**Volunteering Matters Focus Groups**

Volunteering matters, it matters to the organisations that involve volunteers, it matters to the individuals who volunteer to make a difference and it matters to the well-being of our communities.

Volunteering matters a great deal to voluntary & community sector organisations. NICVA’s recent State of the Sector research clearly indicates that sector organisations are dependent on volunteers and need to sustain and grow the number of volunteers they involve.

Volunteering matters to government and it features highly in the current Department for Communities consultation paper on proposals for the provision of strategic support to the voluntary & community sector in Northern Ireland.

<https://www.communities-ni.gov.uk/consultations/consultation-proposals-provision-strategic-support-voluntary-and-community-sector-northern-ireland>

We want the voices of our members and stakeholders to be heard and to help shape our response to the proposed government policy over the next 4 years 2017 – 2021. That is why we are working hard over the next month to talk to as many organisations as possible about why volunteering matters to you and what support you need to attract and involve volunteers effectively.

 So we ask you over the next four weeks to do three things:

1.    Take time out of your busy schedules and join our independent researchers, Insight Solutions, at one of a series of focus groups to talk about volunteering;

2.    Engage with Volunteer Now and in responding to the Department for Communities’ consultation, including responding to a survey that will be in your mail box next week:

3.     Help us to understand what strategic support you want and need and how we can together make volunteering better for organisations, volunteers and for communities.

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| **Date** | **Venue** | **Time** |
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| 19th October | Holywell Trust, 10 -12 Bishop Street, Derry\* | 10 am -11:30pm |
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\*in partnership with local Volunteer Centres

To book please email: [wenda.gray@volunteernow.co.uk](mailto:wenda.gray@volunteernow.co.uk) or phone 90 232020

We look forward to engaging with you on this important issue.