



The King's Award for Voluntary Service

Celebrating the outstanding work of local volunteer groups

Dear colleague,

Thank you for agreeing to give your time to participate in visits to groups nominated for KAVS. This is one of the most important roles that the Lieutenancy undertakes. It is a recognition, in itself, for an organisation to be nominated for the KAVS and in Berkshire we celebrate this with a ceremony where certificates are given to each organisation or group nominated. While the DLs' assessment is critical, the final decisions are made by the KAVS central office. We suggest you bear in mind the following points:

1. Please read the document, the Kings Award for Voluntary Service (KAVS) Guidance for his Majesty's Lord-Lieutenants (attached here). It is detailed and occasionally repetitive but it is a clear guide to the whole process and the key principles which govern it. Key points from page 7 are that the group must:
 - be made up of three or more people
 - be based in the UK, Channel Islands or the Isle of Man
 - have been in operation for at least three years before nomination
 - have over half its volunteers eligible to reside in the UK
 - be led by volunteers, not by paid staff; over half its members should be volunteers
 - provide a specific and direct benefit to the local community

In order to attain the requisite national standard, groups must be: volunteer-led, making a considerable difference locally, operating at an exceptional standard, well-run with an outstanding local reputation.

2. Nominations sent to us by the central office should be assumed to qualify for assessment. The finer details are in the document mentioned in point 1.
3. Please be as positive as you can both before, during and after the visit though no indication should be given as to the likelihood of an award being made. While we are required to collect and assess key information, it is an opportunity to encourage the good work carried out in the individual charity. Please note, however, that it is not the Deputy Lieutenant's role to give feedback or advice to the groups we assess.
4. Prepare carefully before the visit. Check to see if you have all the required documents, requesting and missing documents online before the meeting, so as to ensure a productive and detailed dialogue when at the charity. Agree in advance who will lead on questioning and who will keep notes. Feel free to ask for further documentation to be sent on to you after the meeting, to inform further your deliberations.
5. Please remember that volunteers are crucial to the assessment. How many volunteers are there, what proportion of the working week do they work, and how does this compare with paid staff, if any? How influential are the volunteers in forming policy and driving day-to-day practice? How are volunteers supported?

6. When writing the draft citation, please note the word count where this is specified, and the fact that you do not need to repeat information already on the application form. Wherever possible, please include quotations to bring the citation to life. Words from volunteers and beneficiaries are particularly powerful.
7. Attached is a copy of a citation written in support of a charity in Berkshire, which won the award last year. Relevant information is most important in the draft; the exact wording will be reviewed before the final submission.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Marina, Graham or Paul:

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