

## HSHVA saves 88% on expense admin with vHelp



**Halton & St Helens**  
Voluntary and Community Action

In January 2021, Halton & St Helens Voluntary and Community Action (HSHVCA) was commissioned by St Helens CCG to provide volunteers for the rollout of the Covid vaccination programme locally.

As a voluntary sector local infrastructure body, HSHVCA normally supports local organisations that rely on volunteers, but the vaccination programme required it to recruit and support around 150 volunteers itself.

Supporting so many new volunteers presented HSHVCA with logistical and technical challenges, including how to reimburse expenses to a large number of volunteers. Under the vaccination programme, volunteers are eligible to claim expenses for their travel to and from their volunteering role.

HSHVCA's existing expenses process for volunteers was time consuming, requiring volunteers to fill out forms and send them back to the charity. HSHVCA's finance team then had to enter the payments onto its finance system. Sometimes it took up to 4 weeks for volunteers to be repaid their expenses.

Claire Redford-Kerr, Volunteering Lead at HSHVCA, says: "From conversations we had with volunteers, they were put off from claiming expenses by the systems we were using. But one of our good practice mottos is that volunteering should not cost the volunteer. They should not be left out of pocket."

**To find a solution, Redford-Kerr approached vHelp about using its Expenses app and set two main aims:**

- 1) To increase the number of volunteers claiming expenses**
- 2) Potentially raise money by allowing volunteers to donate back unwanted expense payments.**

In March, HSHVCA started to use vHelp Expenses. Redford-Kerr said it was quick and easy to get the volunteers using the system, even though many were older residents who do not ordinarily use mobile phone apps. "The volunteers were sent a link," she says. "They registered online and they downloaded the app. The volunteers then started to claim their expenses on a day-to-day or week-to-week basis."

In the first month, 45 volunteers from HSHVCA registered to use the Expenses service, making a total of 90 expense claims. About 50% of expenses were donated back to the charity, raising almost £400 for HSHVCA once Gift Aid was added.

Equally important, volunteers received the money directly into their bank accounts within 24 hours of their coordinator approving the claim.

Redford-Kerr says the vHelp system made the expense process far easier. “Prior to using vHelp our finance team were getting inundated with spreadsheets of volunteer expense, between the volunteer management and finance team we used to spend around 45 minutes to process a single expense claim. Using vHelp Expenses reduced expense processing time down to 5 minutes per expense, that’s 88% reduction in admin time. Using vHelp also meant volunteers are getting paid quickly.”

## Positive feedback

**Catherine Emley, one of our Street Champion volunteers said,**

“Now that I am getting used to your system, I just wanted to let you know that I am really confident using it and find it very quick and easy to log my claims. Thanks again for introducing it to St Helens & Halton VCA.”

## vHelp Keytakeaways Expenses



vHelp reduced the admin burden from 45 to 5 mins per expense



Volunteers of all ages found the system easy to use



Volunteer manager was able to keep track of expenses payments easily with a full audit trail



Enabled H&StH to estimate the cost of expenses accurately & provide evidence to their funder



£320 in Donated expenses + £75 Gift Aid in one month



Volunteer received payment within 24 hours

## vHelp

For further information, please contact the vHelp team on

[hello@vhelp.co.uk](mailto:hello@vhelp.co.uk) or 020 7117 2097