SHORT REPORT
for the National Lottery Heritage Fund project
led by University College London on behalf
of the Culture, Health & Wellbeing Alliance

Linda J Thomson
Esme Elsden
Helen J Chatterjee
FOREWORD

Like many museums, the Horniman actually has more volunteers than staff, who help us in a great variety of ways from engaging with visitors in the galleries to working on the collections. Volunteers are an important point of our diversity strategy because it is only by ensuring that visitors encounter people like themselves that we will be able to open ourselves up to all of London’s very diverse populations. So, working with the ‘Give: Volunteering for Wellbeing’ project was a great opportunity to diversify our volunteers, as well as providing significant benefits to the volunteers themselves.

It is becoming clear, through initiatives such as the Give Project, how important volunteering can be for people dealing with issues such as loneliness, mental and physical health challenges and unemployment. As this report shows, volunteering can reconnect people with others, increase self-esteem, and help gain new skills.

With the gradual recognition of the benefits of cultural prescribing as part of an holistic approach to health and wellbeing, I hope this kind of work will become core to the work of all museums.

This report provides a valuable practical insight into how museums of all kinds can successfully integrate volunteering for wellbeing into their core programme.

Nick Merriman
Chief Executive Horniman Museum & Gardens
Contents

Aims & Objectives ........................................ 2
‘10 Step Guide’ ............................................ 3
Project Overview ........................................ 4
Volunteering Survey ..................................... 4
Volunteer Recruitment .................................. 5
Staff and Volunteer Training .......................... 5
Data Analysis .............................................. 6
Wellbeing Outcomes .................................... 9
Conference Outcomes .................................. 10
Embedding Wellbeing ................................... 11

Thanks to .................................................. inner back cover

Figures

Fig. 1.0: Survey respondents ......................... 4
Fig. 1.1: Pooled SWEMWBS scores ............... 6
Fig. 1.2: Pooled MWM scores ...................... 6
Fig. 1.3: Hierarchy of themes ....................... 8
Fig. 1.4: Relationship of themes ................... 8

Tables

Table 1.0: Museum training ......................... 5
Table 1.1 Interviews conducted ..................... 7
Table 1.2 Themes and outcomes ..................... 7

Images from the top: University College London, the Horniman Museum and Gardens, the Natural History Museum and Valence House Museum
Aims & Objectives

**Project Aims**
- To work with museum partners in three widely dispersed London boroughs
- To work with museum partners with different models of funding and administration
- To support museum partners to pilot sustainable collections-led volunteering for wellbeing programmes
- To diversify the museum volunteer base for each of the three boroughs
- To change the volunteer experience to make it more inclusive
- To make inaccessible heritage more accessible through volunteering
- To create collections-inspired and object handling wellbeing resources
- To strategically embed wellbeing across the three museum organisations

**Project Objectives**
- To distribute a sector-wide survey to map wellbeing and diversity in volunteering
- To analyse a minimum of 50 surveys and determine best practices for volunteering diversity and wellbeing
- To identify partner staff training needs and implement 12 training workshops
- To map potential community partners for recruiting new volunteers
- To recruit and train local people with health and wellbeing inequalities for the new volunteering roles
- To retrain existing volunteers to mentor / buddy the new volunteers
- To conduct mixed methods (quantitative and qualitative) evaluation
- To report best practice guidance for embedding wellbeing organisationally
Volunteering for Wellbeing

To encourage volunteer diversity from your local area and run volunteering training programmes for wellbeing at your organisation, you should:

1. Employ a dedicated Volunteering Manager and Volunteer Co-ordinator(s)

2. Ensure your organisation has clear pathways and safeguarding policies for how to deal with disclosure, an essential aspect of diversifying and supporting volunteering

3. Approach local charities or support services who you would like to act as partners to your organisation in referring potential volunteers

4. Scope the demographics and diversity of your local area and aim to be representative of these communities

5. Offer specific staff training to support the volunteers you plan to work with e.g. Dementia Awareness, Adult Mental Health First Aid

6. To facilitate recruitment, place adverts for volunteers in places likely to be seen by the people you want to attract e.g. general practices or supermarket notice boards, adapt the existing role description and simplify the application process to breakdown any perceived institutional barriers

7. Match new volunteers carefully to volunteering roles, accounting for personal preferences which will suit their abilities and support their needs

8. Talk to the volunteers to appraise personal goals and skills that they would like to develop during their time at the organisation or, if appropriate, ask them to fill in a short survey

9. Cultivate open conversations and implement a consistent reviewing process through meetings with the new volunteers in their first week, 3-, 6- and 9-months later, and then every six months to chart progress and skills’ development, and re-appraise personal goals

10. Try to embed wellbeing strategically throughout all levels of your organisation so that support is available for staff working with volunteers, as well as the volunteers themselves

Cultivate open conversations and implement a consistent reviewing process through meetings with the new volunteers in their first week, 3-, 6- and 9-months later, and then every six months to chart progress and skills’ development, and re-appraise personal goals.

Try to embed wellbeing strategically throughout all levels of your organisation so that support is available for staff working with volunteers, as well as the volunteers themselves.

To facilitate recruitment, place adverts for volunteers in places likely to be seen by the people you want to attract e.g. general practices or supermarket notice boards, adapt the existing role description and simplify the application process to breakdown any perceived institutional barriers.

Match new volunteers carefully to volunteering roles, accounting for personal preferences which will suit their abilities and support their needs.

Talk to the volunteers to appraise personal goals and skills that they would like to develop during their time at the organisation or, if appropriate, ask them to fill in a short survey.

Cultivate open conversations and implement a consistent reviewing process through meetings with the new volunteers in their first week, 3-, 6- and 9-months later, and then every six months to chart progress and skills’ development, and re-appraise personal goals.

Try to embed wellbeing strategically throughout all levels of your organisation so that support is available for staff working with volunteers, as well as the volunteers themselves.

To facilitate recruitment, place adverts for volunteers in places likely to be seen by the people you want to attract e.g. general practices or supermarket notice boards, adapt the existing role description and simplify the application process to breakdown any perceived institutional barriers.

Match new volunteers carefully to volunteering roles, accounting for personal preferences which will suit their abilities and support their needs.

Talk to the volunteers to appraise personal goals and skills that they would like to develop during their time at the organisation or, if appropriate, ask them to fill in a short survey.

Cultivate open conversations and implement a consistent reviewing process through meetings with the new volunteers in their first week, 3-, 6- and 9-months later, and then every six months to chart progress and skills’ development, and re-appraise personal goals.

Try to embed wellbeing strategically throughout all levels of your organisation so that support is available for staff working with volunteers, as well as the volunteers themselves.
Project Overview
Give: Volunteering for Wellbeing was a National Lottery Heritage Fund project led by researchers from University College London on behalf of the Culture, Health & Wellbeing Alliance in collaboration with three museum partners: the Horniman Museum & Gardens (the Horniman), the Natural History Museum (the NHM), and Valence House Museum (Valence House).

Made possible by money raised by National Lottery players, the project helped to make heritage more accessible to people experiencing health inequalities by utilising hidden and unused collections, increasing volunteer diversity, and offering training and mentoring/buddying to new volunteers.

By supporting museums to deliver volunteer training and mentoring programmes, sustainable collections-led volunteering for wellbeing outcomes were achieved at three levels:

**National**
The sector-wide Volunteering Survey mapped volunteering for wellbeing in UK museums, heritage, community arts and local voluntary organisations. Survey outcomes combined with learning about improving volunteer wellbeing will be used to inspire and support museums nationwide to undertake similar projects.

**Organisational**
Through offering training and evaluation, museums developed an understanding of how to embed collections-led volunteering for wellbeing across the organisation, supporting a wider, more diverse range of volunteers and visitors in the future.

**Community**
Using new and existing networks and knowledge of best practice enabled a wider range of people to volunteer with local museums to support their personal wellbeing, be enthused by museum collections and inspire other people.

Volunteering Survey
The online Volunteering Survey was conducted over four months (Dec 18 - Mar 19) and implemented and evaluated by UCL. It comprised 10 online questions (see Evaluation Report Appendices) that took an average of 13 minutes to complete. Survey respondents were from museums and galleries, heritage sites, voluntary, community and social enterprises (VCSEs) and community arts organisations (Figure 1.0).

**Figure 1.0: Survey respondents**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sector</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Arts</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VCSEs</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heritage</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Museums</td>
<td>53%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Survey Outcomes**

- 60 responses from organisations in England, Wales and Scotland (clustered in London and South East)
- 42 average number of volunteers per organisation
- *50%* of organisations embedded wellbeing in current volunteer training programmes
- *50%* of organisations planned to embed wellbeing in future volunteer training programmes
- *30%* of organisations measured wellbeing outcomes
- *25%* of organisations supplied volunteer age peaking in groups 15 - 29 and 60 - 74 years
- *25%* of organisations supplied volunteer ethnicity: 80% White British, 20% other ethnicity
- *25%* of organisations offered formal or informal mentoring / buddying to volunteers
- *20%* of organisations forged external partnerships with local and national charities, housing associations and professional services
- *10%* of organisations received funding from external sources

[* Above figures approximate]
Volunteer Recruitment

Volunteer recruitment focused on young adults age 18-25 years, older adults age 50 plus, and people experiencing mental or physical health challenges, social isolation, and long-term unemployment.

The project tackled inequalities across volunteering and diversified the volunteer base with a view to improving the quality of life and wellbeing of the volunteers, especially disadvantaged adults. Across the three museums, 40 volunteers were involved in the Give Project comprising 33 new volunteers recruited through local VCSEs, and seven existing museum volunteers to act as mentors or ‘Buddies’.

The NHM recruited 12 new volunteers; nine became ‘Wellbeing Champions’ while three joined the regular Learning Volunteer programme. Six existing NHM volunteers became ‘Volunteer Buddies’ to the new volunteers. The Horniman recruited 15 new ‘Engage Volunteers’. As it was deemed too onerous for the existing volunteers to mentor new volunteers, the Horniman instead opted to recruit four new volunteers as two sets of ‘Buddy Pairs’ placed together by the VCSEs to support each other. Valence House recruited two new ‘Wellbeing Champions’ and one existing ‘Volunteer Buddy’.

Staff and Volunteer Training

Museum staff and volunteers took part in 14 types of training during the Give Project (Table 1.0). The first three were training sessions conducted by UCL as part of the Give Wellbeing Workshops; the next four were training courses provided by external, third sector agencies; and the last seven were training sessions initiated by the museums themselves as key elements of their volunteering induction programmes.

Table 1.0: Museum training

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Training</th>
<th>Horniman Museum &amp; Gardens</th>
<th>Natural History Museum</th>
<th>Valence House Museum</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What is Wellbeing?</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Embedding Wellbeing Organisationally</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluation</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mental Health First Aid</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working with Vulnerable Adults</td>
<td></td>
<td>✔</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dementia Awareness</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Delivering Audio Object Descriptions</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Object Handling</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Live Interpretation</td>
<td></td>
<td>✔</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Customer Service</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Safeguarding</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Engagement</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction to the Animal Kingdom</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ways to Wellbeing</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Data Analysis
Mixed (qualitative and quantitative) methods were used to analyse data consisting of measurement scales, observations, volunteers’ wellbeing diaries, and in-depth semi-structured interviews.

Quantitative Analysis
Quantitative measures comprised the Short Warwick Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing Scale (SWEMWBS: Fat, Scholes, Boniface, Mindell & Stewart-Brown, 2019) used by the Horniman and NHM, and the UCL Museum Wellbeing Measure (MWM: Thomson & Chatterjee, 2014, 2015) used by the Horniman, the NHM and Valence House.

Measures from 29 volunteers, consisting of 21 Wellbeing Champions/Engage Volunteers and eight Volunteer Buddies, were evaluated using descriptive and inferential statistics in IBM SPSS Version 22.

Total volunteer SWEMWBS scores (out of 35) were pooled for five training sessions at the Horniman and seven training sessions at the NHM. Both museums took this measure pre-session.

Mental wellbeing appeared to decline in Sessions 2 and 3, partly recover by Sessions 4 and 5 and stabilise for Sessions 6 and 7 (Figure 1.1) although statistical analysis found no significant differences across the sessions. Pooled scores fell within the ‘medium’ range for mental wellbeing determined by the SWEMWBS authors.

Figure 1.1: Pooled SWEMWBS scores

The gradual decline in volunteer psychological wellbeing was attributed to differences between the initial training sessions, seen as enjoyable due to their novelty value (e.g. behind-the-scenes tours; visits to other organisations) and later sessions that became more demanding (e.g. working on outputs such as resources and exhibitions). In effect, the training sessions changed over time from having a content of enrichment to one of resource development.

Furthermore, feelings that once the training was over, the new volunteer roles would come to an end, may have also acted to reduce scores. Interview data showed, however, that volunteers experienced wellbeing through their sense of achievement and participation in something bigger with a value beyond the project (see Qualitative Analysis), mental states not directly assessed by the measures used.

Figure 1.2: Pooled MWM scores

Although scores improved a little post-session compared with pre-session, indicating beneficial effects of each training session, there appeared to be a gradual decline in psychological wellbeing across the five sessions (Figure 1.2). This difference was significant between the first and the last sessions.
Qualitative Analysis
Semi-structured, one-to-one interviews were carried out with 18 volunteers and eight staff (including one from each museum at director level) after training had taken place (Table 1.1). Most interviews were carried out face-to-face but where this was not possible, mainly due to volunteer access and part-time working, they were carried out over the phone.

Table 1.1: Interviews conducted

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Champions/Engage Volunteers</th>
<th>Buddies/Mentors</th>
<th>Staff</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Horniman Museum &amp; Gardens</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Natural History Museum</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Valence House Museum</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Inductive thematic analysis of the 26 in-depth interviews found a hierarchy of themes (Figure 1.3) and relationships between them (Figure 1.4). The six main themes are outlined below:

1) Social interaction, forming connections
Social interaction and the forming of connections between volunteers were mainly brought about by routines, such as working in the same part of the museum on the same day. Engagement with the public alongside other volunteers allowed new volunteers to establish social networks.

2) Support
All new volunteers were supported in their roles by existing volunteers acting as Buddies and museum staff. Volunteer Coordinators in particular, were vital in delivering support and training to establish these more diverse volunteer cohorts.

3) Learning and training
Volunteers were further supported by learning and the training they were given to fulfil their museum roles. New knowledge about the collections was acquired during the training sessions for the new voluntary positions, and in passing on this new knowledge while engaging with museum visitors.

4) Diversifying volunteering
The aim of increasing diversity in the volunteer base led to diversification of the recruitment procedures. Having a diverse cohort of volunteers with a range of needs led to increases in the scope of training offered to volunteers and Volunteer Coordinators.

5) Giving time and sharing
The action of volunteering was based on giving time and sharing knowledge with other volunteers, or the public if in public-facing roles. When volunteers dedicated their time and effort to the museum, it helped them develop a sense of belonging from giving of themselves in a rewarding way.

6) Routine
Volunteering provided a routine and structured way for volunteers to spend their time within that routine. The commitment to and regularity of the voluntary position gave volunteers a sense purpose and helped them integrate into the museum. Routine also established regular social interaction and engagement with other volunteers, staff and visitors.

Summary of Qualitative Outcomes
Further analysis of the main interview themes suggested that they each related to a set of positive outcomes associated with improving volunteer wellbeing, as summarised below (Table 1.2).

Table 1.2: Themes and outcomes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>Outcomes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1) Social interaction, forming connections</td>
<td>Social inclusion, establishing a social network</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2) Support</td>
<td>Feelings of confidence and security</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3) Learning and training</td>
<td>New knowledge, feelings of agency, being valued and confidence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4) Diversifying volunteering</td>
<td>New recruitment practices and increased scope of training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5) Giving time and sharing</td>
<td>Sense of belonging and purposeful fulfilment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6) Routine</td>
<td>Purpose, help with integration, interaction and engagement</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
GIVE | VOLUNTEERING FOR WELLBEING

Figure 1.3: Hierarchy of themes

Figure 1.4: Relationship of themes
Wellbeing Outcomes

Wellbeing was an important outcome not only because it was a key aim of the Give Project but because almost a third of new volunteers disclosed their previous state of poor mental health and how the desire to change it had motivated them to volunteer for the project, as illustrated below:

During the interviews, new volunteers emphasised that their feelings of wellbeing had improved as a result of their experiences during the Give Project, particularly meeting other people, as stated below:

“… I think it boost my confidence. Because I was, before, I was in a hospital and I felt insecure with people.”

“I had a whole spell of anxiety, depression where I wasn’t leaving my flat often and because technically, I’m unemployed, I was compelled by the Job Centre, to go to a jobs fair at Kensington, which is where I discovered the information about this.”

“… work experience and it was suggested to me, having a routine and I didn’t have confidence to go to job interviews and I was quite an anxious person, but I thought I would start with volunteering.”

“… I think there is a correlation between coming here and less depression. I think my depression really comes from when I feel isolated and when I’m here mixing with people, I feel less isolated so I’m sure it does help my mental wellbeing.”

“When you are... it’s a mental health, you know, my situation. I’m very big, big depression in these last years. Very massive depression. And affecting everything, the change you, real personality change, the simple decisions, take the simple decisions, that’s very difficult... When I come to this project, is ... I don’t know, is take analysis... that everything is possible.”

“The most important thing is to communicate with the people. I want a social life with the people, so it is very useful for me to be a volunteer there”

“… and when I’m here mixing with people, I feel less isolated so I’m sure it does help my mental wellbeing... I have made connections with other people”

“Yes I do [think my wellbeing has changed] you get out and meet people, you work in a nice location, at a historical house with a nice garden and near the park”

“…when you put in the same room, total different persons and you discover new opinions, new different positions on the same project, that’s the same in the life.”

Furthermore, new volunteers reported that their wellbeing had improved due to the support given to them by established volunteers, acting as Buddies, and the museum staff, as below:

“…” when you have support from special people working in here, you are more confident, more comfortable… you’re going in different areas.”

“The volunteer manager supported us as a group, in a good way, I think, no one felt left out or ignored or that they weren’t contributing, that they weren’t valued, they were.”

“Just to say that you and your team have been the ones that have helped me regain my hopes and encouraged me to gain a new future for myself.”
Conference Outcomes

Hosted by the NHM, the Give Conference disseminated project outcomes to partner staff and volunteers, and around 80 delegates. Keynote speakers were Liz Ellis, Policy Project Manager, Business, Innovation and Insight, NLHF, and Nick Merriman, Chief Executive Officer, the Horniman Museum and Gardens. The presentations showed how museums had achieved the project’s diversity and wellbeing objectives by making four key changes to the volunteer recruitment processes:

- Adapting recruitment procedures to attract local atypical adult volunteers
- Recruiting applicants through referral by community partners
- Streamlining the application process to make it more inclusive
- Enhancing and enriching induction and training sessions to embed wellbeing

Conference presentations are downloadable from: https://culturehealthresearch.wordpress.com/give/

Workshop Conclusions

Conclusions from the three Give Conference breakout group workshops are summarised below:

- **Embedding Wellbeing Strategically:** Delegates discussed the support and training required at all levels of an organisation to embed wellbeing, and concluded that practices needed to be initiated top-down (from director level) as well as bottom-up.

- **Evaluation Methods for Volunteering:** Delegates explored the MWM and other wellbeing measures, and compiled a set of six emotions (Connected; Happy; Inspired; Motivated; Purposeful; and Valued) deemed suitable for assessing volunteer wellbeing in both public-facing and behind-the-scenes roles.

- **Testing the NHM’s Wellbeing Resource:** Delegates trialled and confirmed the value of the NHM’s wellbeing resource: ‘Finding Calm: A Wellbeing Guide to the Natural History Museum’, in a guided tour locating quiet galleries and places to sit and relax.
Embedding Wellbeing

Directors and other senior members of museum staff were interviewed about how they could embed wellbeing strategically across their organisation. Open-ended questions triggered discussion around consolidating the work that museums do to support wellbeing implicitly and making this explicit.

Those interviewed thought that the steps needed to embed wellbeing should include mapping activities within museum programmes that already had wellbeing outcomes, for example, volunteering in the Learning and Public Engagement Departments, the focus of the Give Project. Further activities could involve volunteering for other public-facing roles, such as in the gift shop and café, and for non-public facing roles, such as in the archives. In support of volunteering for wellbeing, one of the directors interviewed stated:

“I think the concept of wellbeing is a really important one and is one of the benefits of having a good volunteering programme”

A second director expressed that:

“Giving people that agency and skills and social networks, and challenging them in a very supportive environment can make such a huge difference to wellbeing”

Another interviewee considered the implications of embedding wellbeing:

“... if we make a commitment as an organisation for wellbeing ... we have to make sure it is in role descriptions, training and make sure everyone knows what it means, it has to be embedded into everything that touches it and its value recognised and... cascaded up, down and sideways throughout the organisation”

Reinforcing Wellbeing Strategies

By mapping the outcomes of voluntary roles, directors and senior staff believed it would be possible to identify where a wellbeing strategy might benefit from explicit reinforcement. One suggestion was to frame volunteering as a pathway to wellbeing to a view to enhancing a museum’s long-term aim of achieving greater diversity.

Interviews reflected a range of options regarding mapping wellbeing outcomes. At one end of the continuum, there was a preference for mapping outcomes implicitly, rather than making them explicit within the museum strategy, as a senior staff member observed:

“... you need to say it, organisations say they do things implicitly, they may need a political reason to be explicit”

At the opposite end of the continuum, a longer term aim was include the concept of wellbeing explicitly and unambiguously within the museum’s strategic planning, as implied below:

“We are all supporting wellbeing and in our heritage strategy we have how volunteering is about giving people new skills, new social experiences, but actually none of that is described in any wellbeing terminology and I think that needs to change if we are going to show our value and the value of the work that we do…”

Taking the middle ground and noting practical concerns, another director specified:

“We need to really prioritise [wellbeing] much more strongly than we have so far ... you can have a policy that is very there and nothing changes so you have actually have got to operationalise it”
Building Wellbeing Resources

Directors agreed that to operationalise a wellbeing strategy, museums relied on having sufficient resources and robust partnerships, especially if diversity was part of their wellbeing remit. They thought that having a more diverse population of volunteers with differing wellbeing needs might prove a challenge to any museum but particularly those without resources and partnerships in place. Directors thought to build wellbeing resources, the best plan was to look to community partners and local charities, especially for training opportunities. All interviewees felt that to build wellbeing resources as an outcome across their organisation, they would need to establish clear routes to embedding training to support both paid and voluntary workers, as one director summarised:

“Training has to be there and embedded, and it has to be a no-brainer”

Interviewees considered that for wellbeing resources to be sustainable, meaningful community partnerships would need to be fostered and maintained. They thought that, in addition to training, community partners could offer alternatives application routes to recruit new volunteers and provide support workers for these volunteers where needed.

Positive Working Culture

Directors felt that fostering an internal positive working culture that supports the wellbeing of volunteers and staff is essential, as one expressed:

“It is important to have a positive staff culture, they want to come to work, they enjoy it, they are respected and valued and have opportunities”

Directors thought that a positive working culture could be achieved through consulting workers on how best support their lives, as another reflected:

“The general stresses, both politically and economically in society at the moment, and how best we can support staff and volunteers to deal with that feeling of anxiety… So, I think we need to look into our training package on how we support mental resilience with mental health issues alongside physical [health] within our workforce.”

Practical solutions for a positive working culture offered by interviewees included:

- Flexible working hours
- Setting up community groups within work
- Respecting lunch hours
- Providing lunchtime activities

Embedding Wellbeing

Thematic analysis of the interview transcripts revealed seven steps that directors and senior staff associated with the processes of embedding wellbeing strategically across their organisations:

1. Map where wellbeing fits within all museum departments
2. Chart the capacity of the museum to support wellbeing
3. Employ a broad definition of wellbeing e.g. Six Ways to Wellbeing (NEF, 2008)
4. Define explicitly where the museum supports staff and volunteer wellbeing as well as visitor wellbeing through a culture of care
5. Make wellbeing a priority area in the museum’s values and strategy
6. Establish a robust set of resources though community partnerships and training
7. Maintain wellbeing by supporting a positive working culture
Thanks to:
All of the new and established museum volunteers who participated in the Give Project, the museum staff who supported and trained them and their referrers from local third sector and recruitment agencies. We would also like to thank the following museums, heritage, community, arts and voluntary organisations for completing the Volunteering for Wellbeing Survey:

- Barnsley Museums (across five sites): Cannon Hall, Cooper Gallery, Elsecar Heritage Centre, Experience Barnsley and Worsbrough Mill
- Battersea Arts Centre, London
- Beaney House of Art and Knowledge, Canterbury
- Bexhill Museum, East Sussex
- Brent Museum and Archives, London
- British Museum, London
- Brooklands Museum, Weybridge, Surrey
- Calderdale Industrial Museum Association, Halifax
- Ceredigion Museum, Ceredigion County Council
- The Charterhouse, London
- Chirk Castle, National Trust, Wrexham
- Clivedon Estate, National Trust, Taplow
- Colchester and Ipswich Museums
- Cosmeston Lakes and Medieval Village, Glamorgan
- Culture Volunteers, Poole, Dorset
- Darlington Railway Museum, Durham
- Devizes Outdoor Celebratory Arts, Somerset
- Dorich House Museum, Kingston Vale, London
- Dudley Canal Tunnel and Limestone Mines
- Egypt Centre Museum, Swansea University
- Fabrica Arts Centre, Brighton
- Fife Cultural Trust, Dunfermline
- Glenside Hospital Museum, University of the West of England, Bristol
- Gloucester Culture Trust
- Hampshire Cultural Trust, Forest Arts Centre
- Helston Railway Preservation Company, Cornwall
- Heron Corn Mill (Beetham) Ltd, Cumbria
- Heritage Doncaster, Doncaster Museum and Art Gallery
- Horniman Museum & Gardens, London
- Involving Residents, Oxford
- Lauderdale House, Waterlow Park, Highgate, London
- The Listening Place (UK), London
- Mountain Heritage Trust, Bencathra Field Centre, Cumbria
- Museum of London Archaeology
- Museum of Oxford, Oxford City Council
- Museum in the Park, Stratford Park, Stroud
- The Story Museum, Oxford
- Natural History Museum, London
- Oxford University Museum of Natural History
- The Pankhurst Centre, Manchester
- Pembroke Dock Heritage Centre, Pembrokeshire
- Pontefract Museum, Wakefield Council, Museums and Castles, West Yorkshire
- Port Sunlight Village Trust and Museum, Wirral
- The Reader, Calderstones Volunteering, Merseyside
- Rhondda Heritage Park, Welsh Mining Experience
- River & Rowing Museum, Henley-on-Thames, Oxfordshire
- Royal Airforce (RAF) Museum, Colindale, London and Cosford, Shropshire
- Royal College of Music Museum
- Southampton Cultural Services at Southampton City Art Gallery and Sea City Museum
- Southside House, Wimbledon
- Starfish Services, Staffordshire
- Tamworth Castle, Birmingham
- Theatre Royal Nottingham, University of Nottingham
- Tredgar House, Newport
- UCL Museums, University College London (Art Museum, Grant Museum and Petrie Museum)
- The Whitworth Art Gallery, University of Manchester
- Wrexham County Borough Museum & Archives