen as too formal, and the 'interview' as potentially intimidating to our volunteers. We have also made efforts to involve our volunteers in decision-making, improve the communication between our volunteer teams, and make our volunteers more aware of the different opportunities available to them.

What difference did this make?

We have had over 15 applications since January 2016, and I believe this may be in part due to the restructuring of our application process. The other changes affect how we manage our volunteers once recruited, so this will not have impacted on our level of applications as such.

Summary from charity:

Chiltern Open Air Museum has benefitted from this training course, by allowing a staff member to gain a better understanding of, and gain confidence in, key areas of working with volunteers. We hope that this will increase volunteer recruitment, and produce a better volunteering experience at Chiltern Open Air Museum. - **George Hunt, Visitor Services & Events Team Leader**

Quote from Community Impact Bucks:

"We're so pleased that George and Chiltern Open Air Museum have reaped such positive rewards from the training. This interactive course is recommended for all those who co-ordinate or manage volunteers – whether they are completely new to the role, or require a refresher." - Hazel Finney, Volunteering Adviser

Need support? Speak to our team

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