



2025 - 2028

Volunteer Strategy

 **newlife**
The Charity for Disabled Children



Newlife Values



Introduction

At Newlife, volunteers play an important role in helping us to achieve our mission. Our 2025–2028 strategic plan builds on our existing successes and sets out our ambitions to expand our volunteering opportunities across the charity, recognising the positive impact our volunteers have in making a difference for children with disabilities and their families.

This volunteering strategy sets out our direction for the next three years. It builds on what we've already achieved and looks ahead to how we can continue to create rewarding, inclusive, and impactful experiences for everyone who chooses to give their time to Newlife.

We're focused on ensuring that volunteering with us is not only meaningful and enjoyable but also sustainable — for both our volunteers and the charity. By listening to and working alongside our volunteers, we aim to strengthen our community, increase our impact, and make sure every volunteer feels valued and supported.

"I enjoy volunteering at Newlife as it's a fantastic charity and you really feel you are doing something worthwhile." Lynne

Always compassionate and deserving of trust – in all we do.

Volunteers will be valued and respected. We will value input and will ensure that our volunteers are listened to. We will work to ensure the volunteering experience we offer is a positive one.

Making things happen – for those we service.

At Newlife, we bridge the gap between statutory services and support for families of disabled children. We work to make change for the better and the families we support are at the heart of our work. As a volunteering service, we will lead at the forefront and our volunteers will support the change.

Leading in our field – to make things better.

We will ensure that we gather feedback to develop and improve our volunteer service at Newlife. Through open communication with all volunteers, we will work with them to develop and evolve the service moving forward.

People at heart – every day.

Recognising our volunteers as individuals, and all have different abilities and skills that they bring to Newlife. We will be inclusive and will ensure that the volunteers within our services reflect the communities that we serve.

What does volunteering look like at Newlife right now?

At Newlife, we're lucky to have an amazing group of long-standing volunteers who've continued to support us regularly, and we've continued to welcome new faces, even at a time when volunteering has changed a lot over the past 5 years.

Whether volunteers are looking to give their time on a regular ongoing basis or occasionally to support a specific event or project, individually or as part of a team, we have opportunities for all.

In 2024/25, our volunteers gave an incredible 14,247 hours of their time – and we know there's room to build on this even more.

Our Volunteer Centre currently hosts approximately 75% of our volunteering activity across Newlife and is a vibrant and inclusive hub, which proudly welcomes and supports volunteers from diverse backgrounds.

There is great potential to grow our volunteering opportunities across our regional sites, within retail and through occasional and virtual volunteering. Some of this is currently limited by resources and infrastructure, but with the right support and investment, we believe there's a big opportunity to expand and bring even more people into the Newlife family.

"My favourite part of volunteering is meeting new people and making friends" Laurence

Our vision for volunteering

Through a supportive and empowering experience, our volunteers will make the greatest positive impact for disabled children and their families, placing their talents, skills, and passions at the heart of our mission to change lives across the UK.

Our plans for the future

We know how important it is to have a clear direction when it comes to volunteering – one that supports our volunteers, our staff, and our wider goals as a charity. Most importantly, it needs to help us do what we're here for: supporting disabled children and their families.

"Volunteering has helped my confidence and built my self-esteem" Bradley

To bring our vision for volunteering to life – and to support Newlife's broader mission – we're focusing on growing and strengthening our volunteer programme. This isn't just about bringing in more people or creating new roles, it's about doing it in the right way – making sure the experience is meaningful, effective, and valuable for everyone involved.

We also recognise that to make this happen, we need the right foundations in place. That means building solid infrastructure and setting realistic, sustainable goals so that volunteering can thrive across the charity.



Our volunteer strategy:

The next three years

Over the next three years, our volunteer strategy is focused on making volunteering at Newlife meaningful, sustainable, and fully integrated into everything we do. Here's what we're aiming for:

- We'll always recognise and value the time, energy and skills our volunteers give so generously.
- We'll build and nurture a strong, sustainable pool of volunteers to support the whole organisation.
- Volunteering will be embedded into every team and department – not just something that sits alongside our work, but a core part of how we deliver impact.
- We'll refresh the way we recruit, support, and celebrate volunteers, making sure the experience is rewarding and accessible.
- Volunteers will feel appreciated, supported, and recognised every step of the way.

We know we will have this right when:

- We'll have the **right resources in place to grow and support** our volunteering programme.
- **Clear, consistent processes** will empower teams to confidently involve and manage volunteers.
- **Bespoke tools** – like handbooks and tailored training – will be available to all volunteers.
- We'll have a year-round calendar of activities and events to **recognise and thank our volunteers**.
- **Newlife will be known as a fantastic place to volunteer** – welcoming, purposeful, and inclusive.

The value of volunteering at Newlife

Volunteering plays a vital role in the success of Newlife and the wider impact we have in our communities. Our volunteer opportunities promote social inclusion, build confidence, and support the wellbeing of the amazing individuals who choose to give their time to us.

The contribution our volunteers make stretches far beyond what can be easily measured. Their time, energy, and commitment help us deliver vital services and make a real difference to the lives of disabled children and their families. While our current systems limit the type of data we can capture, we know the social value of volunteering is significant – both for our charity and for the individuals involved.

As part of our strategy, we're committed to improving how we track and celebrate this impact. We will develop ways to collect better data, helping us show the full picture of what our volunteers bring to Newlife. This means we'll be able to share real stories, insights, and evidence that reflect the true value of their contributions.



We will deliver this vision through the delivery of the following three strategic goals:

Objective 1: Strengthen the volunteering infrastructure through developing policies and processes, including digitalisation to enable growth.

To do this, we will:

- **Review and refine** all volunteer processes and procedures to align with best practice and industry standards.
- **Audit and cleanse** volunteer data to ensure accuracy, relevance, and consistency across systems.
- **Conduct a skills and training review** for both volunteers and volunteer managers to identify gaps and development needs.
- **Invest in targeted training programmes** to equip teams with the knowledge and tools needed to support volunteers safely and effectively.
- **Run an annual volunteer engagement survey** and use insights to inform improvements and identify growth opportunities.
- **Review the Volunteer Team staffing model** to ensure we are resourced to support ongoing and future volunteer growth.
- **Digitalisation** of processes and systems to support growth.

Objective 2: Newlife creates inclusive opportunities for volunteers to reach their full potential, creating a space in which everyone feels part of our community

- **Improve volunteer onboarding and induction** to create a more streamlined and welcoming experience.
- **Improve and develop impact reporting** to better showcase the difference volunteers make, both internally and publicly.
- **Strengthen volunteer communications and reward & recognition** with regular updates, virtual meet ups, and engagement activities showing appreciation.
- **Develop new opportunities** through engagement with all teams and reviewing new opportunities across the charity, including opportunities to develop new skills.

Objective 3: Expanding our volunteering opportunities and recruitment activity to extend our reach in communities across UK

- **Launch a national volunteer recruitment campaign.**
- **Develop and embed** a cross-functional marketing and communications plan to raise the profile of volunteering at Newlife across all platforms, ensuring promotional content is maintained and kept fresh with regular updates to reflect opportunities.
- **Expand and diversify volunteering opportunities** to better reflect local communities and include families we support, working with teams across the charity to identify inclusive, accessible, and future-ready volunteer roles.
- **Regularly evaluate impact and feedback** from volunteers, volunteer managers, and campaign data to refine recruitment and engagement strategies.
- **Support** staff who are managing volunteers through ongoing training and resource development to sustain growth and quality.

Volunteer Service Standards

Our commitment to volunteering



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The Charity for Disabled Children



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