



Volunteering and Young People

What is volunteering?

Volunteering is when you choose to give your time and energy to help and support other people without being paid for it. You may be given expenses (money to cover any costs incurred by you like bus fares etc.) or if you are volunteering full-time you may receive a small subsistence allowance for food and travel (or both). Volunteering **is not** about doing something for a family member, or undertaking work for which you are paid a wage.

As a volunteer, you could do different activities, for example,

- Fundraising for a charity.
- Caring for animals.
- Helping people who are ill or who have disabilities.

Volunteering experiences can now be accredited to national standards, for example, the Asdan Awards making it a transferable workplace skill.

Why do it?

Thinking about why you want to volunteer may help you to decide about what you want to do. Volunteering could help you in many ways, for example:

- Being able to prove to employers that you can keep regular hours and handle commitment.
- Development of your self-confidence through learning new skills.
- Give you an insight into particular job roles.
- Help you to make career choices and improve job prospects.
- Boost your CV or university application (accreditation of UCAS points),
- Practise the skills you have.
- Help you to stay active and healthy while giving something back to your community.
- Allow you to meet new people and gain references.
- Offer you the chance to gain a recognised qualification, such as: an Asdan Award or First Aid qualification.

What types of opportunities are available?

Whatever your skills and interests, there is likely to be something you can do or a project in which you can become involved. Many of the opportunities may only be open to young people over the age of 16 or 18 but some organisations will consider younger people. Here are some examples of the more popular projects:

- **Social Services:** (helping the elderly, the disabled, children with special needs or other vulnerable people in times of personal crisis)
for example, the LUPS Scheme in Fareham which takes volunteers from the age of 14 to help out on holiday playschemes with disabled children

- **Health:** (working for the NHS as a hospital guide, a nursing home DJ on Hospital Radio or with the St John Ambulance as a paramedical assistant).
- **Sports:** (helping to set up and run a sports club or assisting with coaching activities, organising play schemes during holiday time).
- **Environmental / conservation:** (restoring footpaths, street cleaning, clearing beaches, working for RSPCA or RSPB, Blue Cross, PDSA, a working holiday with the National Trust).
- **Archaeological Digs** (English Heritage sites and museums).
- **Performing Arts:** assisting with production of performances and helping out behind the scenes, for example, assistant at Groundlings Theatre Company in Portsmouth.
- **Other Community Projects :** for example, the Hampshire Police Young Cadets or Hampshire County Council Trading Standards for the Underage Sales project.

For many of the caring opportunities a DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) check will be required as part of the entry requirements. This is to ensure that you are suitable for the type of work undertaken and will be discussed in more detail at your interview; the volunteering provider usually organises this. You may be required to work for a minimum number of hours per week and on specific days **so** it is important to think about the amount of time you can spare and when you will be available before you apply for opportunities.

It can sometimes be difficult for young people to find suitable opportunities, particularly for those who are under 16 because of insurance and safeguarding issues. However here are a few suggestions of projects and activities in which you could get involved either through your school, college or in your spare time:

- The Duke of Edinburgh's Award (for 14 – 24 year olds).
- The Scout Association.
- Armed Forces Cadets (Army, Royal Navy, Royal Air Force).
- Membership of Student Council in school.
- Joining the Local Youth Council (influence local youth policies).
- School / College prefect or mentor or litter collector.
- National Citizenship Service for 16 and 17 year olds (a new summer volunteering scheme in England which gives 16-year olds the opportunity to take part in a range of physical challenges and social action projects. The programme lasts for three weeks, plus 30 hours of volunteering, with two weeks spent away from home.
- Music projects – (organisation of gigs, band practice or learning how to be a DJ or play a musical instrument).

Involvement in any of these activities could benefit you in the same way as volunteering on any of the above projects. If you volunteer in the community or at events on a regular basis you may be able to obtain an Asdan qualification.

You could also start up your own project if you identify a need in your local community and apply for funding through the **Think Big project run by O2**. This scheme offers funding and training to young people aged 13 to 25, who have an idea for a project that will improve their local community.

How do I get started?

To find out more about being a volunteer in your area, you could log onto the **do-it** database and search for suitable opportunities by entering your post code and interests. Your search should bring up all the registered volunteering opportunities in your area. All the websites listed below include useful information about volunteering and opportunities.

Other ways to find out about what you can do are to:

- contact organisations directly that offer opportunities in the areas that interest you
- ask teaching staff and tutors about undertaking roles in school / college
- ask your careers adviser in school or college for some ideas
- look in your local library, community centre or youth support centre,
- check local newspapers and radio for organisations that may want volunteers.



Want to find out more?

www.do-it.org/opportunities/search: details of opportunities across the UK and now includes a section on “overseas opportunities” – can search for local opportunities and link to particular interest and local volunteer centres.

<https://www.ncvo.org.uk/ncvo-volunteering> Telephone number: 020 7713 6300 - links to **do-it** website and all the volunteer centres – useful information on all aspects of volunteering including benefits.

www.hampshirevolunteers.org.uk - gives overview of voluntary projects across Hampshire and includes useful information on volunteering – **links to volunteer centres across Hampshire.**

www.nationaltrust.org.uk/workingholidays - details on working holiday opportunities (conservation and environmental) for 16- to 18 –year olds

www.lups.co.uk - holiday play scheme for disabled children at St Francis School in Fareham - contact: Ian Wilson 01489 574731 (after 6pm)

www.O2thinkbig.co.uk – useful advice on funding available for young people to set up their own projects.

www.vso.org.uk - details of volunteering opportunities abroad

www.musicfusion.org.uk (information on music projects in Hampshire area).

www.ncsyes.co.uk - a short volunteering project for 15 to 17 year olds undertaken out of term time. A cost of £50 may be charged depending on financial circumstances.

www.solentyouthaction.org.uk - details of opportunities across Hampshire and the Isle of Wight for young people, in particular those with special needs

www.hampshire.police.uk - select : " Join the Team" and scroll down to Volunteer Police Cadets/ Police Support Volunteers and Special Constables.

www.porthosp.nhs.uk click on "Get Involved" to find out more about the types of opportunities available at Portsmouth hospitals.

Telephone: 02392 286401 or email: voluntary.services@porthosp.nhs.uk

www.uhs.nhs.uk/volunteering opportunities at University Hospitals Southampton – Telephone: 02381 204688 or email: volunteers@uhs.nhs.uk Volunteer Services manager: Kim Sutton. To find out more about Hospital Radio at the hospital, telephone 02380 785151 after 6 pm.

www.hampshirehospitals.nhs.uk Royal Hampshire County Hospital in Winchester: Telephone: 01962 825446 or email: volunteers@hhft.nhs.uk.

www.ukyouthparliament.org.uk Youth Parliament - to get involved in politics and help to influence local youth policies. Enter your postcode to see what is happening in your area. The website will include details of local contacts.

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Website: www.ebpsouth.co.uk. Tel: 023 9228 3400 Monday to Friday 9am to 4pm

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