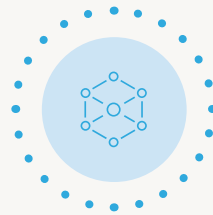# Bayside's Volunteer Recruitment, Retention and Recognition Plan

2022—2026

Youth Volunteers

Environmental Conservation

Helping Family Member or Neighbour

Bayside
CITY COUNCIL

Acknowledgement of Country

Bayside City Council proudly acknowledges the Bunurong People of the Kulin Nation as the Traditional Owners and Custodians of this land, and we pay our respects to their Elders, past, present and emerging.

Council acknowledges the Bunurong's continuing relationship to the land and waterways and respects that their connection and spiritual identity is maintained through ancient ceremonies, songlines, dance, art and living culture.

Council pays tribute to the invaluable contributions of the Bunurong and other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island elders who have guided and continue to guide the work we do.

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I'm a Bayside

VOLUNTEER

Executive Summary

Bayside City Council's *Volunteer Recruitment, Retention and Recognition Plan 2022—2026 outlines* the volunteering priorities for Council over the next four years. The Plan is evidence-based and is guided by the *Bayside City Council Plan 2021-2025 and Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2021—2025*, both of which acknowledge volunteering as a key deliverable to achieving a connected and thriving Bayside.

The Volunteer Recruitment, Retention and Recognition Plan has been developed in close consultation with the local community and through wide-ranging collaboration with key agencies, partners and stakeholders.

Implementation of the Plan will be driven by four strategic objectives which have been designed to be delivered in collaboration with key internal and external stakeholders. Partnerships and co-design are crucial in ensuring this Plan is delivered.

Council's vision is to *"partner with the community to protect and care for the community of life in Bayside making an inclusive, active, healthy, connected and creative experience for all"*. Volunteering can help achieve this vision by providing social and economic support to the community through opportunities that allow for community connection, as well as ensuring all volunteers feel supported, engaged, and valued for their commitment.

The following four objectives have been identified as key priority areas for the next four years:

1. Increase and support volunteerism in Bayside

2. Create a coordinated approach across Council run volunteer programs

3. Drive opportunities that increase youth volunteering in Bayside

4. Strengthen the connection between Council and Volunteer Involving Organisations

1. Introduction

Volunteering plays a crucial role within Bayside, contributing to the overall health and wellbeing of the community. Volunteering holds many benefits to not only the people that volunteer, but to the community as a whole. Volunteering encourages social connection, a sense of belonging, an environment where individuals can learn new skills, gain confidence and have fun. Volunteering also builds community connection and resilience. Many organisations including Council rely and thrive on volunteer passion and commitment.

The nature of volunteering is changing and in Bayside there is an ageing volunteer workforce. Volunteers of all ages and abilities are increasingly looking for diverse and flexible ways to contribute their time. Currently not everyone who would like to volunteer is able to access opportunities. There is a need to find new ways to attract a diverse range of people to volunteering and support them to stay involved.

Bayside City Council is committed to creating a vibrant and engaged volunteer community for all ages and abilities. Through this Plan, Council aims to work with the community to grow volunteer numbers and opportunities in the Bayside municipality.

1.1 What is volunteering?

Volunteering is defined as "time willingly given for the common good and without financial gain"[1]. This definition identifies the range of methods people give their time, knowledge, or skills which fall under the following categories:

Formal volunteering: includes activities within an organisation, club, or group. It usually involves a level of structure, support, or management.

Informal volunteering: includes activities outside of an organisation and often involves a private arrangement – for example looking after a neighbour's children, house or pets or providing personal help.

Spontaneous volunteering: includes activities that happen without planning. It often occurs during or immediately after an event – for example responding to an accident or natural disaster.

Workplace volunteering: includes activities where an employer supports staff to offer professional skills or practical support to others during work or paid time. It is one way that businesses might choose to "give back" to the community.

Virtual volunteering: includes activities performed online. Communications and social media, fundraising and advocacy are common forms of virtual volunteering.

1.2 Value of volunteering

Volunteering lies at the heart of the Bayside community. It delivers many benefits to individuals, organisations and the community overall.

Bayside volunteers get personal satisfaction from helping, giving back, and making a difference. Local data shows that individuals feel satisfied and more connected to their community as a result of volunteering[1].

Bayside organisations also benefit from volunteers. Organisations that use volunteers have access to a wider pool of local skills and experience. Volunteers are an important resource and support and can build community trust within organisations. Many organisations could not survive without the commitment of their volunteers[3].

The wider Bayside community benefits from volunteering. Volunteering helps build social networks, increases shared values, and strengthens social cohesion. People who volunteer are more likely to take part in other aspects of community life. Research shows that communities that harness volunteers are more resilient and socially connected[3].

Lastly, volunteering adds to the economy. In 2019, it is estimated that volunteering in Victoria enabled at least $58.1 billion worth of benefits across the State. The sum of commercial benefits worth $31.8 billion and civic benefits valued at $26.3 billion[3].

2. Volunteering in Bayside

2.1 About the City of Bayside

The City of Bayside is located 16km south-east of Melbourne along the coastline of Port Phillip Bay. Bayside's 106,862 residents enjoy the leafy surrounds of the municipality and have identified the close proximity to the beach, access to open space and a strong sense of community as key factors for living in Bayside.

Many Bayside households are family households (36.5%) comprising couples with children. This is followed by couples without children (24.2%) and lone person households (23.3%) with this number expected to increase over the next four years with an ageing population[2].

Bayside is an 'older' community compared to metropolitan Melbourne with the average age of 44 years compared to 36 years in metropolitan Melbourne. There is a substantially higher percentage of aged persons in Bayside (85 years and over) when compared to metropolitan Melbourne. However Bayside has fewer younger adults (25 to 34 years) residing in the area, as reports show those aged 25-34 tend to leave Bayside seeking more affordable housing or areas closer to work and entertainment opportunities[2].

It is anticipated that there will be an increase in the number of people with a disability over the next four years in Bayside. Over 13,923 residents reported to have a disability and 4,213 reported that they needed assistance in their day-to-day lives due to a disability, long-term health condition or old age. Currently, 9,800 Bayside residents are also providing unpaid care to family members or others because of a disability or illness[2].

2.2 Snapshot of volunteering in Bayside

Demographic profile

Volunteering is a valued and integral part of Bayside's community. Across the municipality, Bayside hosts many clubs, community groups and organisations. Many of these groups are managed entirely by volunteers and the services of these groups are delivered by volunteers. Others, like Council, engage volunteers alongside a paid workforce to deliver services and activities.

According to the 2016 Census data, 18,801 (24%) of Bayside residents volunteered. This was significantly higher volunteer rates compared to other metropolitan areas in Victoria[4].

Similarly, results from the 2020 Health and Wellbeing survey conducted by Bayside City Council showed that 27.2% of respondents reported that they volunteered regularly and 36.7% reported that they volunteered sometimes. 'Regular' volunteering was defined as once per month or more and 'sometimes' was defined as less than once per month[2].

In May 2022, Bayside City Council had 353 registered volunteers across a variety of programs including: environmental groups, library services, arts and culture and youth services. Of those volunteering with Council, there were almost twice as many females than males (66% female and 34% male).

Council has an ageing volunteer workforce with 78% of volunteers aged over 40 years old and 57% aged over 60 years old. With those aged under 30 years only account for 11% of Council's volunteer workforce. There is a critical need for Council to engage younger volunteers in our programs to ensure the sustainability of our volunteer programs for the future.

Table 1: Bayside City Council Volunteer Age and Gender breakdown

Age		Gender		
Age Range	**Percentage of Volunteers**	**Female**	**Male**	**Unidentified**
16 years — 19 years	3.7%	54%	38%	8%
20 years — 29 years	7.4%	69%	31%	0%
30 years — 39 years	3.1%	55%	45%	0%
40 years — 49 years	7.1%	58%	33%	9%
50 years — 59 years	6.8%	76%	24%	0%
60 years — 69 years	16.2%	80%	20%	0%
70 years — 79 years	19.3%	64%	32%	4%
80 years — 89 years	1.7%	25%	50%	25%
Unspecified Age	34.7%	-	-	-

Social profile of Volunteers

Targeted consultation undertaken during the development of this Plan identified further information regarding the local volunteer profile.

When asked about motivations for volunteering in Bayside, responses were strongest regarding 'to give back to the community, 'alignment with values' and 'enjoyment'. Many people identified multiple responses, across a range of motivations.

- Community-minded and want to give back to the community
- Alignment with social, humanitarian, and environmental causes
- Fun and enjoyment
- Meet new people and develop social networks
- Improve mental and physical health
- Develop new skills – pathway to employment and improve job prospects

When asked about type of volunteer work, responses for 'planting/propagation' and 'conservation' were highest. Many people identified a range of volunteer activities they were involved in.

Most popular reported volunteer activities:

Planting / propagation	Environmental conservation	Helping family member or neighbour	Rubbish collection
Program and event coordination	Administration	Home library services	Emergency relief
Field Work	Social support	Committee member	Sport and recreation support

3. Emerging trends in volunteering

3.1 The impacts of COVID-19 on volunteering

COVID-19 has significantly impacted the number of volunteers nationwide. In 2020, volunteering numbers had dropped by 1.1 million across Australia, a decline of over 50% since 2019. The local government sector saw a decline of 80% across volunteering rates in 2020. Many volunteers across industries expressing concerns for health risks associated with activities, as the most significant barrier to volunteering[5].

Throughout the pandemic there has been an increase in demand for volunteer services and the need for more volunteers across various industries, however volunteer re-engagement and recruitment has been the biggest challenge facing organisations. Research has shown that the volunteer industry is not bouncing back and the need to invest in volunteer retention and volunteer program sustainability is a key focus moving forward[5].

3.2 Ageing volunteer workforce

The Bayside municipality has an ageing volunteer workforce, with over 57% of Council volunteers aged over 60 years old. This is similar across Victoria with volunteering rates peaking amongst those aged 65 – 74 years of age[4]. It is important that Council and local volunteer involving organisations support an ageing volunteer workforce whilst also investing in increasing opportunities for younger residents to ensure the growth and sustainability of volunteerism in Bayside.

3.3 The changing face of volunteering

Volunteers of all ages and abilities are increasingly looking for diverse and flexible ways to contribute their time. In a recent survey completed by Volunteering Victoria, individuals were asked their preferred method to volunteer. Over 62% of individuals preferred to volunteer occasionally or with flexibility compared to 37% who preferred regular or fixed hours[3].

Due to people's commitments with work, study, family, and possibly volunteering for other organisations or groups, they may need more flexibility to fulfil their volunteering commitments. This trend and the changing nature of work suggest that some organisations need to rethink the usual metric of 'volunteer retention'. Newer models that can better accommodate volunteers may involve people engaging and disengaging more frequently, rather than filling ongoing roles. Volunteering undertaken on a project basis is another way to engage highly skilled and time poor volunteers. In any case, the capacity of organisations to provide more flexibility may assist in recruiting and retaining volunteers in the future[5].

4. Policy Context

The volunteering sector is governed and protected by Commonwealth and Victorian legislation and policy regulatory frameworks that influence how local government plans and delivers services to the community.

4.1 National

The National Standards for Volunteer Involvement are a set of standards developed by Volunteering Australia to guide and assist organisations when involving volunteers in meaningful, relevant and useful activities.

There are eight standards that are recognised as the best practice framework for volunteer involvement within Australia:

1. Leadership and management
2. Commitment to volunteer involvement
3. Volunteer roles
4. Recruitment and selection
5. Support and development
6. Workplace safety and wellbeing
7. Volunteer recognition
8. Quality management and continuous improvement

In late 2022, the National Strategy for Volunteering will be released. This National Strategy will provide strategic direction for the volunteering ecosystem and enable volunteering across Australia to be more effective, inclusive, and sustainable. Council will promote this resource to its volunteer involving organisations, as well as utilise the resource for future strategic direction.

4.2 State

In May 2022, the Victorian Government released the Victorian Volunteer Strategy 2022—2027

This Strategy will focus on five priority areas:

1. Making volunteering inclusive and accessible
2. Making volunteering flexible and easier
3. Supporting volunteers to be resilient, supported and empowered
4. Creating volunteering connections and pathways
5. Ensuring volunteering is recognised and celebrated

4.3 Local

Bayside's Volunteer Recruitment, Retention and Recognition Plan is guided by Council's 2050 Community Vision, the Council Plan 2021—2025 and the Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2021—2025 and links with other Council plans and strategies.

Council's vision is to *"partner with the community to protect and care for the community of life in Bayside making an inclusive, active, healthy, connected and creative experience for all"*. This vision is delivered through four goal areas: Our Planet, Our People, Our Place and Our Promise. Volunteering is a key component to help achieve a resilient, connected, and healthy Bayside and specifically addresses goal 2 'Our People' from the Council Plan.

Volunteering is also a key objective identified in Bayside's Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan which strives to support volunteering organisations and enhance inclusion and diversity across the volunteer sector in Bayside. The development of a specific Volunteer Recruitment, Retention and Recognition Plan is a key deliverable for the Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan.

Other council plans and policies that link directly with volunteering include:

- Safeguarding Children and Young People – Policy 2021
- Library Services Strategic Plan 2018—2022
- Community Resilience Plan and Vulnerability Framework 2021—2025
- Bayside's Arts Strategic Plan 2018—2022
- Active by the Bay Recreation Strategy 2013—2022
- Biodiversity Action Plan 2018—2027
- Climate Emergency Action Plan
- Bayside Open Space Strategy
- Graffiti Management Plan 2018

5. Development of the plan

5.1 Methodology

Many people had their say and shared their perspectives, passion and creativity to develop the Bayside Volunteer Recruitment, Retention and Recognition Plan.

The methodology used to develop this plan include both qualitive and quantitative approaches:

- Detailed research and the creation of an internal background paper that detailed the current state of volunteering in Bayside.

- Online survey sent to all volunteers, volunteer convenors, volunteer coordinators and volunteer involving organisations outlining the current and future needs for volunteers and volunteer programs within the municipality. 137 surveys were completed.

- Have Your Say community consultation on the draft plan. 119 surveys were completed, and five comments added to the Have Your Say online Vision Board.

- Regular meetings with volunteer program convenors.

- Attendance at Council facilitated committees: Bayside Healthy Ageing Reference Group, Bayside's Disability Access and Inclusion Advisory Commitee, Safeguarding Children and Young People Advisory Committee and Bayside's Youth FReeZA Committee

- Consultation with Bayside Neighbourhood Houses, Community Centres and local health service providers.

- Consultation with internal Council staff across relevant departments including volunteer coordinators who manage Council-run volunteer programs.

- Research to identify best practice approaches in Australia in relation to the volunteer sector, referring to Federal and State policy. This included working directly with Volunteering Victoria.

- Review of existing Council plans and policies.

- A Gender Impact Assessment was conducted as a requirement under the Victorian Gender Equality Act 2020. Council will commit to identify and track any gender-based trends over the coming four-year period and will also commit to ensuring all volunteer programs are gender inclusive.

5.2 Themes and priority areas

In the development of the Volunteer Recruitment, Retention and Recognition Plan, the following themes were highlighted through community consultation.

- Increase volunteer recruitment across Council-run volunteer programs

- Introduction of a Recognition Program for Council-run volunteer programs

- Create a consistent volunteer management model across all Council-run volunteer programs

- Increase flexibility within programs specifically focusing on time commitments and introducing "taster" sessions across Council-run volunteer programs

- Improve access of information on volunteer programs including updating Council's website

- Improve promotion and advertising for volunteer roles within the municipality

- Encourage volunteering opportunities for younger participants

- Create regular networking events for volunteer involving organisations

- Promote volunteer opportunities for all ages and abilities

- Develop and share volunteer resources with volunteer managers and coordinators across all volunteer organisations in Bayside

- Provide training opportunities for volunteers and volunteer involving organisations

- Promote the ways in which council can support volunteer involving not-for-profit organisations e.g. grants

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10 March 2022

Heathermacfarlane says:

"Have a go to page where all the volunteering opportunities, are listed. Enable non council orgs to add items."

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10 March 2022

MultiM says:

"Guidance for socially isolated young adults get invloved in community work. Easy to navigate website plus someone to help guide if needed."

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10 March 2022

dickie.bobbie says:

"Taster session and casual volunteering, to breakdown perceived barriers"

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18 March 2022

JingY says:

"Provide support volunteer person from different age group, abilities, and background might help. People resonate with similar stories."

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9 April 2022

SueR says:

"Run events at the location of the volunteering opportunity. Could be the library, an indigenous reserve or anywhere that needs volunteers."

6. Strategic direction

Bayside's Volunteer Recruitment, Retention and Recognition Plan aims to strengthen Bayside City Council's role in volunteering.

The plan focuses on promoting best practice volunteer recruitment and retention, as well as continuous improvement across the municipality including: education and advocacy work, recognition programs and improving partnership opportunities with local Bayside volunteer involving organisations. A key outcome of this Plan is to boost engagement levels across all volunteering programs and increase the number of volunteers throughout Bayside.

The Plan also encourages volunteering to younger Bayside residents through collaborative opportunities within Council departments, volunteer involving organisations and educational facilities. Partnerships and co-design are crucial in ensuring this Plan is delivered.

The following four objectives have been identified as key priority areas for the next four years:

1. Increase and support volunteerism in Bayside

2. Create a coordinated approach across Council run volunteer programs

3. Drive opportunities that increase youth volunteering in Bayside

4. Strengthen the connection between Council and Volunteer Involving Organisations

7. Action Plan

Objective 1: Increase and support volunteerism in Bayside		
Action	**Progress Indicator**	**Lead and Partners**
1.1 Create increased awareness about volunteering and volunteering opportunities in Bayside	- Number of promotional activities via Council's communication channels - Number of promotional activities via community volunteer involving organisations - Number of "Taster" volunteer sessions offered - Number of new volunteer registrations for Council volunteer roles - Number of volunteer opportunities advertised by Council for Bayside's volunteer involving organisations	Community Development Officer (Lead) Digital Communications Officer Citywide Biodiversity and Foreshore Planning Officer Community volunteer involving organisations
1.2 Increase inclusive and flexible volunteer opportunities for people of all ages and abilities	- Number of opportunities - Number of capacity building sessions - Range of programs and organisations offering inclusive and flexible volunteer opportunities	Community Development Officer (Lead) Inclusion Officer Community volunteer involving organisations
1.3 Advocate for volunteer's rights and responsibilities	- Number of council policies and strategies volunteers are included in (e.g. child safe policies) - Number of activities held to make organisations more welcoming for volunteers - Increase opportunity for volunteers to have a say in consultation	Community Development Officer (Lead)
1.4 Continue to find innovative ways to keep up-to-date with current and emerging trends and respond to changes in the volunteer sector	- Connect with relevant networks and volunteer organisations to stay abreast of emerging issues and trends, for example the LG Pro working group and Volunteering Victoria. - Delivery of annual Bayside volunteer survey	Community Development Officer (Lead)

Objective 2: Create a coordinated approach across Council run volunteer programs

Action	Progress Indicator	Lead and Partners
2.1 Implement a centralised induction and onboarding program for Council volunteers	• All Council-run volunteer programs and volunteers are registered on a centralised system • Council staff, volunteer convenors and open space contractors are provided ongoing training on how to induct and onboard new volunteers • Feedback received from new volunteers regarding induction and onboarding	Community Development Officer (Lead) Youth Worker Community Services Librarian Education & Communication Engagement Officer Healthy Ageing Officer Citywide Convenors
2.2 Develop a recognition program for Council volunteers	• Needs assessment completed with volunteers on type of recognition, training and other professional development opportunities to be delivered • Number of recognition and training programs delivered annually	Community Development Officer (Lead) Youth Worker Community Services Librarian Education & Communication Engagement Officer
2.3 Review and update Friends of Bayside annual action plans	• Consultation with volunteer convenors, open space contractors and Council staff • Council-run Friends of Bayside volunteer programs reviewed annually	Biodiversity and Foreshore Planning Officer (Lead) Community Development Officer Citywide Convenors

Objective 3: Drive opportunities that increase youth volunteering

Action	Progress Indicator	Lead and Partners
3.1 Promote volunteering to younger Bayside residents	• Needs assessment completed on interests and preferred method of volunteering for young people • Deliver co-designed marketing campaign with young people • Number of activities promoted or supported targeting younger volunteers (e.g bushland programs for youth) • Number of volunteer registrations (15 to 30 years of age)	Community Development Officer (Lead) Youth Worker Community Services Librarian Education and Communication Engagement Officer Citywide Bayside schools
3.2 Create partnership opportunities with educational bodies and co-design new volunteering initiatives to attract youth	• Number of partnerships created • Number of new co-designed volunteer initiatives developed	Community Development Officer (Lead) Youth Worker Bayside schools Citywide
3.3 Support existing, and develop new volunteer environment groups with a focus on youth-focused activities	• Consultation with existing environmental groups to identify gaps and needs • Activities delivered to attract new volunteers to Friends of Groups • Number of young people registered for environmental groups	Community Development Officer (Lead) Biodiversity and Foreshore Planning Officer Youth Worker Citywide

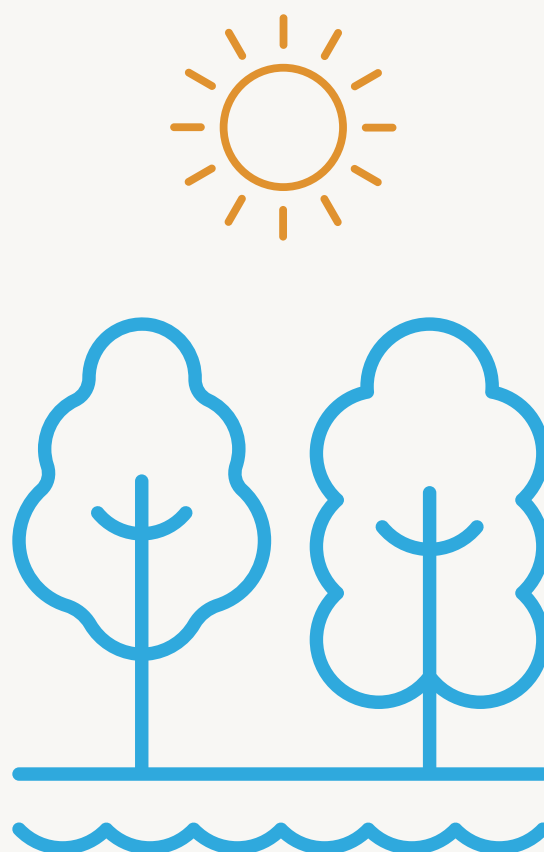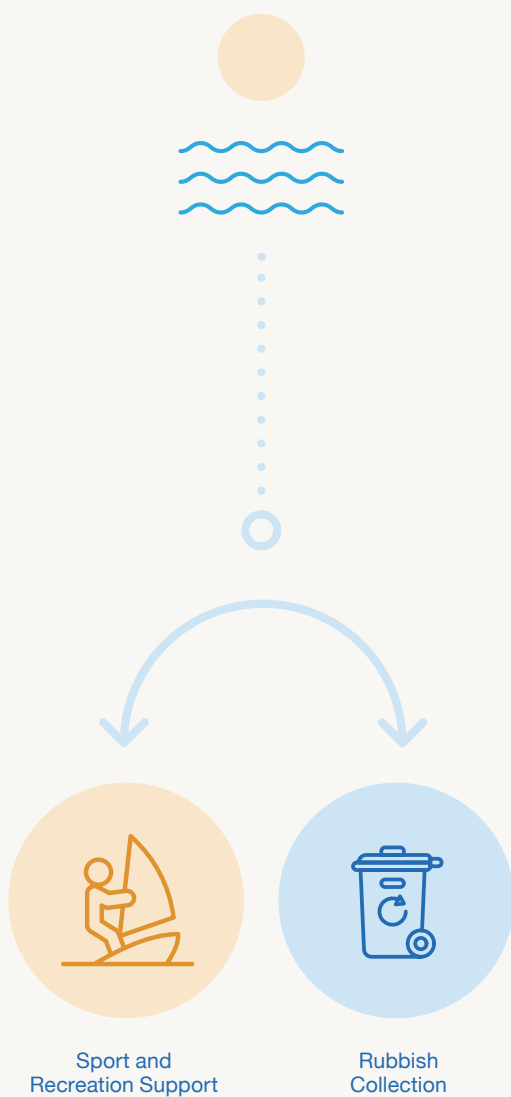| Objective 4: Strengthen the connection between Council and Volunteer Involving Organisations		
Action	**Progress Indicator**	**Lead and Partners**
4.1 Deliver training and development opportunities to Volunteer Involving Organisations	• Number of training and development opportunities provided to external volunteer involving organisations • Attendance at training workshops and events • Satisfaction of training workshops and events • Number of volunteer resources shared with volunteer managers and coordinators across all volunteer organisations in Bayside	Community Development Officer (Lead) Youth Services Volunteer Coordinator Art & Culture Volunteer Coordinator Library Services Volunteer Coordinator Healthy Ageing Officer
4.2 Promote networking opportunities between local Volunteer Involving Organisations	• Number of networking opportunities provided for local volunteer organisations • Attendance at networking events • Satisfaction of networking events	Community Development Officer (Lead) Youth Worker Community Services Librarian Education & Communication Engagement Officer Healthy Ageing Officer
4.3 Assist community organisations in seeking grant funding and use of Council venue hire to support volunteering	• Number of training opportunities provided • Number of grant applications received from volunteer involving organisations • Number of venue hire applications from volunteer involving organisations	Community Development Officer (Lead) Community and Social Planner Recreation and Events Liaison Officer

8. References

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I'm a Bayside

VOLUNTEER

Sport and
Recreation Support

Rubbish
Collection

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