Connecting Communities

14 June 2022

An introduction to the

Vision for Volunteering

What it is, where it came from and what it means for your organisation

support cambridgeshire

Vision for Volunteering

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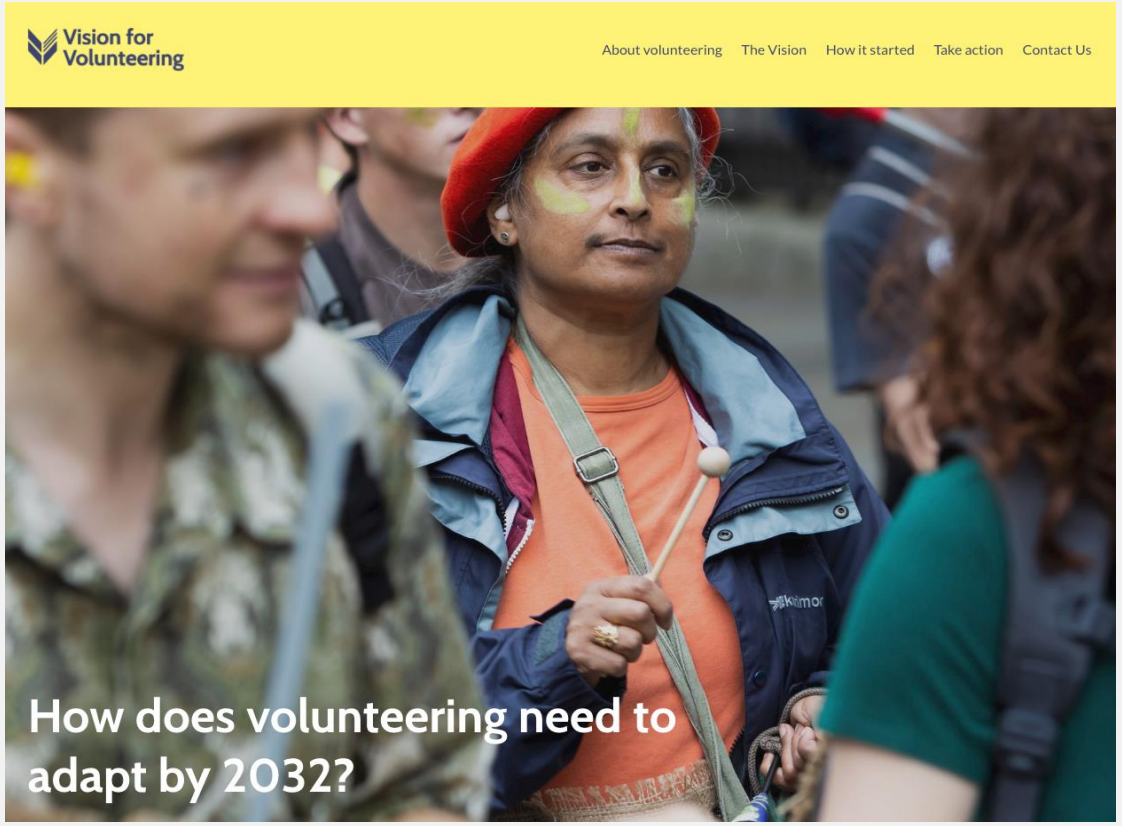
What is it?

- At **attempt to describe** what we want the volunteer-involving sector and movement to look and feel like, by 2032
- A **reflection** of what those most passionate about or engaged in volunteering think are its big opportunities and challenges



Where did it come from?

- A **recognition** that volunteering is changing and growing in importance
- A **cross-sector** effort to capture the power of this moment, and learn from previous ‘moments’ in volunteering

‘A new energy is emerging in volunteering: what will we do with it?’

Core Partners and Leadership Group

NCVO

navca
local focus national voice

VOLUNTEERING MATTERS

SPORT ENGLAND

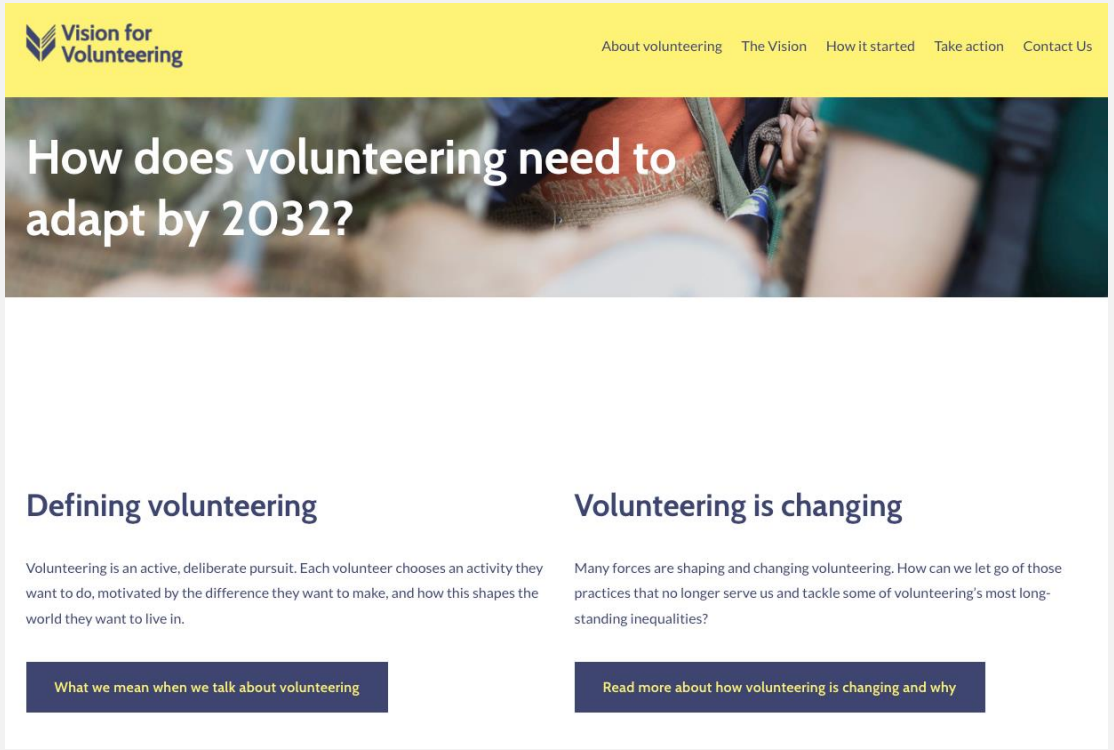
avm

How was it developed?

- **Consultation and engagement phase** - Nov 21 – Mar 22.
- 350 people from 300+ organisations:
  - 14 workshops across 7 thematic strands
  - 45 written submissions (including 9 from local infrastructure)
  - 13 individuals interviewed (to boost engagement from under-represented voices)
- A **Steering Group** provided support and challenge throughout - 19 experts, including local and national reps
- A **Working Group** assessed testimony, reviewed evidence and drafted the Vision.

What's in it?

- A new **definition** of volunteering
- A **brief history** of the recent volunteering movement, putting the Vision in context
- **A Vision in five cross-cutting themes**
- An overview of all **partners, contributors and consult**ees
- How you can **get involved**



www.visionforvolunteering.org.uk

It has five themes...

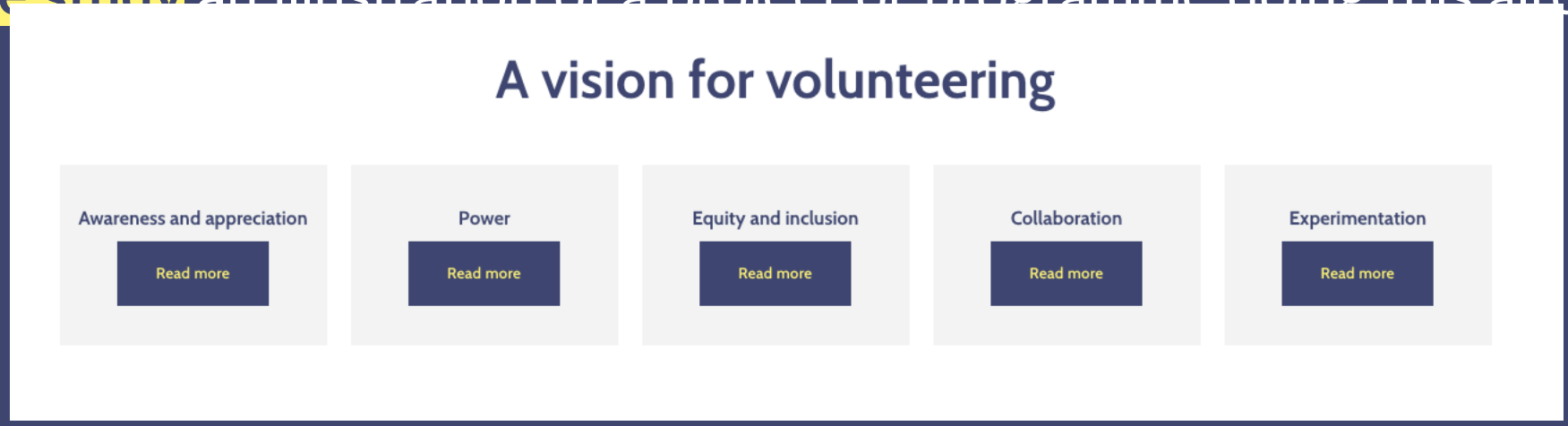
Vision for Volunteering

Each has a narrative why they're in the Vision, and what they mean

'By 2032....' change statements providing an idea of the Vision as reality

For Volunteers how this might look and feel for them

Case study an illustration of a project or programme doing this already



1 Awareness and Appreciation

*'...a future in which a culture of volunteering is further **ingrained in the collective psyche, part of everyone's life**...and woven into the activities and pastimes of day-to-day living. A future in which it's always easy to find ways to make a difference.'*

By 2032:

- ...equal validity alongside public and private endeavours...
- Volunteer voices embedded in the leadership and design of initiatives
- ...appreciated by individuals, communities, organisations and policy makers
- appreciation and celebration supported by common metrics for measurement, adopted by government, and VIOs

2 Power

*'…a future where the **power of volunteers and communities is recognised and supported**. Where volunteering is understood as the community taking action, often enabled or supported by organisations, but not always driven or generated by them.*

By 2032:

- …everyone can engage with their community and build the future they way to see
- Those supporting volunteers see them as equals, supporting them to make change
- First-hand experience is valued and we recognise who is missing, rectifying this to redistribute power
- Emerging social movements work alongside and positively disrupt more established, larger or better-resourced organisations, who support those with fewer resources

3 Equity and Inclusion

*'...We want volunteering to be **accessible and welcoming to everyone**, everywhere, so that the benefits of volunteering - to individuals and communities - are equally distributed.'*

By 2032:

- Inclusive cultures of all those who want to give their time, with volunteering fitting people's identity, background and experience
- Encourage raising concerns about discrimination or inequity as an opportunity to improve
- Those in leadership and governance look and sound more like the communities they serve

4 Collaboration

*'...We want a future where collaboration is a **natural, fluid, flexible and spontaneous** part of volunteering.'*

By 2032:

- Organisations support and champion communities to drive their collaboration, rather than owning it
- Moving between organisations and projects is normal and welcome – sharing people, talent and connections is how we work
- Tackle organisational barriers – recruit, train and work with volunteers jointly where we can

5 Experimentation

*'The Covid-19 pandemic has made many of us innovate, experiment and embrace flexibility like never before. As the crisis abates, we must ensure that spirit is not discarded - **experimentation should become a natural part of volunteering**, not a temporary bolt-on.'*

By 2032:

- Experimentation is not just reserved for times of crisis
- A culture of experimentation means communities and organisations are trusted to design projects as they see fit
- Relationships are built on trust and we avoid overly bureaucratic systems
- We learn from and move on from approaches that are not working

What's interesting?

Vision for Volunteering

- The model – the Vision is both a **conversation and a movement**
- A new and broader **definition**
- A recognition that volunteering's value and benefits are **felt in multiple spheres** – often at the same time
- An invitation to those in volunteering to **'make our own weather'**

An active, deliberate pursuit, motivated by the difference they want to make and how this shapes the world in which they want to live.

You are volunteering if you are doing something:

- *Designed to improve the world, a part of it or a community in it*
- *Which is your own free choice as an individual*
- *Without being paid*

What it isn’t…

Vision for Volunteering

- A road map, manifesto or a detailed action plan
- A funding commitment (yet)
- Owned by any one organisation
- Sectoral or ‘thematic’ – not focusing on any particular area
- The direct voice of volunteers (so far)

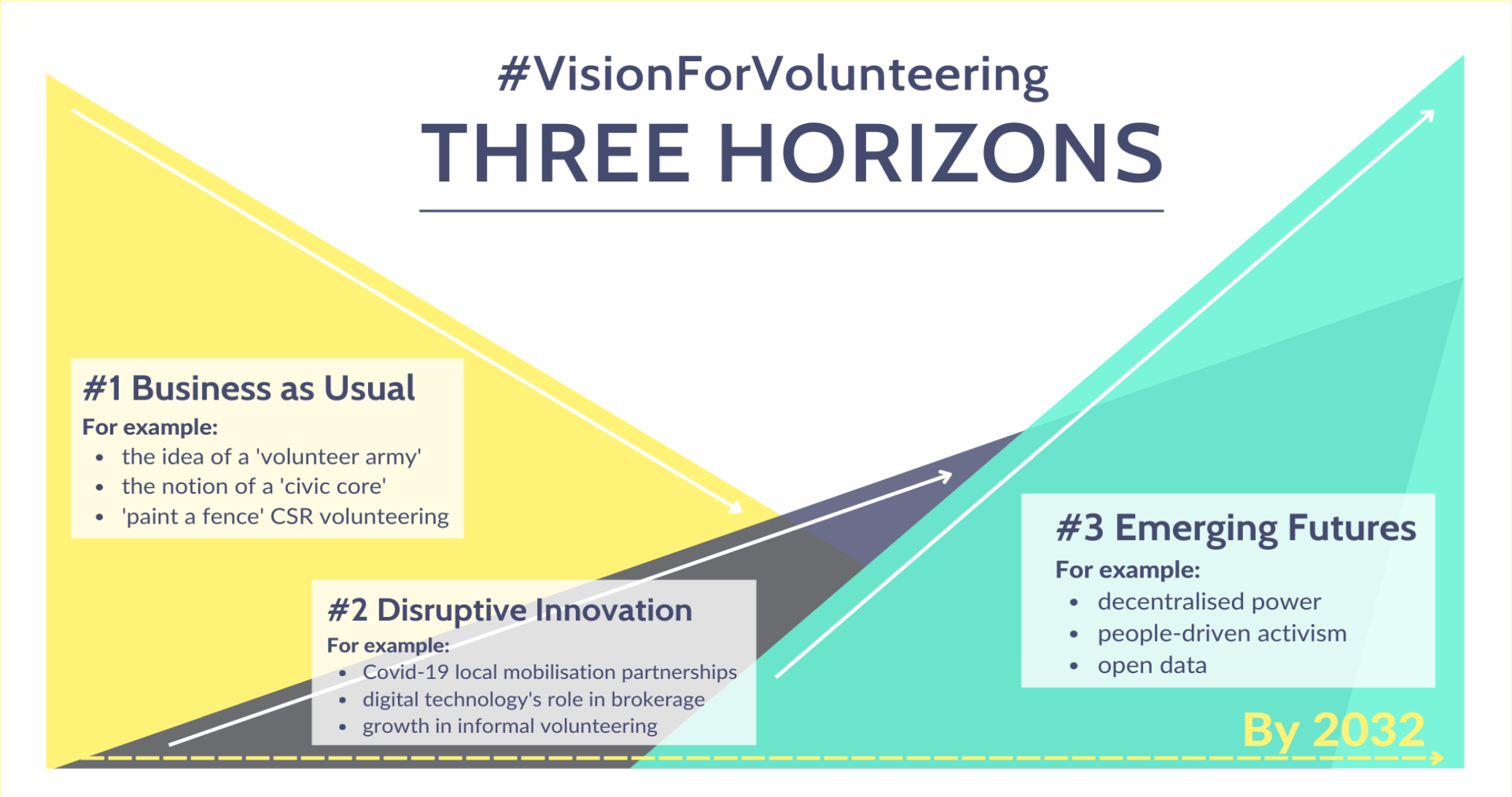
How it helps us

Vision for Volunteering

- A direction of travel for the future of volunteering
- Fuel for your volunteering strategy or funding applications
- A missing link connecting volunteering with inclusivity, redistribution of power and wider social change
- A way to capitalise on the energy of the Covid era, and challenge those supporting volunteering to match their words with actions
- *What else?*

What you can do next

Vision for Volunteering

- Sign up for updates (run by NAVCA) – www.visionforvolunteering.org.uk
- Test it in your own organisations, and with your volunteers – perhaps using the ‘Three Horizons’ model
- Make a commitment of your own
- Challenge your funding partners to follow your lead - the five core partners have all made commitments

What's on your Three Horizons?