

# GOODFORM

RESEARCHING MAJOR EVENT  
VOLUNTEERING

Executive Summary

October 2019





GOODFORM

Always collaborating...

## Project Aims

*To explore the appetite and feasibility for major sport event volunteers (and unsuccessful event applicants) to successfully transition from the event to community-level opportunities*

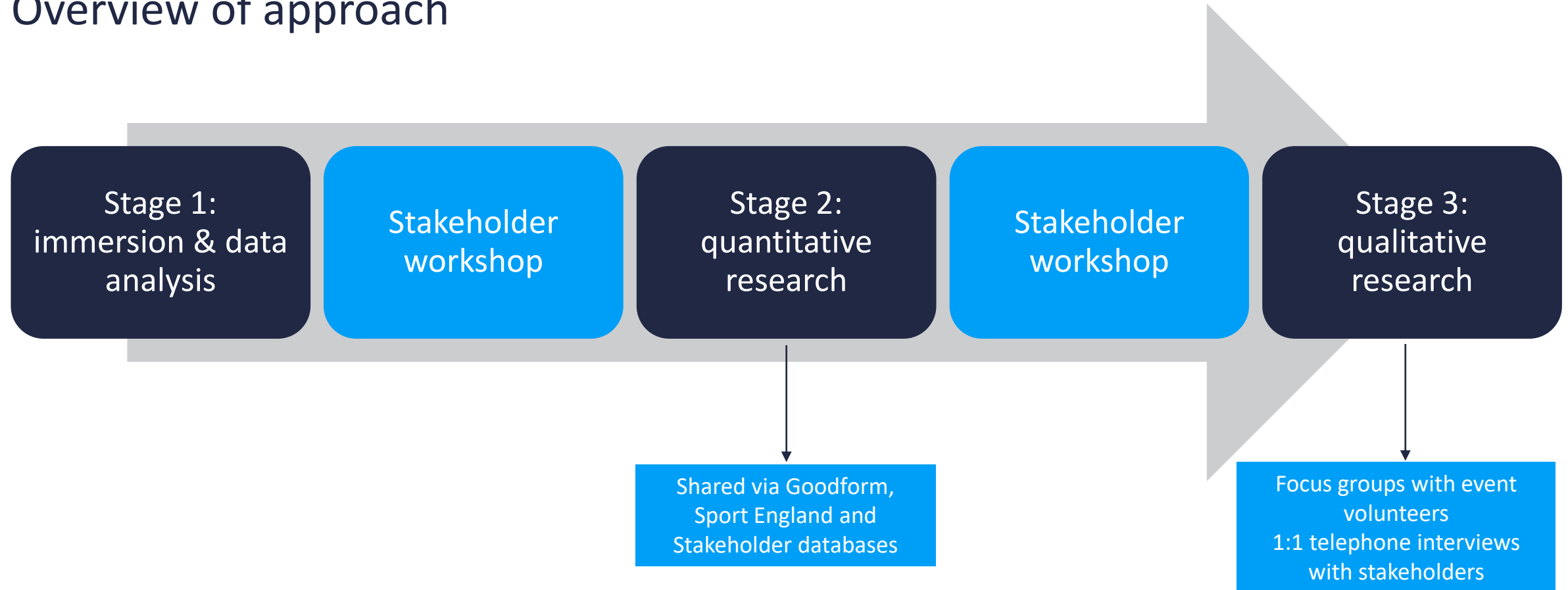
*Culminating in a report & best practice recommendations on how to maximise volunteer retention / pathways into community sport*

We know that:

- There is a strong appetite to volunteer at major sports events, which are often heavily oversubscribed.
- Major events offer a fantastic opportunity to showcase sports volunteering & have the potential to engage new audiences
- Insight from major event hosts indicate that the quality of experience for volunteers is generally good, with high satisfaction with the experience
- Enthusiasm to do more volunteering after an event is often high

But there have been few studies to understand whether initial enthusiasm translates into action, and if not, why not

## Overview of approach



Major event volunteers are fairly balanced in gender. They tend to be older with 65% being 55 years old and over. 89% are white.

Lower socio-economic groups are under-represented based on the Index of Multiple Deprivation\*

Gender:



53%



47%

Deprivation level by postcode (England):

22% are in deciles 1 to 4

Index of Multiple Deprivation

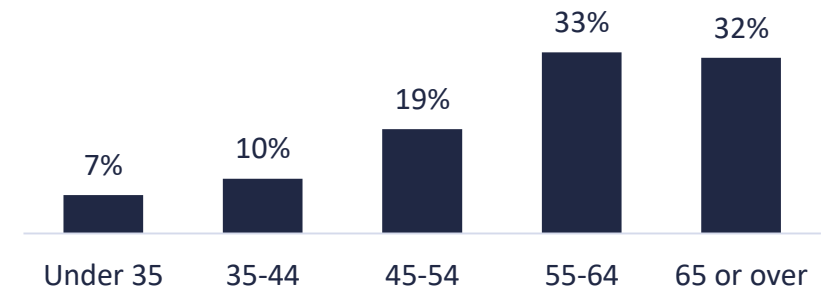
Decile 1: most deprived

Decile 10: least deprived

89% are White or White British

91% do not consider themselves to have a disability

Age:



Please select your gender / Please select your age range / Please indicate your ethnic group? n=1757 previous major events volunteers  
 \*\*Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) – 7 metrics (income, employment, education, health, crime, barriers to housing & services; living environment) Please enter your postcode. n=1501 previous major event volunteers living in England with a valid postcode

Although not directly comparable, there are some similarities in demographics between major event volunteers and volunteers in community setting in Active Lives report (Nov 17/18)

In both, people from lower socio-economic backgrounds are under-represented

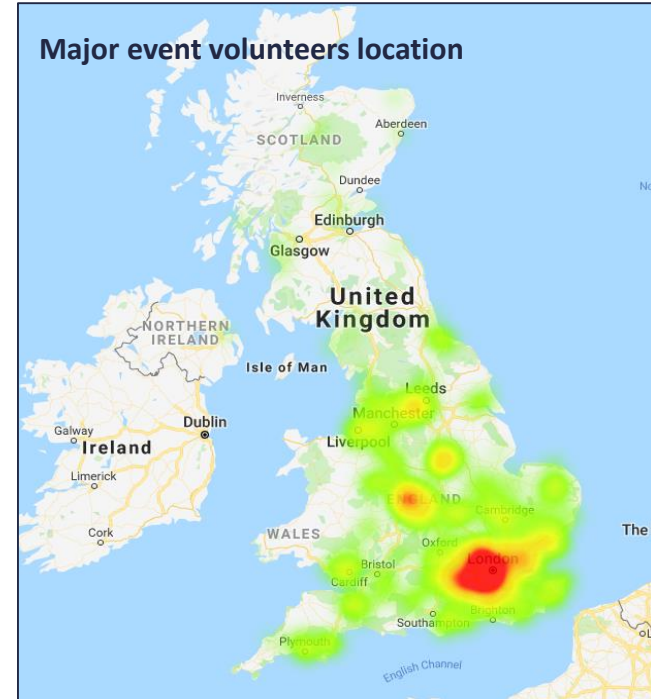


Community setting volunteer defined as:

- Taken part in a volunteering role to support sport/physical activity
  - A person volunteered at least twice in the last 12 months
- Gender: 59% Men, 41% Women
  - Age: 33% Under 35, 36% 35-54, 32% Over 55
  - Disabled or those with long term health condition account for 12%
    - 85% are White British
    - 11% are in lower seg (NS-SEC 6-8)

However, the areas where major event volunteers are predominantly located (London, Birmingham, Manchester) are areas which are more diverse in terms of SEG and BAME audiences...

...suggesting more could be done to ensure volunteers at major events more representative of the local community



A high proportion of major event volunteers have volunteered at more than one event...

Average number of events volunteered at:

2.03

51%

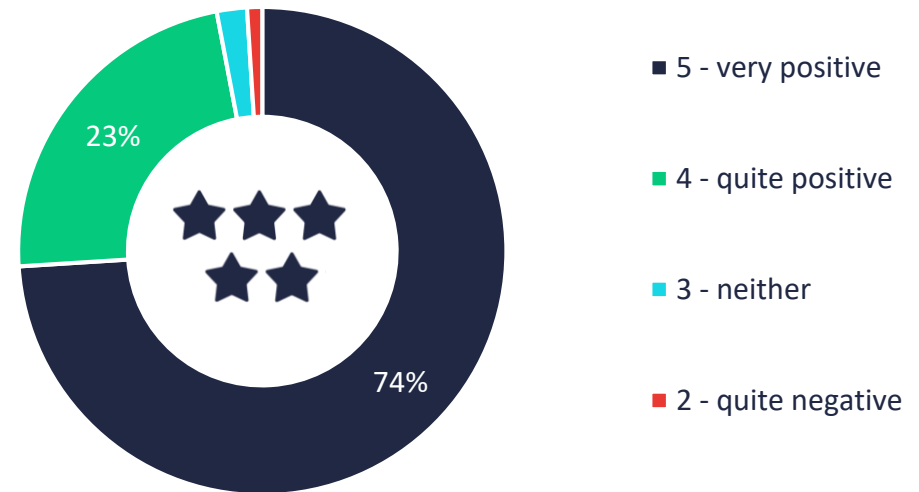
volunteered at more than 1 major event (including London 2012)

10% have volunteered at more than 1 major event EXCLUDING London 2012



...and overall, major event volunteers rate their experience very positively

Rating of the major event(s) volunteering experience:





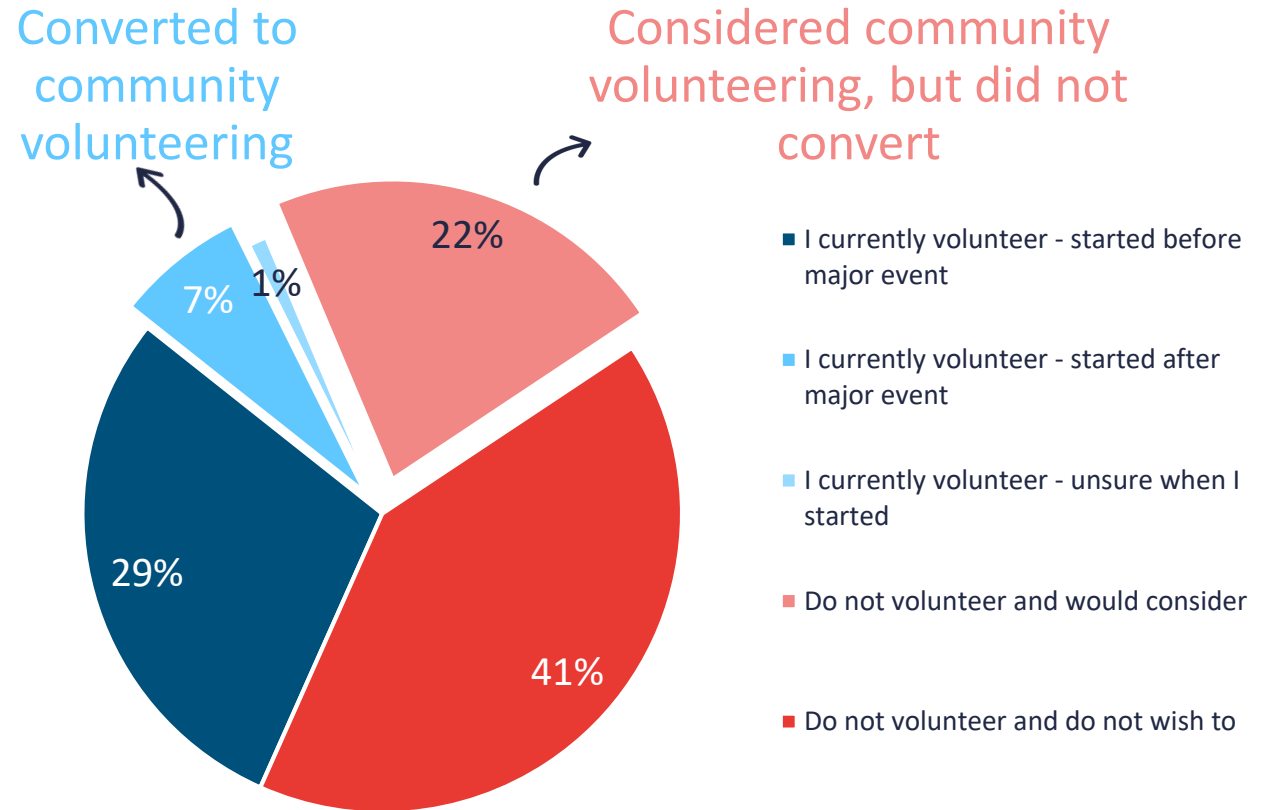
Major events deliver both good volunteer experiences and improve perceptions, and, as shown by the following information, can also act as a pathway into grassroots...



At present, approx. **7%** of people who volunteer at major events will go on to volunteer within community settings.

This highlights that major events are already playing a role in attracting volunteers to grassroots sport – but they could contribute more

Grassroots sport volunteering amongst major events volunteers:



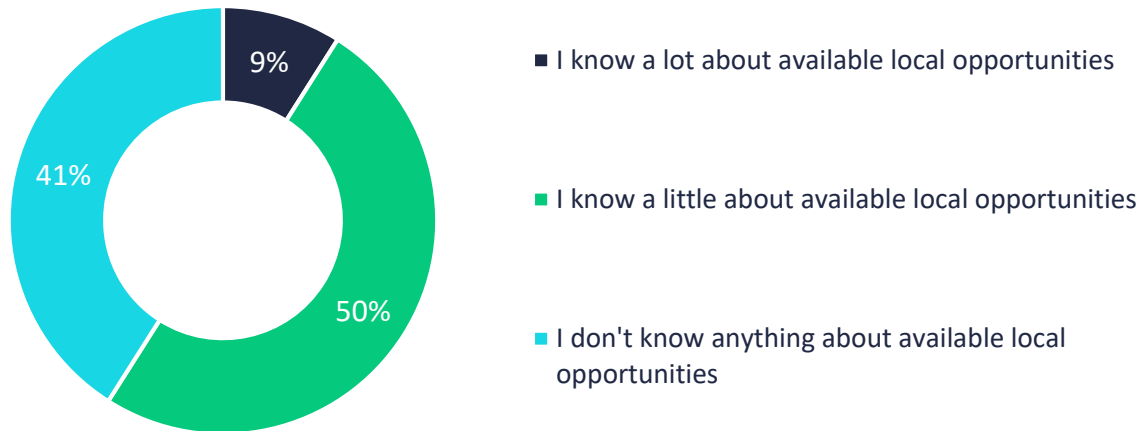
The insight generated from this report identifies a number of barriers that currently prevent a higher level of conversion than the 7% we see currently...



...but also suggests ways in which these barriers can be overcome to drive increased transition to community-level opportunities.

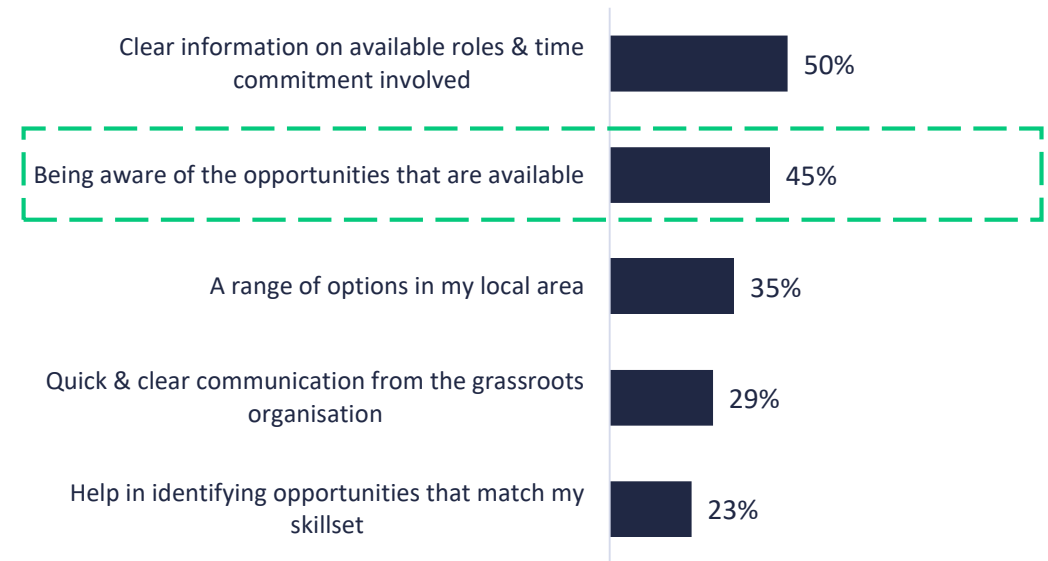
There is a general lack of awareness from major event volunteers about local volunteering opportunities...

Knowledge of the opportunities available within grassroots sport locally:



...so plugging this gap is likely to drive higher levels of consideration

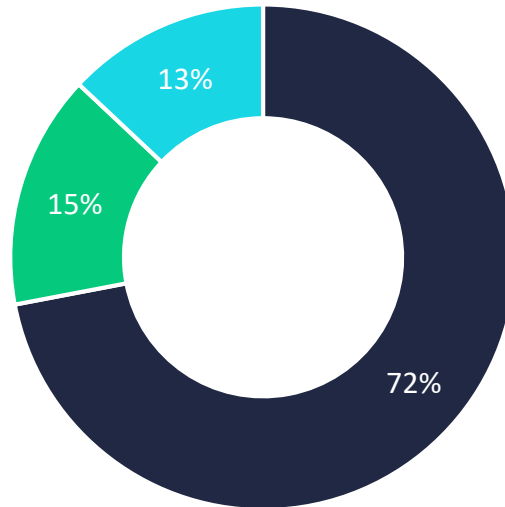
Ways to encourage considering volunteering in grassroots sport:



How would you describe your level of knowledge of the opportunities available within grassroots sport locally? n=1113 major events volunteers not currently volunteering in grassroots sport  
 Which of the following, if any, would encourage you to consider volunteering in grassroots sport? n=1113 major events volunteers not currently volunteering in grassroots sport

At present, some information is being shared to encourage major event volunteers to become involved in other volunteering opportunities...

Receipt of information about ongoing volunteering opportunities:



- Yes
- No
- Unsure





**70% by email**  
 3% in person  
 2% via post  
 1% by phone

...but it's unclear how much of this relates to community-level opportunities as opposed to other major events

*"Be inspired tends to be volunteering at national level."*  
 Focus group participant; Leamington

*"I was never once asked in that process, did I want to volunteer at any local clubs?"*  
 Focus group participant; Leamington

A range of barriers are cited as preventing major event volunteers from making the transition

Reasons that prevented those who were considering getting involved in grassroots volunteering:



*"I do some volunteering at home for like dog charities and local hospices and things like that. So my time is taken up quite a lot really."*  
 Focus group participant; Leamington

Many of these can be overcome through improved communication, challenging perceptions and presenting the opportunities in a more appealing way

We see overlapping motivations for volunteering at major events and within community settings – tapping into these may encourage transition

### Major events

1. To feel part of something
2. To feel good/get satisfaction from being able to help
3. For an exciting experience
4. For a once in a lifetime experience
5. I love sport generally
6. To give something back to that sport
7. I love that particular sport
8. To meet people/make new friends

### Grassroots

1. To support the sport
2. Wanting to improve things/help people
3. I have enjoyed previous volunteering
4. Having the spare time to do it
5. For the chance to use existing skills
6. Someone asked me to give help
7. I felt there was need in my community
8. To meet people/make new friends

What were the main reasons you chose to apply to volunteer at a major event? And which was the single most important reason? n=2102 previous, future and unsuccessful major events volunteers

Which of the following, if any, encouraged you to consider volunteering in grassroots sport? And which was the biggest driver? n=1,133 current grassroots sport volunteers

Those working for NGBs and major events also believe that there is an opportunity to transition more major event volunteers into local volunteer opportunities, but caveat that **the opportunity is likely to lie with a specific minority of volunteers...**

...which reflects the level of conversion we see from the survey results presented, and highlights the need to capitalise on opportunities to increase transition





Stakeholders believe that they do currently signpost major event volunteers to local volunteering opportunities, but that this could be something that could be done better if barriers can be overcome

Current barriers to greater promotion of opportunities:

Internal resource limitations

Silos between event organisers (focused on operational delivery of event) vs NGB staff (longer term focus)

GDPR / other concerns around data privacy & ongoing communications

Difficulty understanding to what extent any investment in supporting the transition would deliver ROI

In some cases, a lack of planning around volunteer legacy ahead of the event itself

For some smaller events, the majority of volunteers may already be recruited from within the grassroots

So we see that there are a number of interventions and strategies that could drive increased transition from major event volunteering to community level opportunities...



Recommendations

- Improve transparency and follow up for unsuccessful volunteers
- Create time-specific, finite opportunities for local volunteering
- Clearly defining volunteer roles is key
- Raise awareness of the volunteer shortage and where opportunities can be found
- Ensure that volunteer strategy and recruitment process has ongoing opportunity in mind
- Understand preferences and signpost appropriately
- Facilitate direct contact where possible

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