

# VOLUNTEER HOW TO GUIDE



# THANK YOU FOR VOLUNTEERING

Thank you for volunteering with Shared Interest. If you are just starting out in your volunteer role, or simply want to refresh your knowledge, this guide is a good starting point.

We have used genuine examples from our volunteer network to give you tips and help you envisage what is involved.

Our experience shows that an investor has often engaged with Shared Interest in any number of different ways before opening a Share Account. While it is very difficult to know what journey someone will take before becoming an investor but we can say that each and every encounter with Shared Interest is significant in that journey.

We hope this helps you on your way, and if you think the guide would benefit from some of your own experiences, please let us know.

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# GETTING STARTED

Start out with people you know and tap into your local networks. Find out if they have any events where you could be a key speaker or have a stall, or even just a place you could leave some information. Networks are best built by meeting and talking to people face-to-face. This gives you a better opportunity to explain more about Shared Interest and understand if there are any links.

When looking for new networks, online can be the best place to begin. Start by searching online for local groups in your area, such as:

## [Fairtrade Towns](#)

There are Fairtrade towns, cities, villages, churches and other groups across the UK. The Fairtrade Foundation may be able to let you know which towns near you are actively involved.

## [Women's Institute](#)

Local Women's Institutes regularly have speakers at their meetings. Each Federation is different with some holding 'Speaker Days' at which you may be invited to give a brief outline of the presentation you would deliver. (You can find contact details for your local Federations using the link above)

## [Rotary clubs](#)

Be aware that some Rotary (and WI groups) book speakers up to 2 years in advance. Having a contact or connection with Rotary and Women's Institute groups can sometimes be useful in approaching these potential audiences so ask your friends and family if they're already involved. We find that the best point contact is the club Secretary and you can usually find details of your nearest Rotary group online.

## [University of the Third Age \(U3A\)](#)

This network consists of retired and semi-retired people across the UK, who learn together and often have monthly meetings with speakers.

We can contact groups on your behalf if you prefer. Please speak to the Volunteer Engagement Manager for more details.

## Sharing Experiences

*"I think this is a vital way forward to get information about Shared Interest Society to more groups and individuals. Many of the groups I belong to already network together. Most of these groups also have websites and I intend to approach them to have information added about Shared Interest."*

Shared Interest Volunteer, Rod Thick

## Handy Hints

- Ask friends if they have any links to groups who would like to hear from Shared Interest.
- Do some research on the relevant person to approach before making contact.
- Remember: Not every group will be a relevant or suitable partner.
- If you need to send an introductory letter, we can help you compose something suitable.
- Google Alerts are a great way to be kept up to date. You can set up alerts via Google to receive a daily or weekly email. By choosing a key word, e.g. 'Fairtrade' you will receive an email with the relevant top stories. You can also filter the information so it only picks up local stories. Learn more about setting up a Google alert by clicking [here](#).
- [Eventbrite](#) is another website which you may find useful to help search for events near you.
- Keep an eye out for organisations who regularly host events with similar values as they might be good networks for you to link with. Shared Interest is also a non-political organisation so we do not attend political events.

# STALLS

Holding a stall is a great way of getting to talk to interested individuals; raising awareness of Shared Interest and your role as a volunteer.

We can provide you with everything you need, including pop-up banner stands, leaflets, and a branded tablecloth.

Running a stall will provide you with valuable experience in recognising the types of questions people ask, and shaping your responses.

Events that may have stallholder opportunities include churches and fair trade fairs and themed conferences focussed on sustainability, co-operatives or environmental sustainability.



## Sharing Experiences

*"I think the best advice is to just dive in. Once I got involved, one door after another opened and I've made a lot of interesting connections and met a lot of nice people along the way."* Shared Interest Volunteer, Russell Salton



# Handy Hints

## Before the Event

- If there are any costs involved, discuss them with us before making a booking.
- Please provide us with the details for your stall booking. We can let other volunteers in your area know about it, and ask someone to support you, if you like.
- Ask the event organiser if they need to see a copy of our insurance cover and let us know if they do.
- You will just need to ensure the organiser can provide a table and we can provide the rest. Just make sure you order your resources from us at least one week in advance, so we can get them posted out to you.
- Check your resources are up to date; check with us if you are unsure.
- Remember to put your code on any materials so we can trace any subsequent investment back to you or the event. Your code starts AMB followed by three digits.

## During the Event

- Take a relaxed approach. It is unusual for people to open a Share Account on the day. We want them to take away the materials and take time to consider any investment decision.

## After the Event

- Let us know how it went, and remember to send in any expense claims through with any receipts.

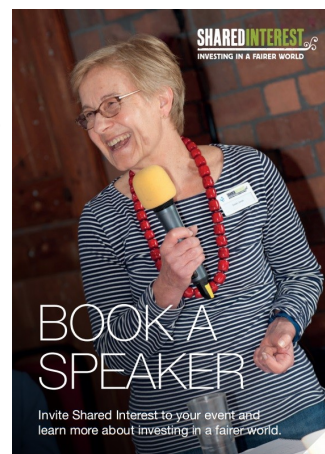
# TALKS

Delivering a talk about Shared Interest is another way to help raise awareness and understanding in your local area. Opportunities will vary from group to group but will often involve time for you to give a presentation followed by a Question and Answer slot.

Our volunteers have delivered talks to Rotary clubs, local church groups, Fairtrade Town groups and many other local organisations. Rather than creating your own event we find it is always better to attend or talk at one of these existing group meetings or events.

Leave a copy of our Book a Speaker card so those interested can get in touch. *You can order this resource from our website.*

Check out your local newspaper for details of local groups who might be interested.



## Sharing Experiences

*"Start making connections by talking about Shared Interest in normal conversation. I do find out if the people I am chatting to have links to other organisations so I am always looking to find openings."*

Shared Interest Volunteer, Richard Walker

## Handy Hints

- Make use of the Shared Interest power point presentation if you have a laptop, or the venue has one you can use.
- Incorporate your own stories of Shared Interest and fair trade if you can. Personal experiences can help bring the story to life.
- Find out if there are other speakers at the event, and if their talk will affect the content of yours in any way.
- Find out if there is a particular area of interest e.g. Africa or bananas. This way you can be prepared with relevant case studies.
- Use topical or local references that are relevant to the audience.
- **For further tips on public speaking take a look at Speakers Trust**  
[www.speakerstrust.org/tips](http://www.speakerstrust.org/tips)

# TELLING THE STORY

As well as being a voice for Shared Interest in your community, there may be opportunities to have an article published in print or online.

Many local groups produce regular newsletters and might be interested in adding a story about how Shared Interest operates , your role as a volunteer or a case study of our lending.

We find that it is better for you to first approach your church or community newspaper and ask whether they may be interested.

Once you know the details please get in touch with our Communications Team on email: [comms@shared-interest.com](mailto:comms@shared-interest.com). They have a standard article which they can tailor to the publication or they can write something more specific.

The Editor is also a great source of information and may know of particular events where you could give a talk or have a stall.

## Sharing Experiences

*“Such publications can be short of copy but it is always a good idea to be a reliable contributor i.e. get copy in a couple of days early. You may also build up an on-going relationship and get copy in on a regular basis. You may also find out from the editor whether the organisation has any sort of central bulletin board for newsletter copy and tips on how to access it. For example the Dioceses of Bath and Wells has a resource page on its website for parish magazine editors where such material can be posted.”*

Shared Interest Volunteer, Rob Walker, also editor of a Church of England Parish Magazine in Rural Somerset



## Handy Hints

- Familiarise yourself with the publication so you are sure of the type of article that will interest them.
- Ask how many words they are looking for, if they will use a logo or an image, and what is their deadline each week/month/quarter.
- If you have any ideas for new publications to approach, email our Communications team at [comms@shared-interest.com](mailto:comms@shared-interest.com) and we can look into your request.

## WHAT NEXT?

Wherever you are in your volunteering experience, we are here to support you along the way. We realise that you may need a hand when answering questions from potential investors. For this reason, you will find some useful resources on our website, including FAQs in appropriate sections, but if you cannot find what you need, please call or email us so we can point you in the right direction.

**Thank you for investing your time in Shared Interest.**  
**We hope you enjoy your journey with us.**



**Shared Interest Society**

Pearl Assurance House  
7 New Bridge Street West  
Newcastle upon Tyne  
NE1 8AQ

T: (0)191 233 9100

F: (0)191 233 9110

[volunteers@shared-interest.com](mailto:volunteers@shared-interest.com)

[www.shared-interest.com](http://www.shared-interest.com)