



**International  
Voluntary  
Service**



## **A Joint Newsletter from IVS and VAP - April 2024**

IVS and VAP have similar objectives working for peace and international understanding through voluntary work and particularly workcamps. This joint newsletter has been produced in recognition of that.

### **IVS Projects to volunteer on**

There are currently 176 short term projects starting between 1 June and 31 July

These projects are scattered through 32 countries: Iceland, Cambodia, Estonia, Kenya, Japan, Czech Republic, Botswana, Nepal, South Africa, Nigeria, Cornwall, Sweden, USA, Germany, Denmark, Sri Lanka, Senegal, Finland, Switzerland, Belgium, Greece, Norway, Togo, Portugal, Taiwan, Turkey, Colombia, Netherlands, Poland, Ireland, Indonesia, Italy.



Vardo, Finmark, Norway, in far north-east of Norway. Host to project NO-ID 12.1, 1 – 15 July 2024

Note: many require a fee to be paid to the hosting organisation on top of the normal registration fee. For more details start from: <https://ivsgb.org/service-civil-international/>

### **New SCI database for Long Term Volunteering projects**

SCI has a new database for Long Term Volunteering projects. Thanks to the hard work of a group of SCI activists from different Branches, with special thanks to our own IVS member Paul Barrow, a much improved version of the old database is now online with almost 300 opportunities lasting 6-12 months hosted by SCI Branches and partner organisations around the world.

IVS has currently 8 LTV projects available there and a few others will be added soon. All the long term projects can be found on the new LTV database of SCI at <https://longterm.sci.ngo/>



## VAP Projects to volunteer on

There are currently 168 short term projects listed on the Volunteer Action for Peace website database as starting between 1 June & 31 July 2024. To have a look at them go to <http://www.vap.org.uk/> and click on **Find My Projects now!** (top right)

These projects are scattered through 28 countries: Kenya, Iceland, France, Mexico, Italy, Czech Republic, Germany, Finland, Nepal, Vietnam, United States, Denmark, Thailand, Belgium, Hungary, Spain, Latvia, India, Portugal, Poland, Taiwan, Slovakia, Serbia, Somerset, Essex, Turkey, Netherlands, Austria.

Note a few projects appear on both the IVS and the VAP web-sites where they have a common partner.



## Report on French Civic Service Volunteers at Othona Community, Essex

We have had the privilege of hosting two young French volunteers at the Othona Community for the last six months. They came to us via the French Service Civique (Civic Service), which involves both the voluntary and civic commitment of young people from 16 to 25 years old, which is usually undertaken in France but can also be done overseas.

The volunteers were recruited following the work of Molly O'Doherty and Nuno Doria from VAP to complete the necessary paperwork and recruited via the French organisation, Solidarités Jeunesses.

Floriane or Flo came from Southeastern France and was looking to spend time here primarily to improve her English but also to learn other new skills, whilst considering what to do next. It was lovely to have Flo join the team, she arrived in time to help out during our busy summer period when we have a lot of international guests and volunteers.



Flo working with some of the other volunteers here to press apples and make apple juice

Flo was a great help in many aspects of the work at Othona from cleaning, housekeeping, painting, helping with guests, but her greatest contribution was in kitchen where her French culinary skills were very much appreciated. She enjoyed the chance to work with a wide range of other volunteers of different nationalities and interact with guests of all ages, abilities and backgrounds. Sadly Flo left in January this year but by then her English was much improved and she is now in New Zealand working as an Au Pair.

Paul Guerin started with us in October last year and is with us until the 13th March. Paul is from St. Malo and is in a gap year in his studies in accountancy and business. He has also been a great asset here, he is a very willing and positive volunteer and has been particularly helpful with outdoor work helping to dig out foundations, cut wood, gardening and construct a labyrinth. He is also very good at helping with cleaning, interacting with guests and just being a key member of the core team, we will miss him when he goes. He had the opportunity to join one of the VAP workcamps in December last year based in the South London parks, which he enjoyed. The chance to improve his English has been invaluable during his time here.



*Paul assisting with pancake making during Half Term*

We are very much hoping to have two more French volunteers this year as it is a great scheme for us and brings young international people to our centre helping to make the resident team here more diverse.

Debbie Saunders, Othona Community, Essex      February 2024

### **Preliminary Notice for IVS AGM**

In accordance with the Byelaws, notice is given that IVS will be holding its Annual General Meeting on Saturday 15 June 2024. It is hoped that the meeting can be a blend of in-person, in Harpenden, Herts, and on-line presence. For a resolution to be considered by the AGM it shall be received by the Chair, in writing, at least six weeks before the AGM.

Nominations are also sought for people to stand for the Board. Three members will be coming to the end of their current term of three years. Members can also be co-opted to the Board for a period of up to one year. If you wish to propose a resolution, or stand for the IVS Board, write to IVS at Thorn House, 5 Rose Street, Edinburgh EH2 2PR or send an e-mail to [Director@ivsqb.org](mailto:Director@ivsqb.org)

The AGM is expected to consider the proposal that IVS should merge with Volunteer Action for Peace.

More details about the IVS AGM, including venue, nominations and any other resolutions will be circulated to members nearer the time.

### **Palestine and Israel**

## **CCIVS General Conference November 2023 Loutraki Greece: URGENT resolution on GAZA and PALESTINE**

*This article arrived too late for our December newsletter*

Conference were deeply moved by reports from the Palestinian delegation of the suffering and devastation to which the population of Gaza is currently being subjected involving indiscriminate bombing and shelling of the civilian population resulting in great loss of life and injury to thousands of children and other civilians; the destruction of the service infrastructure leading to loss of power and water; a siege under which food, medical supplies and other relief is denied access to starving humanity.

In addition we were informed of the breakdown of civil order in the Occupied Palestinian Territory resulting in the killing of many Palestinians and the destruction of their property.

A motion was presented to conference that was discussed and passed overwhelmingly. Here it is together with an invitation from CCIVS to read, agree and sign. Endorsement can be given both by individuals and on behalf of organisations.

**"We invite you to sign the Ceasefire Statement** approved by the CCIVS GA 2023, proposed by our Palestinian member IPYL .  
Find it here: <https://rb.gy/c54xjx>, read it, sign it."

### **What is CCIVS?**



CCIVS – the Coordinating Committee for International Voluntary Service was created in 1948 under the aegis of UNESCO. It is a global network of 188 international, regional and national organisations which actively engage in grass roots, community based projects. Volunteer Action for Peace is a member of CCIVS. Service Civil International, of which IVS is the British Branch, is also a member of CCIVS. For this reason, IVS is given associate status with CCIVS. Both VAP and IVS can participate in the actions of CCIVS

- CCIVS aims to pursue peace, global solidarity, and social justice. It seeks to respond to the prevalent issues of society at both local and global levels.
- CCIVS coordinates the Living Earth Campaign which focuses on what it means to live a peaceful and harmonious existence on Earth and respect towards the Earth as a living being.
- CCIVS has associate status with UNESCO and since 1987 has been recognised as a UN Messengers of Peace. The home page of CCIVS is <https://ccivs.org>

### **28th UN Climate Change Conference - COP28**



Rob Unwin attended Cop 28 as an online observer and wrote for our last newsletter while still at the conference. Here is a link to the SCI website for his reflections on this important climate conference which determines the future of our planet: <https://sci.ngo/cop28-reflections-of-an-activist/>

## The Climate Coalitions' Great Big Green week 2024

# THE GREAT BIG GREEN WEEK

Great Big Green week 2024 will be 8-16 June on the theme: “Swap Together”

Lets make swaps every day to help create a better tomorrow. Examples are neighbours swapping skills in repair cafes and allotments to businesses swapping fossil fuel for solar panels to friends swapping fast fashion for second hand. Get inspired by some of the swops people are making.

To find out about events in your area go to the website: <https://greatbiggreenweek.com/>

A useful information tool has been produced with the forthcoming General Election in mind ;

**The Local Intelligence Hub** <https://www.localintelligencehub.com/>

This is a platform to analyse and explore data about local MP's, constituencies, public opinion and the climate and nature movement. It enables community groups and individual campaigners to have informed conversations with their local political representatives or candidates for election in order to demonstrate the diversity and scale of the public mandate for action on climate and nature in communities across the UK

## IVS Memories Booklet

"IVS : 90 years and counting Volunteers' Reflections" is a selection of Memories, seventeen in total, from our Memories Project. Having so far collected over fifty stories the booklet focuses on the period after the previous IVS for Peace publication: post 1949 to present day. The 17 memories are a range of experiences - short, long, local, international volunteering examples and those that included a reflective element. We hope we have achieved this and the readers both enjoy and become inspired to support IVS going forward, whether as a volunteer, donor or member.

Copies of the booklet can be ordered for £6 including p&p (£8 if to be mailed abroad) <https://ivsgb.org/shop/> or by sending a cheque to the IVS Office, Thorn House, 5 Rose Street, Edinburgh EH2 2PR

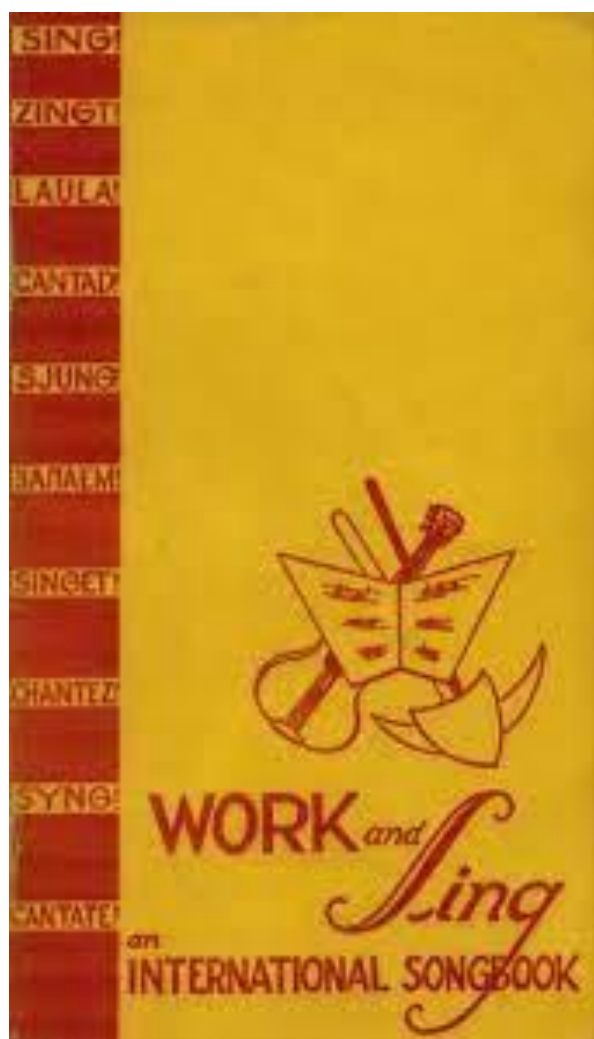
Thank you everyone for contributing your memories and sharing your reflections on your experience with IVS and SCI. We are still collecting new memories, recent or older. Please send to [memories@ivsgb.org](mailto:memories@ivsgb.org)

## Radical Music: 'L'Amitié'

**'Make us live as brothers and forget that we were foes'**

Peace News of February 2024 carried a report of an interview with Stuart Gilbert, a conscientious objector who took part in several SCI workcamps through IVS in different countries in the 1940s. Recorded by Penny Stone, Stuart talks about the "alternative work" he carried out with SCI through IVSP (as IVS was then known) during the war, and the SCI songbook "Work and Sing".

The article on the interview can be found at <https://peacenews.info/node/10862/radical-music-lamitie>



### **SCI Exchange Platform Meeting 2023**

Some of the sessions had a more technical focus (eg. General Statistics of SCI, the Evaluation of SCI's Network Fee and of the Incoming Volunteers Fee, the Structure and Features of the new Online Placement System); others focused mainly on networking (eg. CCIVS/SCI/ICYE Decolonise IVS project, Creation of the Regional Network of the American IVS organisations, SCI's Grassroots project in Africa) and others aimed mostly at improving SCI's work and structures (LTVs Online Pre-Departure Training, SCI's Climate Team, No War Anywhere! Anti-militarism work in SCI and the Strengthening of SCI's international Working Groups).

IVS also actively participated in the annual meeting of the Africa Working Group through the presence of the two IVS members of the Steering Group, Kerry Hargadon and Nuno Doria. The very successful meeting took place on Saturday 14 October in two different sessions and was attended by 18 representatives of 3 SCI Branches and 10 African contacts, groups and partner organisations.



## How you can help IVS

### Volunteer

IVS is mostly run by volunteers . The Joint Chairs of IVS, the rest of IVS's Board of Trustees, and the Fundraising and Newsletter Group, are volunteers. If you'd like to volunteer with us, do get in touch. We are looking for:

- an extra person to sit on the IVS Board as a Trustee
- a bookkeeper to manage the receipts, payments and bank accounts
- an extra person for our Finance Advisory Group, or to serve as Assistant Treasurer
- a couple of people to assist IVS with its publicity and recruitment efforts.

If you are interested in any of these opportunities please write to [director@ivs.gb.org](mailto:director@ivs.gb.org)

### Recent volunteers on projects

We would particularly like to hear from recent volunteers about their experiences, impressions and views on how IVS can establish a digital presence on social media. If you can help here please write to [info@ivs.gb.org](mailto:info@ivs.gb.org)

### Donate

IVS relies on donations to run its activities. A donation would help us to recruit, train, support and send volunteers overseas to support our work. It would also enable many more volunteers from overseas to come to Great Britain to support local charities to deliver hundreds of important services to those most in need. For instance, the UK government charges IVS £25 for each invitation we issue to a long-term volunteer as well as seeking some £1000 in NHS fees from that volunteer. Further information is on our website <https://ivs.gb.org/donate-2>

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