

## Skills for Democracy – Lesson Plan 2

### The Role of Charities

#### Objectives

- Students will learn more about charities and their different aspects.
- Students will think about how charities impact on people's daily lives.

#### Resources

- Information sheet – The Role of Charities
- “Post-it” notes
- Pens and paper
- 4 different newspapers
- Case study – Volunteering with UNA Exchange

#### Time

One hour

#### Room Layout

- Tables in groups, splitting class into 4

#### Introduction

Students might have only heard things about charities when a natural catastrophe has happened somewhere. But they represent much more than that. People working in the voluntary sector are acting in many different ways to make people's lives better.

#### Introductory Activities (25 minutes)

##### *Listing charities (10 minutes)*

- Ask pupils to write as many names of charities as they can on “Post-it” notes.
- They should now classify the charities by category (research, children, health care, overseas development etc.).
- Why do they think that the government is not in charge of what charities do?
- Do they think that charities are useful?

##### *Case study – The voluntary sector in action (15 minutes)*

- Give students the case study and give them time to read it.
- Have they heard about UNA Exchange before?
- What do they think about the charity's projects?
- What interested them most? The work, or discovering another country?

#### Main Activity – Spot the charity (25 minutes)

- Give each group a different newspaper.
- Ask them to go through it and yell “ORG”! whenever they spot an article, or a sentence, that involves a charity. Use this as an opportunity to explore the issue. The teacher leading the session should complete a table with each example of a charity.
- Ask the students to define how the charity is involved each time.

- Are there many articles dealing with this sort of topic?
- Do they think that charities and their work are covered enough by the press?

### **Plenary – Assessment (10 minutes)**

- Could you have imagined working or volunteering for a charity before? And now? Do you think it can be a career option?
- Are you interested in participating in a project abroad?
- What did you imagine about charities before? Did you know that most of the people working in that field are professionals and waged?
- Complete self-assessment using the “Parthenon paper”.

### **Where next?**

- Investigate volunteering opportunities in your local area.
- Ask representatives of charities to come into school and describe their work.

### **Organisations with useful resources**

- Wales Council for Voluntary Action [www.wcva.org.uk](http://www.wcva.org.uk)
- National Council for Voluntary Organisations [www.ncvo-vol.org.uk](http://www.ncvo-vol.org.uk)
- UNA Exchange [www.unaexchange.org](http://www.unaexchange.org)
- Volunteering Wales [www.volunteering-wales.net](http://www.volunteering-wales.net)
- Institute for Volunteering Research [www.ivr.org.uk](http://www.ivr.org.uk)
- National Association for Voluntary and Community Action [www.navca.org.uk](http://www.navca.org.uk)
- Voluntary Service Overseas [www.vso.org.uk](http://www.vso.org.uk)

## Information Sheet: The Role of Charities

### WHAT ARE THEY?

Charities are organisations with the aim of helping people. This is either by providing aid (goods or money) or by giving information to help people understand an issue. They are not part of government and they feed any money that they make back into their work.

### WHO ARE THEY?

You might recognise some of the logos below - do you know what these organisations do?



### HOW ARE THEY LINKED TO DEMOCRACY?

Charities often work for a particular cause and put pressure on governments to take their cause seriously (you will see how in your next session). If enough people get involved with a particular cause then governments sometimes take it as seriously as the results of an election.

### HOW CAN I GET INVOLVED?

Almost every charity needs volunteers to enable it to do its work. Volunteering can just be helping out in the office but sometimes it can be a lot more exciting.

To volunteer, you could:

- Ask to be placed with a local charity when your school organises work experience for students
- Visit [www.volunteering-wales.net](http://www.volunteering-wales.net) and take a look at existing opportunities for volunteers
- Look up the phone number or e-mail address of a charity that particularly interests you, and ask them whether they need volunteers

## Case study – Volunteering with UNA Exchange



### **Volunteering and Democracy**

What has volunteering got to do with democracy?

Maybe more than you think.

Understanding that people are different, with different needs and different views, is important if we are to live together democratically. On a professional level, on a personal level and on a social level, understanding one another is about getting to know people and seeing things from a different perspective. Working in unison to achieve something is a good way of encouraging this. Interacting with people who come from a different background, culture, religion or country initially shows you the differences between people. But it also shows you the similarities.

You could engage in this kind of activity in lots of different ways, but why not do it in a way that's fun?

International Volunteer Projects (IVPs) bring together people from all over the world. The projects usually run for 3 weeks in countries across Europe, America, Asia, Africa and Australasia. They might focus on restoring a castle in the south of France, rescuing turtles on a Greek beach, or helping to organise a national festival in South Korea. And it doesn't cost the earth. IVPs are organised by voluntary organisations and charities in every continent. By signing up to an IVP organised through UNA Exchange, based in Cardiff, you can get involved for about £130, which covers all food and accommodation.

UNA Exchange organises two programmes: one in developed countries (Europe, North America, Japan and South Korea) and one in developing countries (Latin America, Africa and South East Asia). Both offer a range of CV-enhancing opportunities to volunteers, including leadership training and publicity skills.

To get an idea of what an IVP experience is actually like, read on...

### Catalonia, Spain, July 2005

The organisers, who were a lot younger than I had expected (in their 20s), collected the group from the rendezvous point at the local town's bus station. They drove us higher up the hills to the camp which is perched on a 900m high hillock with *buenas vistas* all around. We sat in a circle and introduced ourselves, thankfully without any naff get-to-know-each-other games. The group soon got to know each other! During the day we spent four or five hours doing continuous but not strenuous work and then returned to the camp where lunch had been prepared by the volunteers not on forest work that day. After post-lunch relaxation or *siesta* we were taken on visits to local areas of interest, or went kayaking or river walking. In the evening we'd either go into town for entertainment or stay at the camp. We were something of a local spectacle, appearing in the local paper and even on Catalan television; local people were very enthusiastic and keen to come up and talk to us, and though my bungled Spanish replies were probably complete nonsense, they smiled politely and laughed a deep, guttural laugh. In my opinion it really was an interesting way to experience another country. I didn't often feel like a tourist, which I detest, and I met local people rather than just other travellers.

(Jack Rattenbury)

### Germany, August 2005

I have just got back from an amazing time in Germany. The project consisted of three weeks, of which the first was set aside to prepare for the *Stadtranderholung* festival and for cultural excursions to the surrounding area, and the second and third was actually taking part in the festival. During this fortnight, we took the bus with 160 children aged between 5 and 13 to a summer camp, which was 5 minutes away from the town where we were staying, and then began the programme. As leaders, we were expected to prepare at least one activity for the children per day – it could be a sport or craft for any number of children. There was an enormous range of activities, from origami and Japanese dancing to painting stones, making rain makers and making wind socks. We also had two activity days on the Thursdays, where we did different activities and the older children had a sleepover, that some of us helped out with.

(Anonymous)

### Kedros, Greece, November 2005

When I arrived at my project I felt a bit worried – oh God, I have to spend 2 weeks here with these people I don't know; it's going to be really difficult! However, when we started doing stuff together, and getting to know each other, I started to have loads of fun, and realised that (of course!) everyone else was in the same boat! It was a good chance to get to know the other people, and try out your catering skills – cooking for 17 people! In terms of work we built a pathway, made sanding huts, did litter picking, and painting. It was fun because everyone got on so well and was interesting to talk to. We'd work till 11, take a break, then work again till 2 when we'd have lunch, made by the home team! In the second week we could cook what we wanted, so we ate crepes and made Mexican tortillas! After that we were free to do what we wanted, which for some was sleep, or play cards, or have origami seminars. We did archery, rafting, and abseiling on 3 afternoons. In the evening we usually went to the café and played backgammon, or a couple of times we went to some Greek festival. Once, on a volunteer's birthday, we took the café over and made them play our CDs!! It was a fantastic two weeks and a great way of meeting people.

(Jenna Wilcox)



If you would like more information about UNA Exchange, check out their website at [www.unaexchange.org](http://www.unaexchange.org) or pop into their office at the Temple of Peace in Cathays Park, Cardiff. Alternatively, phone 029 2022 3088 or e-mail [info@unaexchange.org](mailto:info@unaexchange.org).

## The Role of Charities – Skills Sheet

### 1. *Thinking about charities and what they do (as a whole class)*



#### LISTENING

\* You will listen to what other people have to say about the charities they think of.

#### DECISION MAKING

\* You will choose which category each charity fits into.

### 2. *Reading and discussing the case study (on your own and with the whole class)*



#### DEBATING

\* You will be discussing the pros and cons of working with charities.

### 3. *Looking for the work of charities in newspapers (in a group and with the whole class)*



#### DEBATING

\* You might discuss whether each story involves charities.

#### LISTENING

\* You will have to stop and listen to other groups during the newspaper activity.

#### DECISION MAKING

\* You will have to choose which newspaper stories are about charities.

Skills for Democracy  
Self-assessment “Parthenon paper”

# The Role of Charities

**DECISION MAKING**


**LISTENING**


**DEBATING**


**MEETING**


**COMPROMISE**


**YOU**