



## THE QUEEN'S AWARD FOR VOLUNTARY SERVICE

The Queen's Award for Voluntary Service (QAVS) is the **highest award given to local volunteer groups** across the UK. It was created in 2002 to celebrate the anniversary of the Queen's Coronation. **It is the MBE for volunteer groups and is awarded for life.**

### Who is it awarded to?

It is awarded to exceptional groups of volunteers whose level of initiative and impact are truly exceptional. A successful group will normally have the following characteristics:

- **Volunteer-led:** The volunteers are in the driving seat, setting the direction for the group's work and spotting opportunities to develop it still further each year.
- **Exceptional compared with comparable groups:** This group is likely to be one of the best of its kind in the country.
- **Making a considerable difference locally:** The initiative of this group and the efforts of its volunteers have changed the situation dramatically for its beneficiaries.
- **Well-run:** There are high standards of governance, financial management and safeguarding.
- **Outstanding reputation locally:** The group has a high standing in the community and has an excellent reputation with beneficiaries, service providers and others.

### Benefits to the group

QAVS are only awarded to the very best of hundreds of nominations each year. This is a badge of excellence and a real achievement for a group. It provides a big boost to the volunteers as well as great publicity for their work.

Successful groups are presented with a crystal award and a certificate bearing Her Majesty's signature. They gain the right to use the QAVS logo on their stationery and other material. They

are also invited to nominate two volunteers to attend a Royal Garden Party. The names of awarded groups are announced on 2 June in The Gazette and promoted widely elsewhere.



### How to nominate a group

Anyone can nominate a group, as long as they are not one of its employees or volunteers. **Nominations can be submitted between April-September each year via the Award's website <https://qavs.culture.gov.uk/>.**

Nominations are particularly encouraged from beneficiaries of a group's work, or from those who are not involved with the group but have observed and admired the results of their work.

## Key eligibility requirements

1. The group must have **3 or more members**.
2. It must be based **in the UK**, Channel Islands or Isle of Man.
3. It must have been **operating for a minimum of 3 years**.
4. It must provide a specific **local benefit** (QAVS is not intended for national organisations, although a branch can be nominated).
5. We are looking for evidence that volunteers are initiating and driving the group's work. It may have some paid staff, but we expect **at least half of the people who work in the group to be volunteers**.
6. Groups operating solely for the benefit of animals are not eligible.



More guidance is available on the QAVS website [www.gavs.culture.gov.uk](http://www.gavs.culture.gov.uk).

## Contact us

The QAVS Team at the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport administers the Award and will happily help with any queries. You can contact them at [queensaward@dcms.gov.uk](mailto:queensaward@dcms.gov.uk) or 0207 271 6206.

