

See Me, See You, See Us.

See Me
End mental health
discrimination

Volunteering Strategy 2021-2026



Welcome

As director of See Me, I know that it is essential that the opinions, ideas and experiences of people who have lived with or are living with mental health problems are central to any successful action to end mental health stigma and discrimination.

I find myself inspired, impressed and spurred to action by the work of our volunteers on a daily basis.

The breadth and variety of their involvement is a tremendous asset to our work and in order to achieve the vision and mission set out within the See Me strategy 'With Fairness in Mind (2021-2026)', it is vital



that we continue to build upon everything the volunteering programme has achieved so far, and embed volunteering even more fully across See Me.

I want to express the utmost gratitude from myself and the whole of See Me to our volunteers. It is no exaggeration to say we couldn't do it without you.

Wendy

Wendy Halliday, director



"I got such a buzz from being surrounded by like-minded people who all shared the same passion of contributing to the change of ending mental health stigma and discrimination."

Kirsty, See Me volunteer

Purpose of this strategy

The launch of the See Me strategy, 'With Fairness in Mind (2021-2026)', provides an opportunity for volunteering to be further embedded in all areas of our work moving forward.

The strategy outlines that See Me will, over the next five years, "achieve change at scale to tackle the deep rooted stigma and discrimination that directly affects people who have mental health problems in Scotland today".

Volunteering will play a vital role in supporting us to reach

across Scotland to a wide range of different people and communities.

This strategy sets out the vital importance of lived experience volunteers to See Me, and describes how See Me will work with our volunteers over the next five years; it explains the core principles that remain at the heart of our volunteer programme, and also highlights our key priorities for volunteering and how we plan to achieve them.



Our vision

Our vision is of a fairer and more inclusive Scotland, free from mental health stigma and discrimination.

Our mission

Guided and supported by people with experience of mental health problems, we challenge mental health stigma and discrimination. We influence change in behaviours, cultures and systems so that people with experience of mental health problems are respected, valued and empowered to achieve the outcomes important to them.

Our values

Respect

We treat our volunteers, the people we work with and our team with dignity, and respect the contribution they make.

Collaboration

We develop trusting relationships through understanding and responding to the needs of our stakeholders.

Integrity

We are authentic, reliable, credible and evidence informed.

Excellence

We are experienced and committed to reflection, learning and continuous improvement.

"My See Me highlights include walks, tours around Scotland, meeting the First Minister... building partnerships between fields of addiction and mental health, improving those partnerships and collaborations, starting local groups that tackle stigma, having events... See Me was where it all started."

Suzanne, See Me volunteer



"My biggest achievement was going to See Me and telling my story, in my own words...to know what you're doing has such an impact on other people's lives."

Liam, See Me volunteer



"I have been encouraged to use my own personal passions to spread the word, and get people to join in the big conversation."

Bridget, See Me volunteer

Overview of the programme

See Me was founded in 2002, starting out as campaign to challenge attitudes around mental illness. It has evolved over time to become a programme which looks to change systems, cultures and behaviours, which lead to people facing stigma and discrimination.

Throughout See Me's history, the voices, experiences and ideas of people with lived experience have been central to our work, and this has evolved into a robust volunteer programme that can help support the design and the delivery of our programme as well as grow and lead the See Us movement to end mental health stigma and discrimination.

Our volunteers all identify as having lived experience of mental health problems, either personally and/or by their close association with family members or friends. Many have also experienced stigma and discrimination first hand, and these experiences often drive the passion and determination our volunteers bring to their role. However, See Me volunteers bring a wide range of additional skills and experiences, and while we value their status as experts by experience, we do not assume or expect that they will wish to share that experience during their time as a See Me volunteer.



The evidence shows us that the most effective way to change minds and behaviours is to use an approach combining elements of social contact, education and influence/protest. Our volunteers are vital to the effective implementation of this approach.

See Me Volunteers are active across all areas where See Me aim to create change, including health and social care, in education and with young people, in workplaces, communities and with our campaigns and policy work. At times they work 'behind the scenes', helping to develop resources and inform policy discussions; they may choose to speak in the media about their own experiences or deliver training or workshops.

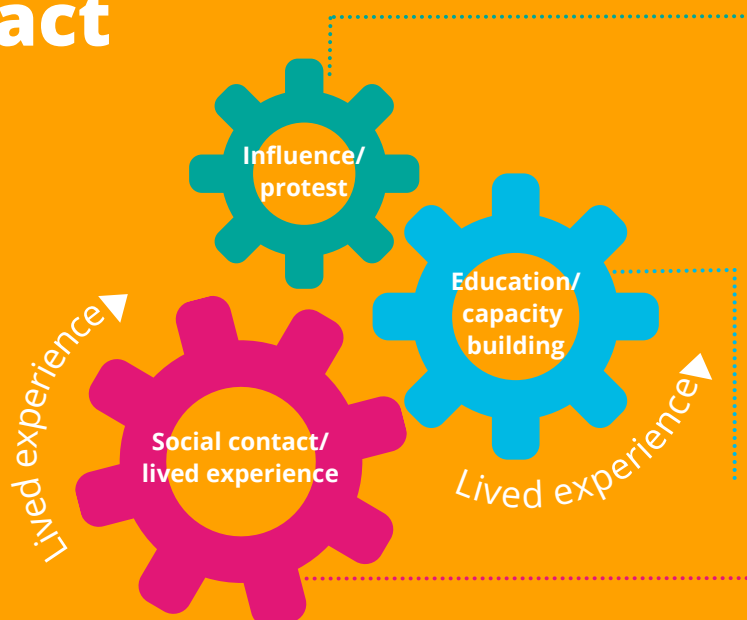
They bring their knowledge and experience to focus groups and policy discussions and hold community events. They also develop projects that respond to the needs they see around them and experience first hand.

See Me volunteers ensure the programme:

- **Focuses** its work in the right areas by remaining close to the issues affecting those with experience of mental health problems
- **Designs and delivers** work with those affected by mental health stigma and discrimination
- **Takes forward** effective social contact-based approaches

Social contact

Social contact aims to challenge stigmatising attitudes through planned interactions between people who have experienced mental health problems and have direct experience of stigma and discrimination, and members of targeted groups especially employers, education professionals and health care workers.



- Leadership
- Promote inclusive cultures
- Media
- Targeted social marketing
- Policy and practice
- Inclusive language
- Knowledge and upskilling
- Empowering action
- Social movement



For the period of 2021-2026, we will build on the work we have already achieved alongside our volunteers and deliver a more impactful, sustainable and targeted volunteer programme which even more effectively supports, engages and empowers our volunteers.

The work of our volunteers will continue to be directed by what they are most interested in and where they want to make a difference, in line with our empowerment approach. But it will always connect with our strategic aims, our key areas for focus, and remain in-keeping with our mission and values. In order to achieve this, the strategy has developed four objectives for volunteering in See Me.

By 2026 we want to be able to say:

**Our volunteers
are more
diverse**

**Volunteers are fully
integrated across the
programme**

**We have increased
the impact and reach
of the volunteer
programme**

**See Me is
recognised as an
enjoyable place
to volunteer**



Volunteers are fully integrated across the organisation

In 2021 we replaced our existing volunteer roles with the new Social Movement Volunteer role. Social Movement Volunteers are at the core of the See Us movement and have the opportunity to engage across the whole programme in a range of different ways, instead of committing to only one part of the organisation.

This will create more opportunities for staff and volunteers to connect and build relationships, and encourage an even

greater variety of activity with which volunteers can engage, including more longer-term opportunities. To further support this, we will develop and deliver cross organisation training and involvement processes to ensure the effective and safe involvement of volunteers across See Me.

2021 also saw the creation of our Volunteer Steering Group, a group made up of staff and volunteers meeting quarterly to lead work implementing our four volunteering objectives.

Increasing the diversity of our volunteers

We know that the best way to work with within the communities experiencing the highest levels of mental health stigma is for that work to be led by members of that community.

We will conduct equality and diversity monitoring of our volunteers, partners and wider See Us movement supporters in order to better understand who we are and are not currently engaging, and take forward action to act on gaps identified.

We will take forward targeted action to recruit more people from different equality groups and we will identify and take forward creative and innovative approaches to encourage a more diverse range of people to grow the See Us movement. We will work with key partners to ensure our recruitment, materials and approach is appealing and relevant to diverse communities.



Increasing the IMPACT and REACH of the volunteer programme

As our volunteer programme becomes more diverse, the reach of the programme will grow. This greater diversity will complement partnership working with key organisations and will open up new ways to engage communities we have not worked with before.

We will think creatively about how to focus on managing and facilitating effective social contact and developing approaches to enhance opportunities for social contact.

We will develop new systems to track the impact of volunteer input and involvement across the programme, both internally and externally. We will equip our volunteers with the skills and tools to conduct simple, creative evaluations of their own events and activities. And we will provide partners/volunteers with key areas to feed back on following volunteer involvement and engagement to help us to build a picture of the specific value and richness our volunteers bring to their work.

Above all, we want our volunteers to enjoy their role with See Me. We know that our volunteers value feeling connected to other volunteers, that they are engaged in meaningful activity that they care about and that they have the opportunity to develop new skills and build confidence.

We will review our current volunteer approach and journey and make improvements according to the feedback we receive and we will use this data to continually improve the volunteer experience.

We will invest in the continuous development of our volunteers through formal training and informal skill sharing sessions. We will offer a greater range of opportunities, both digital and in person, for volunteers to connect and collaborate with each other.

We will continue to thank, celebrate and value our volunteers in appreciation of the significance of the enormous role that they play within See Me and the See Us movement to tackle mental health stigma and discrimination. Thank you to all our current, former, and future volunteers – we couldn't do it without you!

See Me is recognised as an *enjoyable* place to volunteer



Further links

- For the full picture of our plan for the next five years, please read our strategy, [With Fairness in Mind](#)
- Our website is the best place to find a huge range of tools and resources relating to tackling mental health stigma and discrimination, at the home of the See Us movement - seemescotland.org/SeeUs
- To keep up to date with See Me's volunteer recruitment and to learn in more detail about the work our volunteers are involved in, please visit our [volunteering pages](#)

seemescotland.org