



Inspire Volunteering Awards 2024

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Introduction

Purpose of the Awards

Stirling's volunteers are the heart of the community, dedicating time, passion and energy into improving the lives of others. The Inspiring Volunteer Awards, run by Stirlingshire Voluntary Enterprise, celebrates these local champions by recognising and celebrating their achievements and contributions.

The main aims of the Inspire Volunteering Awards are

- Celebrate the achievements of volunteers and volunteering involving organisations
- Raise the profile of volunteering in Stirling

We also aim to

- Inspire people to volunteer in Stirling

The Inspire Volunteering Awards is held biennially and this year took place at the Albert Halls, Stirling on September 18th.

Approximately 150 people attended on the night which included shortlisted volunteers and their guests, nominators, and invited guests from partner and statutory organisations.

The event host for the evening was Go Radio presenter Gina Mckie. Guests were welcomed in by Piper Callan Taylor from Stirling High School, and midway entertainment was provided by local community band Saltire Steel. Music throughout the evening was provided by Ewan from Europa Music.



Nomination Process

Preparation for the Inspire Volunteering Awards 2024 started way back in March when the sub-group held an initial meeting to discuss the 2024 categories. Using data from previous years to indicate which categories are most popular, as well as looking at recent trends in the sector, enabled the categories to be chosen.

After deliberation the 2024 categories were

- Young Volunteer of the Year
- Volunteering for your Environment
- Volunteering for Health & Wellbeing
- Volunteering for your Community
- Volunteering for Sport, Leisure & Culture
- Volunteering for Strong Organisations
- Volunteering for Children and Young People
- The Stirling 900 Award

2024 is also a momentous year for Stirling as we celebrate our 900th anniversary and acknowledge our remarkable history. As a highlight of the 2024 Awards, and to mark this historic event, we launched a search for Stirlingshire's longest standing volunteers, The Stirling 900 Award. We received 29 amazing stories of decades of volunteering totalling 555 years!!

Once the categories had been decided the hard work starts to encourage sponsorship from local third sector and statutory partners. Obviously, this helps to support the Awards financially but also serves to strengthen partnerships with local and national organisations.

This year we were supported by 'Gold' event sponsors Solicitors for Older People Scotland, and NHS Forth Valley, and our 2024 Award sponsors were Colleges Scotland, Scottish Fire & Rescue Service, Loch Lomond and the Trossachs National Park, Kildean Business Park, The Climate Action Hub and the Thistle Centre Stirling.

Nominations open during Volunteers Week which gives a strong comms link, for example we highlight a different category each day of Volunteers Week, for example on the Power of Youth Day we promote our Young Volunteer of the Year category, as well as celebrating previous winners.

We received over 100 nominations this year which is double the number in 2022. All the SVE Staff team pulled together to encourage nominations which served to boost our final numbers, however it made the judges job a lot harder!

Listening

Representing

Understanding

Supporting

the sector
to flourish

Judging Panel

The 2024 Judging Panel convened on August 6th at the Barracks Conference Centre once nominations had closed.

The judging panel consists of some of our sponsors and partners, alongside the Provost and local MSYP's. They are each sent the nominations in advance, with judging criteria and scoring sheets.

This year, different to previous years, we decided to score against 5 criteria

- Alignment to the category: Does the volunteer meet the award category description? If so tell us how? You can use examples to back up your nomination.
- Impact: Describe the difference that the volunteer has made. Include information about the number of people that the volunteer has impacted and any positive changes which have happened as a result of their volunteering.
- Inclusivity: Does the volunteer make a special effort to include others, or make sure that other people can participate equally? Describe how your nominee does this.
- Dedication: How does the volunteer demonstrate their dedication to their volunteering? You may want to tell us how long they have been volunteering and how often they volunteer. However, dedication can be demonstrated in other ways such as always having a positive attitude towards their volunteering. It's not just about the amount of time you volunteer, we want to hear about all kinds of dedication.
- Personal growth: Tell us how the nominee has benefited from volunteering, and how it has supported their own personal growth. This could include increased skills, empathy, confidence or social connections.

Our thanks go to the 2024 Judging Panel

- Anne Knox (Chair), Stirlingshire Voluntary Enterprise
- Elaine Watterson, Provost
- Claire Barrie, Thistles Stirling
- Jillian Cheape, Colleges Scotland
- Mark Findlay, Active Stirling
- Karen Goudie, NHS Scotland
- Lorraine Robertson, NHS Forth Valley
- Zac Mickel, MSYP
- Sophie Kerrigan, MSYP

Once the judges decisions have been made all nominees and nominators are informed of the outcome. We then announce the shortlist through our own channels as well as in local press.

Impact

Aim: Celebrate the achievements of volunteers and volunteer involving organisations

The Inspire Volunteering Awards makes volunteers feel that their work is valued and celebrated, and allows their organisation to demonstrate their thanks for the commitment a volunteer has shown. It is clear to see the impact it has on all the shortlisted volunteers and the winners.

It lets volunteers see that their lived experience is a valuable asset to be proud of.

Ian MacFarlane, winner of the Volunteering for Health & Social Care said

“

Being a 14 year recovered alcoholic is a great achievement for me. And volunteering for a great organisation like Change Grow Live helps me too give back to the community. So the fact that I was nominated by such a great service is not only testimony to the journey I have made but the belief that Change Grow Live have in me. I was gobsmacked when I was told I had been nominated for the award and even more so when I won. It just goes to show that if you put in the effort you will be recognised for your hard work. And as I say to anyone in addiction if I can do it you can do it! Believe in yourself!

”



Impact

Aim: Raise the profile of volunteering in Stirling

The Inspire Volunteering Awards was featured in the Stirling Observer and the Daily Record.

[PressReader.com - Digital Newspaper & Magazine Subscriptions](#)

[Volunteers across charities, sport, disability and communities celebrated at Stirling awards ceremony - Daily Record](#)

We also featured on several organisations social media and websites including this blog from Stirling City Heritage Trust

<https://www.stirlingcityheritagetrust.org/blog/sve-inspire-awards-september-2024>

Local press coverage about volunteering can significantly increase awareness of volunteer opportunities. When local media highlights volunteer events such as The Inspire Volunteering Awards it raises the visibility and profile of volunteering. This not only informs local residents about available opportunities but also inspires them to get involved. By showcasing the positive impact of volunteering, local press can motivate more people to participate and contribute to their communities.



Impact

Aim: Inspire people in Stirling to volunteer

One of the aims of the Inspire Volunteering Awards is to motivate others to try volunteering when they hear about the positive impact it can have both on the volunteer, and the people they support. Recognition motivates people and as Ian says 'If I can do it, you can do it!'

Hearing stories of personal growth, community change, and the connections made through volunteering can motivate others to get involved. Plus, seeing peers recognised for their efforts can spark interest and enthusiasm in those who might be considering volunteering.

Our overall Inspire Volunteering Award winner, Colin Watterson, felt that even though he already volunteers, the Award and recognition made him want to give even more!

“

When I won the Inspire Volunteering Award it blew me away. I honestly believe that anybody in the hall that night could've won it. Being recognised in this way is genuinely humbling and just makes me want to try harder to justify the award.

”



2024 Winners

The winners of the 2024 Inspire Volunteering Awards were as follows

Young Volunteer of the Year sponsored by Colleges Scotland
Lewis Watt, Stirling Champs

Volunteering for your Environment Sponsored by the Climate Action Hub
ROC Garden Group

Volunteering for Health & Wellbeing sponsored by NHS Forth Valley
Ian Macfarlane, Change, Grow, Live

Volunteering for your Community sponsored by the Thistle Centre Stirling
Fallin Community Voice

Volunteering for Sport, Leisure & Culture
Craig Allan, Active Stirling

Volunteering for Strong Organisations sponsored by Loch Lomond & the Trossachs National Park
Hugh Grant, Forth Valley Welcome

Volunteering for Children and Young People sponsored by the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service
88th Stirling Scouts

The Inspire Volunteering Award 2024
Colin Watterson, Forth Valley Sensory Centre

The Stirling 900 Award sponsored by the Kildean Business Park was awarded to
Pat Griffen
John Dymond
June Payne

