

DIY Handbook

AN INTRODUCTION TO
BECOMING A
VOLUNTEER



SCAN ME



Registered Charity No. 1069957 VAT No.
643 5247 41 Company No. 3562830.

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Why volunteer?

If you are reading this, you are probably thinking about volunteering.

There are many reasons why people volunteer and here are just some of them:

Volunteering can help you make new friends – useful if you are new to an area or want to expand your social networks.

Volunteering can open new and unexpected doors to you – you never know where your volunteering can take you.

Volunteering can help you get or stay fit and healthy in body and mind. Studies have shown that regular volunteering can have a positive effect on mental and physical health.

Volunteering can be a way of fulfilling your ambitions when your career hasn't led you in the direction you expected.

Volunteering gives you a chance to make a difference, put something back into your community or take up a cause you believe in.

Last, but by no means least, volunteering should be fun. Enjoy yourself and make the most of your volunteering.

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Where to start?

This handbook is designed to help you find the right volunteering opportunity to suit your needs.

We always say we have an A-Z of volunteering opportunities – here are some ideas to get you thinking about what you might like to do:

A ~ Admin Support, Accounts, Arts, Animals

B ~ Befrienders

C ~ Children, Cafes & Catering

D ~ Dog Walker, Driver, Disaster Relief

E ~ Environmental, Education, Entertainment

F ~ Fund Raising, Fetes, Finance, First Aid

G ~ Gardening, Groundwork

H ~ Hospital Visitor, Health Support

I ~ International Aid

J ~ Justice system

K ~ Knitting

L ~ Languages, Legal Work

M ~ Mentor, Museums, Marketing & Media, Magistrate

N ~ National Events, Newsletter Production

O ~ Organiser

P ~ Practical Work, PR

Q ~ Quick-step (and other dancing)

R ~ Religion, Research

S ~ Shop Work, Social Media, School Governor

T ~ Trustee Roles, Teacher / Trainer

U ~ Under 16s, Uniformed Youth Groups

V ~ Victims of Crime, Vulnerable Adults

W ~ Women's groups, Well Being, Web Design

X ~ X-offenders (ok, we cheated on that one)

Y ~ Youth Work

Z ~ Zoo's

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Beginning the search

Word of Mouth

Ask around. Lots of people already volunteer and may be able to suggest some contacts for you. Once you put the word out that you are a potential volunteer, it won't be long before someone approaches you.

Like finding a job, finding the right volunteering placement is not always an easy task. But often, volunteer-involving organisations are looking for more than one volunteer and are prepared to be more flexible than an employer might.

Like employers, they advertise in a variety of ways so here are some places you can look:

Social Media

Follow us on Facebook (www.facebook.com/volunteercornwall) or Twitter (www.twitter.com/volcornwall) for up to the minute volunteering news and opportunities.

Shop Windows & Notice Boards

Charity shop windows often carry 'Volunteers Wanted' signs but also check Village or Community Halls and parish and church notice boards.

Volunteer Cornwall

If you are unsuccessful in your search, Volunteer Cornwall is available to give you help, advice and support with your search. See details at the end of this pack.

It is a good idea to keep a diary or log, in much the way you would if job hunting, of your search for a volunteering placement. Although the chances are you will quickly find something, it may be helpful to refer to if your search takes longer than anticipated or to follow up leads in the future.

Direct Approach

If you have a particular charity in mind – try the direct approach. Contact them and ask how you go about volunteering.

Local Press – News Stories

Each week, the radio, TV and papers are full of stories about the activities of voluntary groups and charities in your area. See what they are up to and if something takes your fancy, get in touch.

Internet

If you have an idea what you want to do, try googling the word plus 'volunteer' and see what comes back.

Volunteer Cornwall Website

Visit our Opportunities page on our website to find out about hundreds of great volunteering opportunities near you!

<https://opportunities.volunteercornwall.org.uk/>

Local Press – Adverts

The local media generally carry requests for volunteers. The Cornish Weeklies each have a dedicated page which is worth checking.

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Choosing your placement

Before long, you will find that one (or more) organisations take an interest in you. Here are some points to consider:

Don't overdo it to start with. Accept one volunteer placement and see how you get on before you start the next. Often people end up taking on several placements because they don't like to say "no" and end up wearing themselves out.

Be aware that the organisation will have a checking process. Just like employers, charities need to check out their new volunteers. This is to protect you as well as their service users. You may need to complete an application form and/or send a CV. Some charities may wish to interview you first though these are usually less formal affairs than an interview for a job. Checks usually take the form of references and may also include a DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) check too.

If you are asked to undergo a DBS check, this is probably because the placement involves working with children, young people or vulnerable adults. The DBS check may be conducted by the organisation or they may need to ask another organisation (like Volunteer Cornwall) to do this on their behalf. This process can take some weeks and you may be restricted in what you can do until the check is completed.

You should receive an induction. When you start your volunteering, you should be given basic information about the placement which should include: A guided tour of the premises and introduction to key people; confirming who is your supervisor or manager & what to do if you have any problems • Agreeing when and where you will be volunteering • The procedures for absence, sickness, expenses etc • Basic health & safety, fire drills, first aid procedures etc.

Just like in employment, there may be a 'settling in' or probationary period. This is for the benefit of both sides. If you have any issues about your volunteering, don't be afraid to raise them. If you need any help with this, contact Volunteer Cornwall for advice.

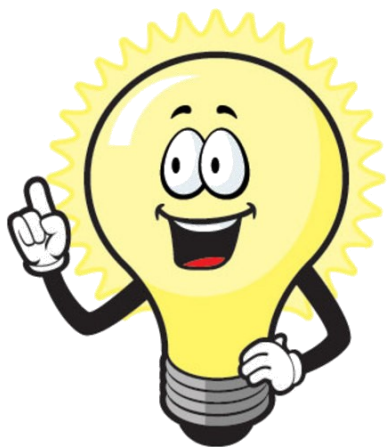
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More ideas...

Uniformed Youth Services

Cadet Schemes operate for Army, Navy & Air Force and of course there are Scouts, Guides, Cubs and Brownies for younger people. All require volunteers to help keep them running and all are fairly widespread. And don't forget the Red Cross & St John's too.

Hub Volunteers

Some of the GP practices in Cornwall are increasingly making use of volunteers as part of their teams to develop links with local community resources. If you are interested in getting involved as a volunteer, contact us and we can approach your local GP practice to see if they are taking part in the initiative.

Volunteer Driver

If you have your own car, why not become a volunteer driver. There are several organisations operating volunteer schemes (including Volunteer Cornwall), each of which offers reimbursement of mileage expenses and you choose how much – or little – driving you do. You could also become a Minibus driver, transporting groups of people around Cornwall - perhaps even your local community group.

Ad-hoc Volunteering

Have you considered volunteering for one-off events that take place from time to time. Events like surf, sport or music festivals often require a pool of volunteers for a variety of duties for the duration of the event.

Volunteer from home

If you can't travel, have you considered what you can do from home? Many people volunteer from home by making things for charities to use or sell. Other people compile newsletters, conduct marketing & fund raising campaigns or even run charities from their own home.

Memory Cafes & Dementia Champions

Dementia is often in the news these days and Cornwall has led the way in developing services and initiatives to make life easier for people with dementia and those who care for them. Many areas now have a Dementia Café (usually run by volunteers) and Age UK, the Alzheimer's Society and others offer befriending services through volunteer schemes.

Volunteer on-line

If you are a whiz with a computer, why not volunteer on-line. You could offer to help organisations with websites and computer-based functions from the comfort of your armchair.

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Volunteering With Volunteer Cornwall

At Volunteer Cornwall there are many roles that you can get involved with to support your community. These opportunities are countywide and can be a great starting point or regular activity for your volunteering journey. Here are some of the opportunities we have on offer.

Stroke Befriending Service

Would you like to help increase confidence and reduce isolation for individuals who have experienced a stroke? Perhaps you have previous caring skills, or, you may have had a stroke yourself.

If so, Volunteer Cornwall and the Stroke Befriending Service needs you!

The Stroke Befriending Service offers short-term emotional support and companionship. All our Volunteers receive training and will be required to complete an Enhanced DBS check. Volunteers are fully supported to deliver their role.

Please get in touch if you could provide some greatly needed support and encouragement to people who have experienced a stroke.

Contact the team at stroke@volunteercornwall.org.uk or phone 01872 266 997.



Volunteer Driver

Do you have your own car, enjoy driving and like meeting people? This could be an ideal opportunity for you.

Volunteer Cornwall are looking for drivers to undertake both regular and ad hoc journeys on behalf of the community. So, whether you can spare a couple of hours every so often or are happy to do a regular journey on a daily or weekly basis, please get in touch.

We reimburse mileage expenses, and you can choose how much or how little you would like to do.

For more information, or a chat about what is involved, please telephone the Bookings team on 01872 265300 or alternatively email bookings@volunteercornwall.org.uk

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More volunteering with Volunteer Cornwall

Hope Befriending

Would you like to offer support to people with long-term conditions - become more confident and cope better emotionally, psychologically and practically with their conditions? If so, this may be for you!

HOPE is a six week programme to help people build confidence to self-manage their long-term health conditions. This could include things like physical health such as pain relief or mental ill health issues such as anxiety, stress and depression.

Do you have some spare time to help facilitate a HOPE programme for 3 hrs a week? Full training is given.

If you would like to register to become a Volunteer Facilitator, please visit the website www.volunteercornwall.org.uk/hope or for further information contact a member of our team.

Telephone: 01872 266987

Email: hopecornwall@volunteercornwall.org.uk

Reablement Volunteers

We are currently looking to recruit Reablement Volunteers who can provide up to 12 weeks of support (up to 6 hours per week) alongside and/or after a formal

programme of support from STEPS (Short Term Enablement Planning Service). Reablement Volunteers will work with individuals to support and encourage people to achieve personal independence goals. Our focus is on supporting clients to maximise independence and wellbeing. This can include support with health or care issues, money worries, confidence building and of course support to develop social networks by engaging with local community resources.

If you would like further information on the volunteering role or how to apply please follow the link- www.volunteercornwall.org.uk/reablement

Project GREEN

There is LOADS we can do to help our climate and natural environment! Taking action on this crisis is the BEST way of turning down any worry or anxiety we have about it.

The types of volunteering you can get involved in could be helping with a community garden/ growing project; supporting your local Climate Action Group; going along to your local Repair Café and helping get things fixed rather than thrown away, and something else being bought (a double whammy!); getting involved with your local Wildlife Trust to help care for, and learn about, our fantastic natural environment; volunteering for a charity shop selling second hand clothes, toys or books – you can see the list is endless! You can search on Facebook for local groups by typing in your local area and the issue you're interested in – or if you're not sure, contact man-dab@volunteercornwall.org.uk and I will find out for you what you can get involved in, in your area!

Telephone befriending

Like talking to new people? As a telephone befriender, you could make a real difference to lives of people across the county who feel lonely or isolated. By calling once a week for up to an hour, you can be a listening ear for those who have no one else to talk to, and in many cases, you can find a new friend. To find out more or apply for this role, please visit our website at www.volunteercornwall.org.uk/telephonebefrienders



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Training and Development

There are several routes open to you if you want to train or expand your skills and qualifications whilst volunteering. You can learn 'in-house' which is generally arranged and delivered by staff or other volunteers of the organisation you are volunteering with. This could be formal accredited training or informal (with in-house or no certification). Or you may be sent 'off-site' to a college or training provider where you will have the chance to do formal qualifications.

If you are interested in doing training, talk to your host organisation. They will advise you about any arrangements that are already in place. However, your host organisation may not be aware that Volunteer Cornwall can offer training for them and their volunteers.

Volunteer Cornwall offers a range of training to volunteers and organisations tailored around the needs of volunteers. There is a small charge for our courses to cover our costs and your host organisation may have some funding to help.

What is on offer for you and your host Organisation?

One day courses:

- Recruiting volunteers
- Motivating volunteers
- Managing change
- Confidence building for volunteers
- Volunteering and the Law
- Safeguarding

More on offer...

Do you give advice?

Level 2 and Level 3 Information Advice and Guidance

Volunteer managers/team leaders accredited qualifications through ILM (Institute of Leadership & Management)

Level 3 and Level 4 Leadership & Management

See our website for upcoming course dates, information and prices



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Call 01872 266987 or
email training@volunteercornwall.org.uk for
more information

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FAQs

I am in receipt of Universal Credit (UC) but want to volunteer. Am I allowed?

Jobcentre Plus views volunteering as a positive activity and encourages people on UC to volunteer to prepare them for the world of work. You will need to let them know who you are volunteering with and when you are volunteering but provided you continue to remain available for and actively seeking work, this should not pose a problem. Various schemes exist to help you. For more information: www.citizensadvice.org.uk/benefits/benefits-introduction/how-volunteering-affects-your-benefits/

What about benefits other than JSA such as Income Support and health-related benefits?

Jobcentre Plus is supportive of volunteering and there are plenty of schemes to help you find a volunteering placement. You could also have some of your travel and other costs met if you are on an eligible scheme.

Will I get paid for volunteering?

No, volunteers do not get paid. But you should not be out of pocket when you volunteer. Expenses such as travel should be covered by the host organisation

I have a disability. Can I still volunteer?

Yes. We believe volunteering is for everyone. We will focus on what you can do (rather than what you can not) and it should be possible to find a volunteering placement to suit you.

Can I stop volunteering if my circumstances change?

All volunteers are free to stop if they choose. However, it is helpful if you are able to give your host organisation as much notice as possible so they can organise a replacement. If you are not free to stop without a penalty, it probably isn't volunteering.

I am not sure if I am going to like my placement, can I try before I commit?

Many places will let you volunteer on a provisional or taster basis before you make a full commitment. Ask the organiser and try and talk to some of the other volunteers to get a feel for what it is going to be like.

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Contacts and connections

Please see below for a recap on key contacts and webpages to get you started:

Volunteering opportunities:

Volunteer Cornwall opportunities:
www.volunteercornwall.org.uk

General opportunities:
opportunities.volunteercornwall.org.uk

Volunteer Cornwall project contacts:

Volunteer driving:

01872 265300 / bookings@volunteercornwall.org.uk

Hope befriending:

01872 266987 / hopecornwall@volunteercornwall.org.uk

Stroke befriending:

01872 266997 / stroke@volunteercornwall.org.uk

Green:

mandab@volunteercornwall.org.uk

Reablement/ telephone befriending:

cvcteam@volunteercornwall.org.uk

Training:

01872 266987 / training@volunteercornwall.org.uk



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