

9<sup>th</sup> December 2009

Report of the Safer, Stronger Thematic Partnership

## **A VOLUNTEERING STRATEGY FOR HERTFORDSHIRE 2009 – 2021**

### **1. Purpose of report**

To report sets out to provide the Core Group with a brief summary of the Volunteering Strategy which has been developed by Volunteering Hertfordshire. Hertfordshire Forward is being asked to support the strategy.

### **2. How the strategy has been drafted**

The strategy has been developed by Volunteering Hertfordshire with support from partners from across the sectors. The Volunteering Herts Working Group held a workshop with representatives from voluntary, community and the public sector in March 2009 seeking to determine the challenges facing volunteering in the county. The views, evidence and experience discussed at the workshop and strategy group meetings were used to inform the development of the Strategy which was launched at Volunteer Herts Open Meeting in June 2009.

### **3. What is the Place Survey telling us about volunteering?**

In comparison with England, Hertfordshire performs well on NI 6 with 26% of residents participating in regular volunteering compared to the national average of 23%. During LAA1 the 'Valuing Volunteering in Hertfordshire' campaign saw significant increases in numbers of residents seeking volunteering opportunities at local Volunteer Centres. More recent increases have arisen from the impact of the recession.

### **4. Approach**

The strategy is built around the desire to create a countywide approach to the support, development and resourcing of volunteering so that everyone has the opportunity to contribute to building stronger more cohesive communities, to gain useful experience for themselves and to help make Hertfordshire a better place to live and work. The strategy aims to:

- Increase understanding of volunteering
- Inform the development of volunteering

- Develop effective collaboration between stakeholders

The strategy reinforces the draft Community Cohesion strategy's theme '*Developing Confident Citizens*' and Hertfordshire Forward's Sustainable Community Strategy by:

- Supporting a vibrant Third Sector that meets the needs of local people
- Contributes to lifelong learning, ensuring older people have opportunities to be active and improving everybody's health & wellbeing

## 5. Objectives of the strategy

The strategy's vision is for a strong and sustainable volunteering culture with 70% of Hertfordshire people involved in volunteering by 2021. The strategy focuses on four main objectives:

- To make volunteering more visible and valued in the community
- To enable every individual, whatever their background or ability, to have the opportunity to contribute to community life through volunteering and to benefit from the experience
- To ensure that organisations across all sectors have the information, skills and attitudes to benefit from volunteering activity
- To build and maintain quality volunteering support services that champion volunteering

## 6. Decision for Hertfordshire Forward

Hertfordshire Forward is being asked to comment on the Volunteering Strategy for Hertfordshire and consider how partners can benefit from the strategy and support the Third Sector in delivering it.