



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

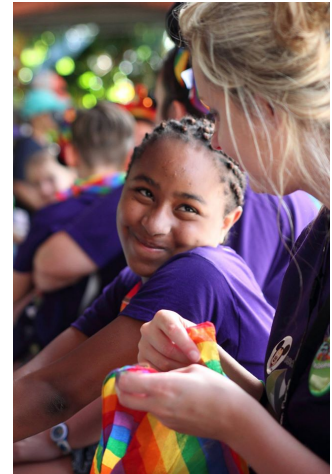
Anyone can nominate a group, as long as they are not one of its employees or volunteers. **Nominations can be submitted between April-September each year via the Award's website <https://qavs.dcms.gov.uk/>.**

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 local branch can be nominated).
5. Groups whose sole purpose is to support other organisations (e.g. **via fundraising or grant giving**) are **not eligible**.
6. 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**.
7. Groups operating solely for the benefit of animals are not eligible.



More guidance and examples of past awardees can be found on the QAVS website www.qavs.dcms.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 or 0207 271 6206.

