



Durham
University

Volunteering and Outreach

Impact Report

2024



Foreword

Our Vision:

Supporting wider community needs and volunteer development through enabling and providing impactful, ethical and safe volunteering opportunities for all.

Durham University Volunteering and Outreach's (DUVO) purpose has always been to support the local community and enable volunteering to take place across the university, this is reflected throughout the 2023-2028 sub-strategy.

Our vision is underpinned by five guiding priorities:

1. Cultivate an understanding of the value of volunteering.
2. Continue to increase the range and frequency of volunteering opportunities by breaking down barriers to participation.
3. Understand our impact and wider community need.
4. Raise the profile of volunteering.
5. Provide methods and support to enable volunteers to reflect upon and understand the benefits of volunteering on their wellbeing and personal/professional development.

To enable our vision to come to life, as a department we have embraced collaboration throughout 2024. We have utilised every opportunity for staff, students and the community to mutually benefit from the volunteering programme here at Durham. You can see these collaborative successes throughout the rest of this impact report, including our re-accreditation to Investing in Volunteers on page five.

As a department, we continually listen to feedback from volunteers and community partners to improve our services. This year we have elevated our volunteer training for students, introducing new training modules to upskill volunteers and benefit community partners, as well as making it more accessible online. We are now in our third year of using the volunteer management platform that enables our student project managers and staff to easily track volunteer training and promote volunteering opportunities to wider audiences across the university, as well as making it easier to cross-promote the opportunities of other charities and organisations. In total, we are working with over 200 charities, organisations and schools across the entire department.

We hope that you enjoy reading our 2024 Impact Report.

The Volunteering Team

CELEBRATING **35 YEARS** OF VOLUNTEERING



DU Student Volunteering and Outreach (DUSVO) was founded in 1989 as Student Community Action (SCA), and over the years has grown. We now operate as one team (DUVO), under the sub-sections DUSVO, College, Department & Society volunteering, Team Durham Community, and Staff Volunteering (SVO). As the team and projects have evolved, we have been shaped by many individuals across the university, and we want to celebrate this rich history of collaboration in our 35th year of operation at the university.

We have an online and physical exhibition to showcase the past 35 years of volunteering, brought to life by the volunteering memories of our staff, students, alumni and community partners. We hope you take the time to visit our exhibition and enjoy looking back through the last 35 years of volunteering.



Scroll or expand to view our volunteer memories.
If you have any memories you would like to share, please get in touch.



Volunteer Fair

In January, we started the new academic term with our annual volunteer fair. Held in the Palatine Centre, representatives from more than 25 community organisations and staff or student volunteering projects joined us to highlight the opportunities available to volunteers. The event was followed by a 'Celebrating Collaboration' session where we met with our community partners to find out what benefits our volunteers bring to them and to identify areas that they think we could better support them.

The Volunteer Awards 2024

In June, we celebrated the commitment of our staff and students with an evening of recognition at our Volunteer Awards, held at Trevelyan College. The event was co-hosted by Katie Binks, DUVO Senior Manager and Craig Morgan, Area Action Partnership Coordinator at Durham County Council.

A record 300 nominations across 12 different categories were received from staff, students and community partners. The award winners can be found [here](#).

The evening is not just about the awardees, it is also a fantastic opportunity to highlight the positive impact the support of volunteers has on individuals, the Durham community and our partner organisations.

A key partner and long-term friend of Durham University Volunteering, Leyla Rutter from local dog charity, StrayAid, thanked volunteers for their work. She said, "Volunteers from the university make such a big difference to our organisation and have such a positive impact on the lives of our dogs and cats. It was an honour to be part of such a well organised event and to hear of the vast array of organisations and causes that the Durham University team have contributed to. To hear the passion, support and commitment that the University has to volunteering and to see so many people getting involved to help causes they are passionate about was heartwarming and inspiring". This year's event was particularly notable marking 35 years of volunteering at Durham University.



Festive Food Drive

Throughout November, staff, students and community groups contributed food donations to the annual Festive Food Drive. The total collection weighed in at 1,233.07kg, to put this achievement into context, this is the approximate weight of a Mini Cooper car! Staff and Students from the sports centre at Queen's Campus, Stockton, collected 217kg of donations alone.

Donations were sent out for delivery to families supported by the Trussell Trust (foodbank), Feeding Families and A Way Out. These generous donations will allow the charities to make up food packs equivalent to 1,300 meals.

We would especially like to thank Durham Women's Football Club, Park Run and Coxhoe United Football Team (Lioness Pinks) who all fully supported this drive by hosting collections, and Bowmer and Kirkland for supporting with donation sorting.



Investing in Volunteers



DUVO is proud to be an Investing in Volunteers achiever, having been awarded the quality standard in 2024 for the 4th time. Investing in Volunteers (IiV) is the UK quality standard for all organisations involving volunteers. IiV aims to improve the quality of the volunteering experience for all volunteers and demonstrates that organisations value the enormous contribution made by volunteers. At Durham University, we understand the importance of volunteering in the local community, and our volunteers recognise the impact on the community and personal development.

Volunteering and Community Partnership Senior Manager, Katie Binks comments on how "achieving this re-accreditation has enabled us to benchmark what we have achieved against what our development areas were previously, and it emphasises how much we have exceeded our own expectations since 2021."

DUSVO Highlights

Durham University Student Volunteering and Outreach



Student Volunteering Week 2024



Monday 12th February marked the beginning of Student Volunteering Week, a national event to encourage students to participate in volunteering activity within their local community.

We promoted a calendar of 30+ opportunities for students to get involved in, whether they were a regular volunteer, or just someone interested in giving back to the community and trying new things. Sessions included litter picking at Crook Hall Gardens or with Wear Rivers Trust, gardening at Old Durham Gardens and St Margarets Church, supporting the Durham Park Run, helping at a primary school Valentine's Disco, or donating in the Once a Month sanitary product drive. There was a wide range of one-off opportunities to enable students to participate in SVW and make a difference to their local community.

Alice from the National Trust said, "we had a very successful volunteering week with 8 volunteers coming along to the litter picks". Those volunteers then went on to express their interest in making this opportunity a regular monthly event to further support the work of the National Trust in the Durham area.

 92 volunteers  270 hours


Student Volunteering Data

01/01/2024 - 31/12/2024

 1,573 active student volunteers registered

 15,610 volunteer hours recorded

 45 student volunteering leaders appointed

 28 student-led projects providing volunteering opportunities

Durham Pride 2024



The late bank holiday weekend in May saw Durham Pride take to the streets of the city. Despite rainy weather the event attracted thousands of people, with a parade from the cathedral and activities on The Sands in Durham City.

Volunteers attended to support the event and help ensure everything ran smoothly on the day. Our involvement in the Pride event has allowed our relationship with Durham Pride to grow and as a result a new DUSVO project has formed. We now sit on the North East Rainbow Alliance group to support future pride event plans and to provide volunteer support and training.

 50 volunteers  167 hours



Staff Volunteering Highlights

Employer Supported Volunteering Network

In early July, the staff volunteering team worked in partnership with Durham Community Action to launch and facilitate the first meeting of the Durham Employer Supported Volunteering Network. The event gave community partners the opportunity to meet and learn about several local businesses whose staff can access employer supported volunteering (ESV) opportunities, with companies encouraging or enabling employees to volunteer their time and skills to benefit the community. The aim was to highlight some of the offers available and how to access and utilise the skills and time of staff through ESV schemes, making a meaningful impact on the communities of County Durham. Alongside our team, speakers from Durham County Council, Nissan, PCP and Amazon spoke about how their staff can take paid time off work to make a difference as a volunteer in their local area. 70 local charities and organisations were represented by 90 attendees, presenting an excellent opportunity to network and develop new links.

We will continue to meet and develop further partnerships and opportunities across the ESV area.

Supporting Love, Amelia.

In 2024 a new partnership flourished between Durham University and Love, Amelia, an outstanding charity that works across the North East to support children, young people and their families. Over the last 10 months, 68 staff volunteers have assisted the charity in their warehouse sorting donations and making packs containing clothing, toys, toiletries and even furniture and prams, to be distributed. Alongside this over 15 staff members came together to help make up hundreds of school bags.

We're excited for this partnership to grow in 2025, with staff members signed up for the Great North Run in support of Love, Amelia.



Festive Campaign

Running alongside the department Festive Food Drive, we ran a Christmas card, Christmas crafts and gift making appeal. Over 1,000 Christmas cards were written and delivered to 22 care homes. The care homes were incredibly grateful for these kind and thoughtful gestures. 1,300 bags of reindeer dust and 1,700 festive lollipops were made to be distributed to young people and families through many of our charity partners, listed [here](#). For the craft sessions alone, 153 staff members contributed 547 hours of crafting support to over 24 charities.



Winter Wonderland - Beyond Limits

Annually, we visit Beyond Limits to support them in creating a magical winter wonderland. 18 volunteers assisted in the creation of this enchanting display for vulnerable adults and families to enjoy over the festive period. Charity Founder Susan Sadler said 'Your staff showed wonderful care and attention to detail. They seemed to know exactly what needed doing and jumped right in to help, all while keeping our guests happy and entertained. It's clear that Durham University's volunteering programme is doing an amazing job at encouraging volunteers to get involved in community events.'

Staff Volunteering Data

01/01/2024 - 31/12/2024



30 departments actively engaged and working with the SVO team.



10,000 staff volunteer hours recorded over a 12 month period



160 staff team challenges



269 staff volunteers contributed 793 hours to environmental support

Wider Student Volunteering Highlights

SU Awards

Van Mildert College - **winner** of Community Impact Award

Josephine Butler Volunteering - **shortlisted** for Community Impact Award

[View the full shortlist and winners here.](#)

St Mary's Volunteering Day



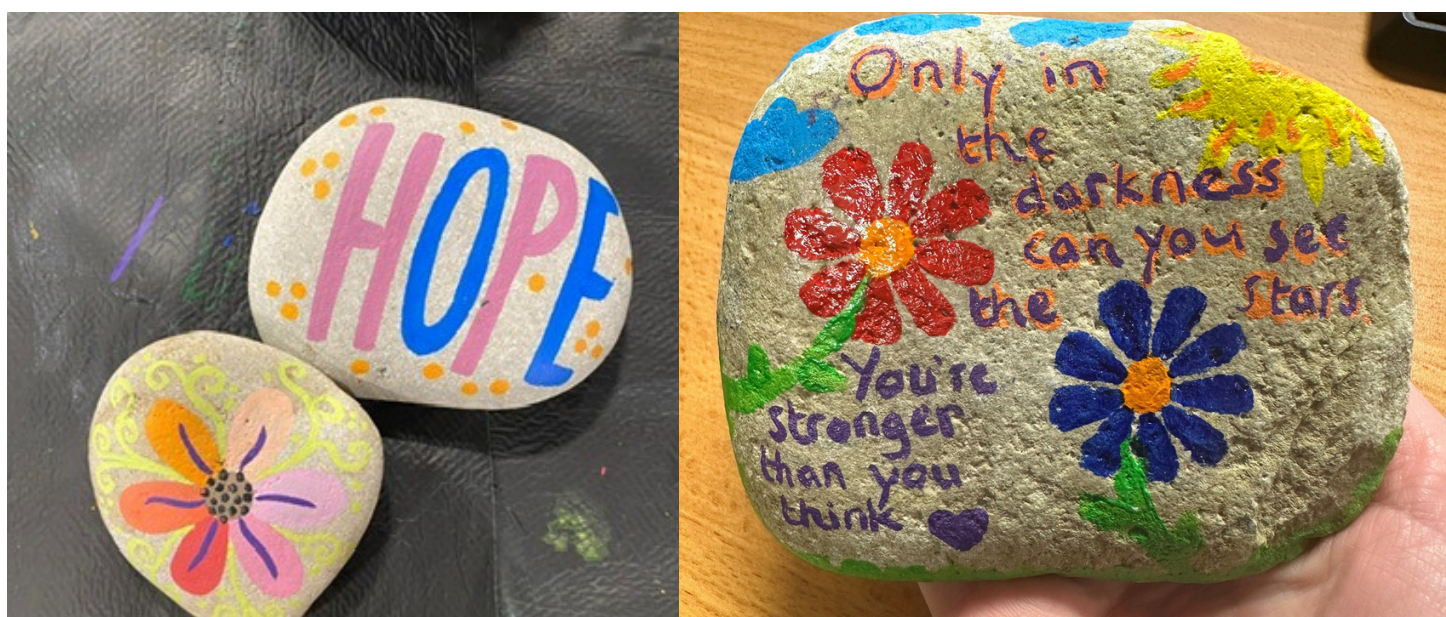
Towards the end of summer term, 24 students from St Mary's College took part in their college volunteering day. In support of our community partners, the students took part in a variety of activities including a beach clean, sorting donations at the local foodbank and Stray Aid charity store sessions. Additionally, students painted wellbeing rocks for our partner RT Projects, a grassroots mental health and suicide prevention charity operating in County Durham. The rocks, with uplifting messages and designs, are placed in and around the county for individuals to find their to lift their mental health and improve wellbeing, as well as signposting people back to the charity.



27 volunteers



56 hours



National Hedgehog Friendly Success

Durham University was awarded the Platinum Hedgehog Friendly campus status for 2024. DUSVO's Hedgehog Friendly Project played a key role in gaining this accreditation through their efforts of co-ordinating litter picks and delivering educational outreach to young people in the local area.

The Hedgehog Friendly campus scheme recognises universities for their efforts to make their campus more friendly to native wildlife. Platinum accreditation is awarded to universities that have taken key action to promote best practice on campus and in the wider community, including through community engagement strategies. We were one of only 4 universities to have been awarded Platinum in 2024.

Our staff and student volunteers from across the university continued this momentum by contributing to the 2024 Big Hog Friendly Litter Pick Challenge. The competition ran through October and November, and Durham were the national winners of this challenge with 108 volunteers collecting 127 bags of rubbish from Durham and the surrounding areas.

Thank you to those involved in this success, including the departments; Earth Sciences, Finance and Procurement, College Operations.

Colleges; John Snow, St Mary's, St Cuthbert's, Stephenson, Trevelyan.

Student group DUSVO Hedgehog Friendly, as well as many other individuals who supported by signing up to litter picks and beach cleans.



Broader Student Volunteering Data

01/01/2024 - 31/12/2024



17 colleges with a student volunteering representative



3,789 college volunteering hours recorded



15 colleges, 8 societies, and 12 departments actively engaged.

Sports Volunteering Highlights

Team Durham Community

Zambia Fun Run

In support of the [Volunteer Zambia \(VZ\) project](#), Team Durham community staff organised the annual Zambia fun run on June 7th.

Around 260 pupils from 4 local primary schools came to The Sports and Wellbeing Park to take part in the fun run, raising almost £500 for the project and Sport in Action Zambia (SIA).

The young people learned a little about life in Zambia and why the work of the VZ Project and SIA is so important in improving young Zambians quality of life and opportunities.

The pupils took part in football and netball sessions, delivered by student volunteers who were going to Zambia for 8 weeks over the summer to deliver sports development provision. Finally, the volunteers from Durham University Dancesport team ran a fun dance session and then went on to deliver a number of after school sessions.

Junior Sports Programmes

Michaelmas term was a busy and successful one for our junior sports clubs. Throughout term time our fantastic student volunteers have delivered weekly after-school sessions, coaching 65 local children and young people, aged 5 to 17, across a variety of sports. Our ever-popular tennis and volleyball sessions were supplemented by junior squash and dance taster sessions.

Student volunteers also regularly support local community sports clubs in delivery of their junior sport sessions including Durham City Hockey Club and Durham United Junior Football section.



Holiday Camps

Based at The Sports and Wellbeing Park, holiday sports camps run for 9 weeks of the year and are a great way for the children to keep active, learn new skills and make friends in a safe, friendly environment.

Alongside the staff team, we have fantastic coaches, many of whom are Durham University students. Coaching is a great development opportunity, and many have secured employment or further study through experience gained. We have a dedicated team of volunteers from the local community and DU students, who have the opportunity to develop confidence, build valuable work-place experience and leadership skills as group leaders. The mix of experience and enthusiasm the staff, coaches and volunteers bring creates a positive atmosphere, with the emphasis on fun, whilst providing opportunities for children to get active.

This summer we provided free spaces on several camps for 100 children, subsidised through grants from the local Fun and Fund programme, ensuring our camps are accessible to all, without financial barriers.



Sports Volunteering Data

01/01/2024 - 31/12/2024



80 sports volunteers across outreach projects



3520 children attending holiday camps



70 young volunteer leaders (14-25 year olds from the local community)



4 junior sports programmes with 65 participants.



