

## THE QUEEN'S AWARD FOR VOLUNTARY SERVICE

### *Nominate your special local group*

#### Introduction

Voluntary groups make an outstanding contribution to the life of our communities. In every part of London they meet the needs of disadvantaged groups; they support minority communities; they care for the environment: wherever there is a need, local people have recognised it and decided to do something about it themselves. They do it in their own time, for no reward, and with no expectation of recognition; it is simply the right thing to do.

#### History of the Queen's Award

The work of these groups undoubtedly deserves our support and recognition, so in 2002, to celebrate Her Majesty's Golden Jubilee, the Queen's Award for Voluntary Service was established. It is the highest award available to local volunteer groups across the UK and recognises the outstanding work they do in their own communities. It is the MBE for voluntary groups, recognising their commitment and dedication.

#### Eligibility

Any group doing voluntary work that provides a social, welfare, economic or environmental service to the local community can be nominated for the award. Each group is assessed on the benefit it brings to the local community and its standing within that community. The only conditions are:

- The group must be based in the UK
- It must have been operating for at least three years
- More than half its members must be volunteers with a right of residence in the UK.

Nominations of smaller local groups, which do not have a large national infrastructure to rely on, are particularly welcomed by the judges as examples of the community spirit that motivates so much of the best voluntary activity. The test is whether a particular organisation is an outstanding example of its kind; does it stand out above similar bodies?

## Making a nomination

In 2016 there were 46 nominations for the Award from Greater London – an average of one and a half for each Borough. Given London’s size and diverse communities, this is a considerable under-representation by comparison with other parts of the country.

As the Lord-Lieutenant has said:

“There are a huge number of dedicated volunteer groups in London, whose work deserves to be recognized. We meet them every day.

You and I know that volunteers are the ‘glue’ which holds communities together and their good work does much to counteract society’s naysayers who argue that we live in an unfeeling city.

I need your help to make sure that London’s volunteers get the recognition they deserve. Look around you: if you admire the work of a voluntary group, nominate them.”

Members of a voluntary organisation cannot nominate themselves for an Award, but anybody outside the organisation can do so using the web-site:

<https://qavs.direct.gov.uk>

The closing date for nomination is 15<sup>th</sup> September 2017.

## What happens next

Nominated organisations are visited by the Greater London Lieutenancy whose recommendations then go to a Cabinet Office Assessment Committee which in turn makes the recommendations to Her Majesty. Not all nominations can be successful, but every group involved will, at the least, have come to the attention of the Lieutenancy as a valuable component of London’s voluntary life. Organisations chosen for the Queen’s Award receive a Crystal Trophy at a presentation by the Lord-Lieutenant, an invitation to a Royal Garden Party at Buckingham Palace, and the public recognition that goes with this prestigious Award.

## Help and Advice

The Representative Deputy Lieutenant for your Borough would be happy to advise in the first instance or to refer queries where necessary to the Honours & Awards Committee of the Greater London Lieutenancy.