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Member of the National Council for Voluntary Organisations – Registered Charity No1180775

Review of 2025-2026

For the year ending 31 March 2026



Monday 1 June – Sunday 7 June 2026

Volunteers' Week is an annual UK-wide campaign which celebrates and recognises the contributions of volunteers. The campaign highlights the diversity and unity of volunteer work across the UK and celebrates the spirit of volunteering that enriches communities each year.

Thornbury Volunteer Centre aims to build support from all members of the Thornbury and district community by showcasing volunteering opportunities and inspiring positive change.

As well as helping others, volunteering has been shown to improve volunteers' wellbeing. It's human nature to feel good after helping someone out. Volunteering can also help you gain valuable new skills and experiences, and boost your confidence.

Want to volunteer but don't know where to start? Chat with Thornbury Volunteer Centre and let us know what you're interested in. We have volunteering opportunities to suit all levels of commitment, experience & time availability; whatever your circumstances you could help many different causes. So, to all the new volunteers who have come forward this past year and to all those who volunteer regularly, please accept our very grateful and massive thanks, you are the people who make our communities strong. To those of you who are thinking of volunteering, we look forward to hearing from you this Volunteers' Week.

To contact Thornbury Volunteer Centre: call in to our offices in Thornbury Town Hall, open 10.30am – 12noon weekdays, no appointment necessary; visit our website at www.volunteer-thornbury.co.uk and search our database of volunteering opportunities; follow us on Facebook, Instagram or X; email us at mail@volunteer-thornbury.co.uk

REDUCED SUMMER OPENING

Our offices will be open Monday and Wednesday mornings only from Monday 20 July until Friday 28 August. Normal hours of Monday-Friday 10.30am-12 noon resume on Tuesday 1 September.

Thornbury Volunteer Centre is run by a team of volunteers and a part time employee with the aim of promoting all aspects of voluntary work in Thornbury and district. As a registered charity, we comply with the Charity Commission's aim of ensuring that all charities are of benefit to the public and the communities which they serve.

Volunteer Co-ordinators

The Centre operates with a team of volunteer co-ordinators who attend the office daily on a rota. The co-ordinators are the backbone of the Centre and donate their time on a regular basis. This year regular volunteers Marjorie Warren and Kerry Annett left our team and we send grateful thanks for their time and dedication to the Volunteer Centre and wish them well.

We have welcomed Kate de la Haye and Cassidy Squire to our Tuesday morning team, Lorna McCarthy, Jackie Cavanagh and Linda Taylor to our Wednesday team, we hope they enjoy their time with us. To all past and current volunteers, thank you.

Trustees

This year Barbara Ray stepped down as Chairperson of the Trustees after fourteen years and Catherine Mason took her place. We are very pleased to say that Barbara is continuing as a Trustee, as her experience and knowledge are invaluable. A long serving Trustee, Alan Payne, stepped down from the Committee although he is staying with us as a volunteer co-ordinator. Alan has served as Trustee for 10 years and his expertise will be sorely missed. Penny Taylor has moved from her role as Treasurer to Secretary and we have welcomed new Trustees Mike Robinson, Treasurer, and Neil Martin. We are confident that their ideas and expertise will be of great benefit in the coming years. Our Trustees ensure that we operate within the guidelines set by our Constitution, the Charity Commission and NCVO.

The Centre

The office is open to the public between 10.30am-12noon Monday to Friday. We have a large database of current volunteering opportunities, both locally, regionally and nationally.

Paid Staff

Our paid employee, Kim Webb works 7.5 hours a week, part funded by South Gloucestershire Council. In return for agreeing a 3-year Service Level Agreement with Thornbury Town Council we have been awarded a further grant which will enable us to increase the hours of the Development Co-ordinator to 15 hours per week. We are grateful to both South Gloucestershire Council and Thornbury Town Council for their core funding.



Website and IT

We are in the process of creating a new website.

We launched our new volunteering platform at the start of 2025. Volunteers can now keep track of roles they are interested in, get matched to specifically tailored opportunities and contact organisations directly. Organisations can post their own opportunity roles, monitor their progress and message volunteers directly to invite them to apply.

Social Media

Our social media accounts help to keep us in touch with all members of the community and this year we have added Instagram to our portfolio. Volunteer, Pauline Szeiler, has been joined by Claire Carpenter and between them they are responsible for all of our social media and do a marvellous job promoting volunteering across South Gloucestershire.

Publicity

We enjoy a good relationship with the local media, with ongoing articles appearing regularly in The Gazette, Thornbury Magazine, Thornbury Voice, Community Magazines, local websites, e-bulletins. We have had displays in the St Mary Centre and have a Community Spotlight advert on Thornbury Radio.

A Retrospective of 2025-2026

April – Farmers' Market

On Thursday 3 April we had a table at Thornbury Farmers' Market in the St. Mary Centre. We sold vintage china filled with mini eggs and lots of crafting items. We raised over £50 for our funds and had an enjoyable morning.

Our thanks to the team at the St. Mary Centre for their support.

June – Volunteers' Week

On Wednesday 4 June as part of our Volunteers' Week celebrations we had a display of volunteering opportunities in the St. Mary Centre.

It was a great morning with 5 volunteers registering an interest and another 6 potential volunteers who took away information.

Pictured right is Volunteer Centre co-ordinator Gillian Kelly chatting to a potential volunteer.



June - Summer Award Lunch

On 11 June, as part of our celebrations for Volunteers' Week, we welcomed more than 70 representatives and volunteers, from 33 volunteer-involving organisations, to a lunch in the United Reformed Church Hall, Thornbury.



This lovely summer event allowed us to say thank you for the hard work and commitment this section of the community has given, and continues to give to Thornbury and district. It also provided guests with the opportunity to meet other volunteers and organisations and share experiences.

We welcomed guests to the event, sponsored by Thornbury Lions Club, and served them a delicious lunch generously

prepared and donated by Sandra at The Swan. We were joined by guest speaker Mark Cardwell of Citizens Advice South Gloucestershire, who gave a highly informative talk on the services it offers to the local community.

The event also gave us the opportunity to make awards to acknowledge the hard work and dedication of volunteers in our community.

The annual **Alan Hudson Award for Volunteering Achievement** was awarded to Thornbury Radio. Thornbury Radio started out as Thornbury FM in 2005, a small station broadcasting to just Thornbury. In 2010 it became GLOSS FM, an online community radio

station for Thornbury and district. However, after an unsuccessful licence bid for a permanent FM frequency, the station was forced to close in 2011. After a six-year break and several attempts to restart it, the station relaunched in 2017 and rebranded to Thornbury Radio in 2021. The station added FM across much of South Gloucestershire that year and DAB in 2024.

The station aims to deliver high-quality, relevant programming. While the big commercial stations go increasingly regional and national, Thornbury Radio continues to highlight truly local news, events and causes in and around Thornbury. It spotlights local organisations, gets to grips with local issues, sponsorship and campaigns, and supports community development through frequent on-air mentions. We were happy to give this award to Thornbury Radio for its valuable contribution to the local community.

We also presented the **Clare Fardell Young Volunteer Award** to **Kinsley Hawkesford**. Kinsley volunteers for Thornbury Parkrun. Like many community enterprises, Parkrun needs volunteers to function and indeed volunteering is a key aspect of its operation. Kinsley is among dozens of young people who have volunteered for it in



Julie Kent, MBE, High Sheriff of Gloucestershire, presents the award to Chris Criddle of Thornbury Radio.



Thornbury Town Mayor Cllr Helen Ball presents Kinsley with her award.

recent years, many of them, like her, as part of their Duke of Edinburgh Award.

Kinsley has stood out and the Run Directors at Thornbury Parkrun unhesitatingly put her forward for this award. As a runner herself she was keen to support others and was always polite and communicative. As well as the more straightforward volunteer roles, such as marshal, barcode scanner and timekeeper, she also took on the Run Director's role of greeting and briefing other volunteers as they arrived. Rather more

dauntingly, she delivered the runners' brief to all the participants before the start – over 80 of them on that day.

Even more than that, Kinsley always gave the impression of a genuine willingness to volunteer, rather than it just being something she had to do as part of her Duke of Edinburgh Award. Every community benefits from those who willingly give their time and energy for the greater good.

Kinsley was an excellent and well deserved recipient of this award.

September - Volunteer Fair



Town Mayor Cllr Helen Ball visiting four of the stalls. Clockwise from top left: Home Start, Children's Hospice South West, Thornbury Stroke Support, Jigsaw Thornbury.

On 10 September we hosted our annual Volunteer Fair in the St Mary Centre. Eleven local charitable and community groups took stalls with the aim of recruiting volunteers, promoting their organisations and in some cases raising funds.

Thornbury Radio played throughout the morning and Town Mayor Cllr Helen Ball visited and spoke to all the stallholders. It was a very social and successful morning which attracted many visitors, resulting in at least 25 potential volunteers coming forward, with many more people taking away information.

Our thanks to the St Mary Centre Management team and South Glos Council for their support of this event.

November - Christmas Tabletop Sale

On Saturday 8 November we held a highly successful Christmas sale at Thornbury Methodist Church Hall.

We were blessed with good weather, which helped to encourage big turnout of customers for the local charitable groups present. They sold a wide range of goods, including cards, Christmas crafts and vintage bric-a-brac, while also raising awareness of their work in the local community. We served tea and cake to the visitors and held a giant Christmas raffle with donations from Tesco, St. Mary Centre, Tesoro Lounge, Mezze, CoffiLab, Boots, the Wildfowl & Wetlands Trust and many more. Altogether, it was a hugely enjoyable event and we raised over £400 for our own funds.



FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Christmas Tabletop Craft Sale: Saturday 7 November
Thornbury Library Display: 21 September – 5 October
Artisan Pop-up Shop: October

November - Christmas Lights Switch-on



On Saturday 15 November we joined the crowds at Thornbury Christmas Lights Switch-on.

We ran a very successful soft toy tombola and had an amazing time. We had run out of toys just as the lights were switched on.

December – Farmers' Market

On Thursday 4 December we had a stall at Thornbury Farmers' Market in the St. Mary Centre. We sold pens, vintage tea cups filled with chocolate and Christmas bows. We had a successful and fun morning chatting to potential volunteers and selling our wares.

A big thank you to Alan Cole and his team at the St. Mary Centre for their support.



Join us at a

Volunteer Fair

**Wednesday 9 September 9am-1pm
in St Mary Shopping Centre**

**Visit the information stands of local organisations who are
seeking volunteers, ask questions and
find out how you can help.**

To reserve a table at the Fair please contact the Volunteer Centre:

**01454 413392 or
mail@volunteer-thornbury.co.uk**

**There is no charge but places are limited and will be allocated on a strictly
first come first served basis**

**Our grateful thanks to the St Mary Centre Management team
for their sponsorship and support of this event.**

Development Co-ordinator

The Trustees were very sad when Kim Webb decided now was the time for her to retire after 27 successful years as Development Co-ordinator. She has devoted much time, energy and commitment to developing the Volunteer Centre and the Trustees are immensely grateful to her for her years of dedication and achievement. She now has a new granddaughter and is looking forward to spending more time with her.



Following a thorough recruitment process the Trustees were delighted to appoint Lorna McCarthy as the new Development Co-ordinator. She will be working to match the many exciting volunteering opportunities with those looking to give something back to local communities.

Since relocating to Thornbury, Lorna has embraced community life through volunteering, becoming involved in a local Spanish language group and is a member of Thornbury Leisure Centre.

Lorna is also an active member and Secretary of the Thornbury Arts Festival Trust and helped organise a number of successful events which took place recently at the newly refurbished Cosham Hall.

"Having lived all over the country over the past few years I was delighted to have the opportunity of returning to the Southwest 18 months ago. In my career I have worked in the Tourism, Housing and Education sectors in a variety of roles.

In my spare time I have volunteered for a number of organisations. I believe my strengths are in communication, organisation, and administration. I am certain my new role will give me a chance to test those skills and I am looking forward to working with all the amazing organisations and people who make Thornbury such a great place to live. I am sure I will be meeting many of you all in the weeks and months ahead."

Grants and Donations

This year we thank the following people, organisations for assisting us in our work.

Thornbury Town Council and **South Gloucestershire Council** for their continuing support in providing our core funding.

South Gloucestershire Council Stronger Together Community Grant of £1800.00 for the purchase of new IT equipment.

South Gloucestershire Council Regeneration Team of £50 towards Volunteer Fair
Thornbury Lions of £300 for the Summer Award Lunch.

Swan, Thornbury for donations to the Summer Award Lunch.

St. Mary Centre for donations to the Summer Award Lunch and their continuing support.

Penny Taylor for donation of office laminator and printer.

Alan Payne for a donation of £35.

CURRENT VOLUNTEERING OPPORTUNITIES

Social Media volunteer: the Volunteer Centre is looking for someone with a good understanding of all social media platforms who would be willing to help us promote our organisation and raise our profile locally. Can be worked remotely.

Events and Fundraising: This role involves representing this local health support charity at local events, raising funds, promoting awareness and engaging with the public. Duties may include running stalls and collecting funds.

Beaver Scout Leader: for thriving local group which meets on Monday evenings. You will be responsible for planning and running the weekly meetings. Full training and support. Must be enthusiastic and have a love of the outdoors.

Female Befrienders: Female befrienders needed to support and encourage women who may have faced difficulties such as trauma, sexual and domestic abuse, rape and sexual violence and who may be experiencing mental health issues and social isolation.

Digital Champion: to provide one to one support to residents who need help getting online or improving their digital skills. You don't need to be an expert, just comfortable using everyday digital devices and online tools.

Parkrun volunteers: Saturday mornings throughout the year. Marshals, stewards, tail walkers, time keepers. No experience needed.

Hedgehog Welfare: tasks include caring for orphaned, injured and ill hedgehogs, helping to clear out cages and provide medical care.

Minibus Driver: for an organisation for people with memory loss/speech difficulties, this singing group needs a minibus driver to pick up and drop participants to the sessions. Available the first and third Wednesdays of each month. Full MIDAS training provided.

Woodland/Conservation/Gardening: a variety of differing roles including; light gardening, historic garden maintenance, wildlife cataloguer, orchard maintenance and woodland/grassland management. No experience needed as training given.

School Governor: School governor to support the leadership team & help the school to function effectively & smoothly. Basic IT skills needed, 6 full meetings pa on Monday evenings starting at 5pm.

Events Helpers: a small group of volunteers run events throughout the year to promote Thornbury, they need volunteers to help at these events, before, during, after. Could involve putting up/taking down banners, tables, gazebos, stewarding etc

Charity Shop Assistants: volunteers will sort, check and prepare donated clothing for display and sale. Good eye for detail. Couple of hours per week.

Group Support: for an organisation for people with memory loss/speech difficulties, you would support their singing group by making refreshments, joining in (if you wish) and supporting participants. The group meets on Wednesday afternoons.

Carpenters/Engineers: to help restore historic railway line and associated artefacts.

Contact mail@volunteer-thornbury.co.uk for further information.
These are only a very small sample of the opportunities currently available.