



MAHI AROHA 

Volunteer Sustainability Strategy

2020-2025

FOREWORD

Kia ora koutou. I am proud to introduce our strategic priorities for Mahi Aroha, our volunteer sustainability strategy that outlines our commitment to our volunteers over the next few years.

With over 8,000 volunteers collectively contributing millions of hours every year to our organisation and their communities, it's safe to say volunteers are the lifeblood of Hato Hone St John and a crucial part of the care and support we deliver every day.

Taking a look back, the legacy of our work in Aotearoa started in 1885, responding to a need for first aid care in the community. We were entirely a voluntary organisation back then, and while we now have a paid workforce working side by side with our volunteers as a significant health organisation, the contribution of our volunteers is still critical to our success.

As we look to the future, volunteering will continue to play an important role in services we provide. It is through harnessing the knowledge and networks of our volunteers in their respective communities that our volunteers will enable us to achieve our strategic objectives to ensure we serve those most in need of support to achieve whānau and community wellbeing.



Put simply, we wouldn't be able to do what we do without our volunteers and we continue to support, value and grow the people who contribute their time to help their communities across Aotearoa. This important document outlines how we're doing that.

Thank you to all our volunteers and to our people who support you in your mahi – your contribution is making a difference and is invaluable to Hato Hone St John and the communities we serve.

Ngā mihi nui

Peter Bradley Chief Executive/*Tumu Whakarae*,
Hato Hone St John ■

WHAT IS VOLUNTEER SUSTAINABILITY?

Mahi Aroha as expressed in a Māori world view means to work with empathy and compassion for others. It recognises that for us to be well, our whānau and hapori or community must also be well. It is in this spirit that our volunteers contribute their mahi with compassion for the wellbeing of their communities and we must in turn contribute to the wellbeing of our volunteers.

In general terms, something is sustainable if it can be maintained at a certain level. For Hato Hone St John, volunteer sustainability is about making sure the volunteer experience is a positive one across the organisation so that volunteers feel appreciated, valued, visible and therefore want to continue their journey with us. ■



INTRODUCTION

We launched our first volunteer sustainability strategy (VSS) in 2014, which took steps to build the right mix of volunteer initiatives to better inform, attract, support and retain our volunteers.

In 2018/19, a comprehensive review and evaluation of the volunteer experience took place, during which we spoke to over 600 of our volunteers to gain feedback on their experience. The result is Mahi Aroha, a five-year strategy that outlines what we can do to better attract, recruit, on-board, reward, recognise, support and develop our volunteers.

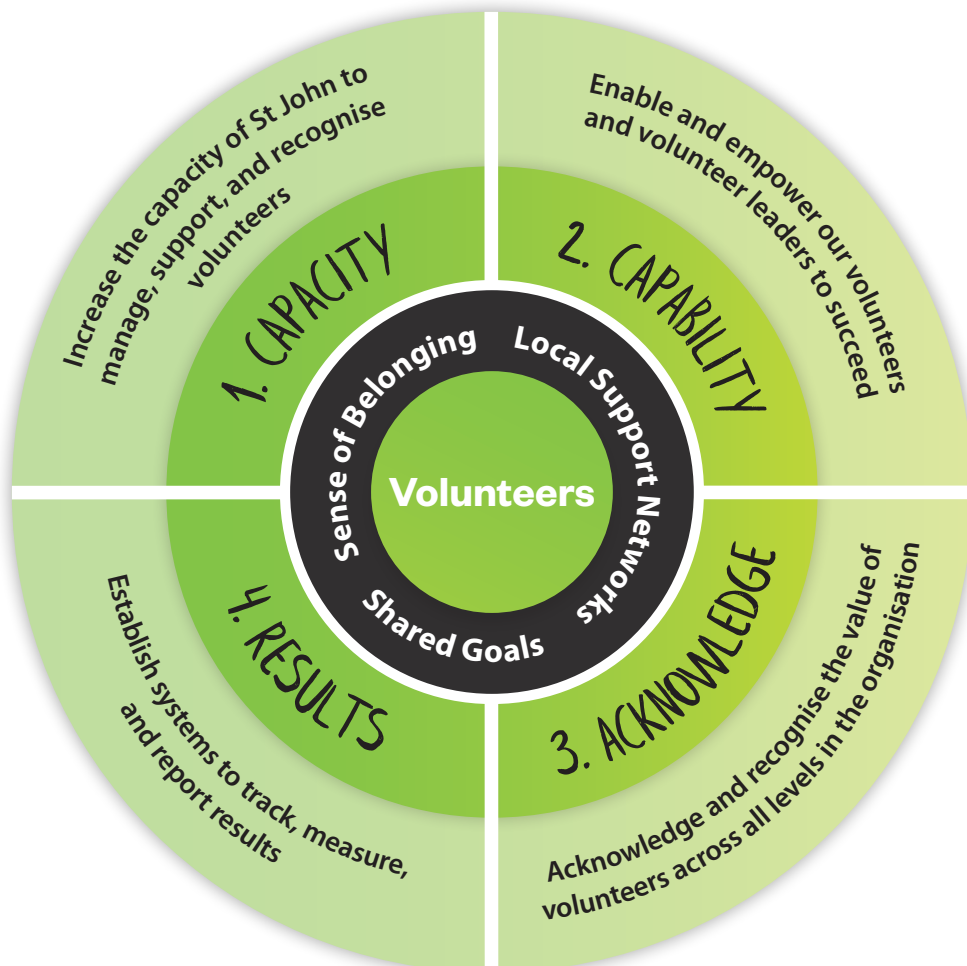
Mahi Aroha seeks to benefit volunteers, local communities, and our organisation by achieving three overarching goals over the next five years:

- > **Local support networks:** Systems and processes are in place to provide a clear sense of direction while delivering the training and support needed to work together at a local level.

- > **Shared goals:** Volunteer leaders who are well-equipped to support the strategy over the next four years and into the future are established in all key locations or programmes across the organisation.
- > **Sense of belonging:** A volunteer model has been established that is inclusive and offers volunteers the opportunity to connect to the identity of 'One St John', experience the feeling of whānau, overcoming any feelings of division between volunteers and paid employees.

To achieve these goals, we have four strategic priorities; Capacity, Capability, Acknowledge and Results. The strategic priorities are accompanied by specific actions which are outlined later in this document. ■

Our four strategic priorities to improve the volunteer experience



VOLUNTEERING AT HATO HONE ST JOHN

The volunteer landscape at Hato Hone St John is very complex with a variety of roles, volunteer demographics, backgrounds and motivations.

Providing ambulance services throughout Aotearoa will always be a core activity for Hato Hone St John, however we're also playing an increasing role in meeting the broader health needs of Aotearoa communities. We also want to proactively support those most in need of our assistance to have positive health outcomes. Central to everything we achieve is the energy, generosity and contribution of our volunteers.

Volunteering at Hato Hone St John enables our volunteers to gain new skills and experience as well as give back and support their local community, work collectively, build friendships, grow social connections and gain personal fulfilment.

We have a diverse range of volunteer roles including clinical operations, events, community care, governance, archiving, youth, chaplaincy and many more. These roles require different levels of training, skills and time commitment. ■

SNAPSHOT OF OUR VOLUNTEERS

791

Health Shuttle volunteers helped thousands of Kiwis get to 75,378 health appointments

699

Caring Caller volunteers offered friendship and support through regular calls to people on their own

1,560

Volunteers helped run our stores for people to donate and buy goods

2,912

Clinical volunteers provided essential services on the frontline

853

Friends of the Emergency Department and Hospital Friends provided community care and friendship in hospitals

1,699

Order Members constituting the Order of St John in New Zealand, helping to promote its goals for relieving sickness, distress, and suffering

1,043

Local area committee volunteers supported St John programmes and raised essential funds

975

Youth leaders co-ordinated New Zealand's premier youth programme to 5,200 future leaders

196

Therapy Pets coordinators and their companions provided hours of therapeutic pleasure

58

Governance volunteers provided leadership and strategic direction and oversight of the activities of St John New Zealand

3,394

community events supported by volunteers

82

Chaplains delivered confidential care, counselling, and compassion





WHAT OUR VOLUNTEERS SAY

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Volunteering gives me a **sense of pride** and an enormous amount of passion to help others. **I love seeing how my contribution can make such a positive impact on someone's day** whether it be small or large.
 – Oli, 19, Area Committee

It's **about connecting with people** and seeing how easy it is to **make someone's day a little bit better**. Giving back to the community that helped raise you doesn't have to be complicated, and **it's so fulfilling**.
 – Elina, 26, FEDs

I love the camaraderie we have as a group.
It's also a lot of fun.
 – Steve, 66, Health Shuttle

Volunteering gives me the **opportunity to do meaningful work in the community** while in turn giving me **challenges and personal satisfaction**.
 – Guy, 84, Archives

It's a reason to get out of bed in the morning,
it gives me a sense of purpose.
 – Di, 63, Store

It gives me a sense of purpose and satisfaction, doing something useful and **helping people in the community**. It also challenges me intellectually. Studying to be an EMT aged 67 gave me a sense of academic achievement, something I hadn't experienced in over 40 years!
 – Jim, 72, Ambulance and Events Volunteer, Emergency Medical Technician

Volunteering for me is about being able to **give and gain knowledge** from the people around me. It allows me to **give back and thank those** who have created the communities I am part of.
 – Caitlin, 17, Youth

Volunteering is my **Step Forward** in making a better tomorrow. Whether it be for an individual, community or St John, offering my time and efforts has been worthwhile. **I know I'm making a difference.**
 – Annie, 38, Ambulance and Events Volunteer, First Responder

It is very rewarding, being able to help members of my community who put their trust in us. As a station manager I enjoy the teamwork, learning leadership skills, mentoring and watching new volunteers grow and seeing my station succeed.
 – Carol, 46, Volunteer Station Manager, Emergency Medical Technician

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OUR FOUR STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

1. CAPACITY

Our capacity strategic priority is about increasing our capacity to better manage, support and recognise volunteers.

▶ **Action 1:** Identify areas of improvement in volunteer recruitment, onboarding and induction practices.

This action focuses on defining the role of volunteer managers during recruitment, onboarding and induction, reviewing the format and information provided and the communications to and from prospective and new volunteers.

▶ **Action 2:** Consider, prioritise and further develop the specific systems and related processes that underpin the volunteer journey and experience.

This action will identify where efficiencies within the current systems can be made to improve day to day volunteer management for managers and arm volunteers with the tools needed to undertake their roles.

▶ **Action 3:** Develop specific frameworks to build stronger connections and greater collaboration between volunteers and the paid staff they interact with, in whatever function they work.

This action will identify opportunities to improve local connections, recognise and support the wellbeing of volunteers and their families and strengthen where the volunteer voice is represented within Hato Hone St John.

▶ **Action 4:** Develop, implement and promote an alumni programme that is both viable and meaningful for volunteers and Hato Hone St John.

This action will focus on how we continue to engage with past volunteers to support advocacy, fundraising and other opportunities.

▶ **Action 5:** Set up a collaborative group, with other NZ voluntary agencies/organisations who face similar issues.

This action will take a collaborative approach with other voluntary organisations to use their expertise to achieve shared benefits.

2. CAPABILITY

Our capability strategic priority is about enabling and empowering our volunteers and volunteer leaders to succeed through access to relevant and engaging development opportunities.

▶ **Action 1:** Continue to engage volunteers and managers of volunteers across all functions by providing training and development opportunities and practices/processes.

This action will focus on the role of volunteer leaders and arming them with the knowledge and skills to better appreciate, develop and support their volunteers as well as understand the complex volunteer landscape at Hato Hone St John and the opportunities available to them and their volunteers.



3. ACKNOWLEDGE

Our acknowledge strategic priority is about recognising the value of volunteers on all levels of the organisation.

▶ **Action 1:** Redefine the role and function of the Volunteer Support Group (VSG) to ensure fit for purpose oversight, support and advocacy for volunteering in Hato Hone St John.

This action will redefine the role of the current Volunteer Support Group (VSG) to enable the group to act as a governance body offering representation to the local volunteer support networks and the various community programmes.

▶ **Action 2:** Further develop and celebrate volunteering through community-based events that link local volunteers with their family and community.

As well as providing consistent recognition guidelines and resources for managers, this action will also focus on developing local recognition activities that resonate with volunteers across different geographic areas and communities, especially those volunteers who do not have proximity to the beneficiaries they serve.

▶ **Action 3:** Work side by side with Communications and other key stakeholders to share volunteer stories in ways that reflect our values and strengthen belonging through storytelling.

This action is around compelling storytelling and invites volunteers to tell the story of volunteering internally and externally in ways that appeal to pre-existing values, trigger empathy, drive action, and create opportunities for recognition and strengthen belonging.

4. RESULTS

Our results strategic priority is about establishing systems to track, measure and report on the volunteer experience and progress of Mahi Aroha to support decision making.

▶ **Action 1:** Review the Volunteer Measurement Framework to ensure a clear understanding of volunteer performance, issues and achievement.

This action will review the current measurement framework and how we can best measure volunteer engagement and sustainability using national benchmarks, plus what success looks like through key performance indicators.

▶ **Action 2:** Work with Capability and Communication colleagues to utilise Kia Rongo and other applicable tools/methodologies to test and track volunteer engagement.

Using the measurement framework, this action will identify the tools and data required to measure the key performance indicators.

▶ **Action 3:** Communicate outcomes to all key stakeholders, integrating findings into ongoing activities and planning.

This action will help us determine the priorities within each programme moving forward and looks to communicate recommendations and priorities in a clear and analytical way. ■





St John

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