



# WELCOME!

to the

**Somerset You can Do**

**Volunteer Service**

If you are interested in volunteering with people and making a real difference to someone's life, Somerset You can Do is for you. We hope the information within the pack will enable you to choose your ideal volunteering experience.

**Somerset You can Do** is Somerset's own integrated volunteer and mentoring service. The aim of the service is twofold, firstly **Community Volunteering** to support individuals whilst they take part in community-based activities that will help them stay active, develop new skills and remain independent for longer. And secondly to recruit and place volunteers to become registered **Somerset County Council social care volunteers**. After looking through the pack you may be interested in one or both of these options.

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## WHY BE A VOLUNTEER?

Volunteering is not only great for your community and makes the world a better place but it could also make a positive impact on your life too.

You could be part of an exciting new concept in volunteering. Whether you want to improve your CV with new skills, meet new people or just feel good about yourself, we will match you up with a volunteer opportunity that could change people's lives for the better.

Volunteering lets you "road test" different kinds of work, giving you hands-on experience of how different professions operate.

Volunteering can bring you into contact with all kinds of professionals and people from every walk of life. In fact, the networking opportunities it can provide are among the least publicised but most exciting benefits of all. A good network can guide your career pathway right through life and help you take/gain steps towards your ideal job.

### **Build your confidence**

Many volunteers encounter new challenges when they begin giving time in their communities. Sharing these experiences with new people, they can learn a range of skills that will give them confidence to face challenges in other areas of their lives.

## **Introduce you to new friends**

There's no better place to meet likeminded individuals than through volunteering for a campaign or cause you believe in. Working together to bring about a change is a great way to bond with others and become part of a community that can stay in touch long after your work is done. Plus, you could meet people from a diverse range of backgrounds – people you may never come across in your daily life.

## **Create more fun in your life**

Many volunteers are surprised at how much fun it can be to help others. Not every volunteer experience is the same, but by finding an opportunity that matches your interests, you have a good chance of having fun while giving time.

## **Boost your career options**

A survey carried out by the Time Bank through Reed Executive showed that among 200 of the UK's leading businesses:

- 73% of employers would employ a candidate with volunteering experience over one without
- 94% of employers believe that volunteering can add to skills
- 58% say that voluntary work experience can actually be more valuable than experience gained in paid employment
- 94% of employees who volunteered to learn new skills had benefited either by getting their first job, improving their salary, or being promoted.

## VOLUNTEER EXPENSES

Volunteers are entitled to claim out of pocket expenses such as travel costs. For example, if you are driving as part of your volunteering you will be entitled to 45p per mile. Your expenses will be agreed with you when you start volunteering.

This should not affect any benefits you may be receiving. If you are receiving benefits please let us know and we will be able to give you more information.

## STEPS TO BECOMING A VOLUNTEER

- You will need to complete an application form,
- meet one of the team to discuss the your options and interests and your anticipated level of involvement,
- We will need two references from you,
- We may have to complete an enhanced CRB **check at no cost to you. This depends on the level** of volunteering you are interested in.



## WHAT IS A COMMUNITY VOLUNTEER?

If you choose to become a community volunteer, once registered you will be part of a local network forming a multi-functioning task force where you can choose to work one to one or in small teams. You can also volunteer with other volunteers in pairs.

You will be able to make a real difference to people's lives by helping them to:

- stay active
- remain independent
- feel valued and part of the community
- breakdown isolation and loneliness
- help them to stay in touch with friends and neighbours
- help them to get out and about.

### **How is this achieved?**

Volunteers can choose to take part in as many of the following community volunteering options as they wish:

- One to one volunteering or befriending
- Volunteer group support coordinating or helping
- Mentoring and support volunteering
- E-volunteering
- IT support volunteering.

All volunteers will receive a full induction and training to enable them to feel confident to undertake their role. We have in place a peer support programme and regular volunteer network meetings and training opportunities to help volunteers to develop their skills. Volunteers have a vital role in improving the service and for the development of new ideas to make the service more responsive and effective.

## COMMUNITY VOLUNTEERING ROLES

### **1 One to one volunteering or befriending: helping people to join in with activities in their local community.**

Could you meet the challenge of supporting people to remain independent in their local community? If so you would be part of a team of volunteers supporting people on a 1:1 basis within an innovative **Somerset You can Do** service

The service will be supporting isolated people and people with mental ill health, physical disabilities or learning disabilities. As a volunteer supporter you will meet with an individual on a 1:1 basis for an agreed period of time to enable them to access local services and develop social networks or supporting those who are more isolated or who need confidence to access local community service. You will have the support of a member of the **Somerset You can Do** staff team.

## 2 Volunteer group support coordinating or helping: helping to develop activities in the local community.

Do you enjoy working with groups? You would be part of a team of volunteers supporting people in their local communities setting up social or activity based groups. The overall goal is for the groups to eventually become self-sustaining. This opportunity is part of the innovative **Somerset You can Do** service which supports isolated people, people with mental ill health, people with physical disabilities, people with learning disabilities and older people.

The role of the Group Support Volunteer will be co-ordinating, facilitating and supporting a new local group and empowering and supporting members to engage with each other and the wider community

You will:

- Work with members to explore their interest and assist them to arrange activities that might interest them, including social activities, visits and outings
- Support the group to become established, consulting them on how they want their group to develop
- Act as first point of contact for the group until it becomes established and self-sustaining
- You will have the support of a member of the **Somerset You can Do** staff team. Full induction and training for your role will be provided. Out of pocket expenses including travel costs will be paid.



### **3 Mentoring and support volunteer: helping people to join in with activities and become volunteers in their local community.**

Do you have time to support others who would like to be volunteers? You will be helping people find suitable volunteering in their local communities and supporting them until they have gained confidence in their role.

You would be part of a team of volunteers with the Supported Volunteering service which is part of **Somerset You can Do** which supports isolated people, people with mental ill health, people with physical disabilities, people with learning disabilities and older people.

As a support volunteer you will help people on a 1:1 basis to explore local volunteering opportunities, assist with applications etc. Accompany them on their volunteering until they are comfortable and confident.

You will have the support of a member of the **Somerset You can Do** staff team. Full induction and training for your role will be provided. Out of pocket expenses including travel costs will be paid.

#### **4 E-volunteering: 'staying in touch volunteers'.**

Do you love to chat?

Would you like to communicate with others to create small social network groups or become a 1:1 buddy by phone, text or email?

You would be part of a team of volunteers who will be able to volunteer from their own homes with a mix of email, text or phone within a new and innovative project **Somerset You can Do**. The service will be supporting isolated people, people with mental ill health, people with physical disabilities, people with learning disabilities and older people.

You will be matched with an individual and support them in a planned way on either 1:1 or group basis to help them to communicate regularly, develop friendships and explore their interests and enable them to feel genuinely part of the community.

You will have the support of a member of the **Somerset You can Do** staff team. Full Induction and training for your role will be provided including and ICT skills check and training.

Out of pocket expenses including travelling costs will be paid.

## 5 IT support volunteering: Staying in touch 'knowhow' volunteers

Do you have IT skills which you are willing to share with others?

Volunteers are needed to support people with computer systems, internet connections using e-mail etc.

You would be part of a team of volunteers supporting individuals with computer problems such as setting up their PC's or laptops, helping with tablets and e-readers. This would include help with setting up internet connections and general ICT problem solving.

The project will be supporting isolated people, people with mental ill health, people with physical disabilities and people with learning disabilities.

You will be supporting individuals with ICT problems which might include helping the person in their own home or tackling the problem by distant access to their PC or over the phone.

You will have the support of a member of the **Somerset You can Do** staff team. Full Induction and training for your role will be provided including and ICT skills check and training.

Out of pocket expenses including travelling costs will be paid.

## WHAT IS A SOMERSET COUNTY COUNCIL SOCIAL CARE VOLUNTEER ?

If you choose to become a Somerset County Council social care volunteer we will place you within the service of your choice where you will be supported by council staff.

As a volunteer may have an individual placement on a long or short term basis. You may be matched with a group or individual and work in harmony with the staff team of your chosen service area.

Some volunteers may wish to become volunteer drivers or support people as they travel to day centres or on outings whilst others may wish to be involved in encouraging and helping parents, or helping young people and children in need, some may wish to befriend older people or support disabled people to use community and leisure facilities etc.

There is an enormous range of volunteering opportunities within Somerset County Council's social care service including:

- adult social care services,
- learning disabilities services,
- mental health services,
- children and young people services,
- Transporting Somerset volunteer drivers.

# VOLUNTEERING ROLES IN SOMERSET COUNTY COUNCIL

## 1 The Learning Disability Service

Do you have the time to make a difference to the lives of people with learning difficulties? If so why not become a volunteer, supporting people in a range of interests including activities within the community.

We are able to offer a range of volunteering opportunities including:

### House attached volunteer

As a house attached volunteer you will be supporting people in residential and supported living settings to access the wider community.

### Befriending

Working one to one with a person with learning difficulties to help them access activities in the community.

### Volunteering in Day centres

Supporting people in a range of centre and community based activities.

### Bus Buddying

Supporting people to become independent public transport users.

## **2 Children's and Young People's Service**

As a volunteer with Children's services you could be using your skills in a wide variety of situations including:

### Befriending and Supporting Young People

You will be part of a team supporting young people Leaving Care, in Children's Residential Centres or Children's Social Care teams.

### Young Carers Project

You would support young carers to help reduce isolation and give respite from their caring responsibilities. You will be able to work in groups or one to one providing a range of fun activities.

### Helping in Family and Children's Centres

You will be part of a team providing a range of services in group and one to one settings for families and young people.

### Supporting Young People with Disabilities

You would work with children and young people with disabilities enabling them to access after school clubs and other activities.

### 3 Transporting Somerset

As a volunteer driver you will be part of a team of local drivers who use their own cars to transport people of all ages with differing needs on regular or one off journeys. You will be able to claim expenses of 45p per mile this covers your petrol costs and wear and tear to your car.

We are able to offer a range of volunteering driving opportunities including:-

#### Social Care Driver

Social care drivers provide non-emergency transport to both children and adults with an assessed social care need. Journeys can be local, county wide or out of county.

#### Health Driver

Health drivers provide non-emergency transport for eligible clients to attend health appointments at local and regional hospitals.

#### School Driving

School drivers transport young people who have difficulty getting into School or College

Volunteer drivers are supplied with a mobile phone in case of emergencies.

## 4 Adult Services

As a volunteer with adult services you will be enabling and supporting vulnerable adults in a range of settings.

We are able to offer a range of volunteering opportunities including:-

### Volunteering in Day Centres

You will work as part of a team to enable people with physical disabilities to enjoy socialising and other activities.

### Volunteering in Active Living Centres

You will work as part of a team to support older people in Active Living Centres, helping to make them feel welcome, comfortable and supporting them to enjoy a range of Active Living opportunities.

### Volunteering with Carers' Support

You will be able to work as part of a team to help organise and run support groups or work one to one with individuals helping to ease isolation by supporting access to community activities.

### One to One Befriending

You would accompany someone to go shopping, help them to access the community and social activities, or have a cup of tea and a chat.



## **5 Somerset Partnership Mental Health and Wellbeing Services**

As a volunteer you will be part of a team or working one to one supporting people recovering from mental health difficulties.

We are able to offer a range of volunteering opportunities including:-

### One to One Befriending

As a volunteer within a Community Mental Health Team you can offer understanding and support when it is needed to help people regain confidence and their ability to do everyday tasks like shopping, cooking and socialising.

### Peer Support Volunteers

You can use your own experience of recovery to help people admitted to wards on their own journeys of recovery.

### Carer's Support

This is one to one befriending of carers of people with mental health difficulties, helping to break social isolation or assist with activities in groups.

### Ward Attached Volunteers

Working alongside ward staff to support people in a range of activities. This may include older people experiencing difficulties due to memory loss.

## QUERIES AND CONTACTS

### **How much time will you need to commit?**

Volunteering is highly flexible and can be done at a time to suit you and your availability. You can volunteer as often as you wish.

### **Training**

We provide a one day training session to get you started followed by access to further training as you need it.

### **Support**

Volunteers are directly supported by Peter Wood, Sue Hunter, Patti Hodgson, Marilyn Stevens or Brenda Fowler from the **Somerset You can Do** team.

### **Expenses**

Travel costs and agreed 'out of pocket' expenses will be paid.

### **Where is the **Somerset You can Do** project running?**

We are looking for volunteers from anywhere in Somerset.

## OUR VALUES

We are committed to the following:

- we will not introduce volunteers to replace paid staff,
- volunteers will have a defined place in the structure of our organisation and the Somerset County Council's social care services,
- volunteers will be integrated and treated equally as part of the team,
- We will recognise the individual skills that each person brings to the organisation and help them to develop a volunteer 'career' path,
- volunteers will be made to feel supported and valued in their role through a comprehensive induction to Somerset County Council's Social Care Services and Community Volunteering.

To find out more about the project please contact  
**Somerset You can Do**

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Our purpose is to engage all of our customers in learning and work.

