

February 2008

In this issue...

Make time to help end child poverty

We're looking for volunteers who can give a little time to do something special – help a child, young person or family living with the effects of poverty in this country....

Volunteer viewpoint

My first decade in Social Services has been very exciting and rewarding for me. It was the Volunteer Centre which first gave me the confidence to get started though and I would recommend it to anyone who feels they want to work with people but don't know how to get started....

Helping others can help you

Volunteering. It's all about U. Not only does it offer the chance to learn new skills and pursue your own interests...

Improving access to arts venues for disabled people

Arts organisations across Manchester are dedicated to improving access for disabled people but they need your help. Theatres, cinemas, museums and galleries across the city would like to invite you along for a couple of hours each month so that you can share your views...

Volunteer Centre Tameside

95-97 Penny Meadow
Ashton-under-Lyne
OL6 6EP

Tel: 0161 339 2345

www.tamesidevb.org.uk

Community Action Team

Volunteer Centre Tameside is working in partnership with Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Service to recruit and train a group of volunteers to undertake home fire safety checks.

Volunteers will be recruited in the conventional way to volunteer perhaps one day a week, but a new twist will see the Volunteer Centre work with employers in a bid to encourage them to permit employees to volunteer during working hours for perhaps a day a year. David Sharples has recently been appointed volunteer coordinator.



Community
ACTION TEAM

Home Fire Safety Checks are FREE to all residents in Tameside, to register for one please call 0161 339 2345. Appointments will be made prior to the visit and a volunteer will accompany you around your home as they look at identifying potential fire risks and helping you to reduce these risks. Assistance will also be given to householders to develop an escape plan. As part of the service FREE 10 year smoke alarms will be provided along with other equipment that might reduce the risk of fire.

Simon Hopes, Fire Safety Manager at Tameside Borough Command said, "We would encourage anyone young or old to contact us and request a Home Fire Safety Check. The majority of fatalities from home fires are due to people not having a working smoke alarm, or not having an escape plan. Please contact us and make yourself safe."



For further information about this innovative and challenging project, please contact David on 0161 339 2345.

Give the best present of all – your time!

Dare to Care: make time to help end child poverty is a campaign led by CSV (Community Service Volunteers) and the Campaign to End Child Poverty. From now until the end of February 2008 we're looking for volunteers who can give a little time to do something special – help a child, young person or family living with the effects of poverty in this country.

Poverty is not simply about money - children missing out on the latest toys, gadgets and clothes. Children from poorer families are missing out on some of the most basic opportunities and experiences you would expect a child to have access to.

There's a lot you can do to give children a positive experience and opportunity to learn something new, have fun, be creative or simply have something to look forward to. Get involved either as an individual or with your community group, youth centre, school, organisation or place of worship. It doesn't matter what age you are or what skills you have – everyone has something to offer and everyone is welcome!

You could set up a Christmas Activity Day where children could do arts and crafts and receive a small gift from Santa at the end of the day – use the £80 grant on offer through this campaign to do this. You could organise a big clean up and litter pick, or planting of a community garden. Give a run down play area a real lift! Make your New Year's resolution matter to others - commit to helping a child improve their reading. An hour a week over one term can increase a child's reading ability by a whole year! Get fit and help others along the way by setting up a free after school sports club or activity.

There are many easy and simple activities that require little time – please visit our website www.daretocare.org.uk to find


daretocare
MAKE TIME TO HELP END CHILD POVERTY



out more about setting up an activity or enter your postcode to see what's already taking place in your area.

The Dare to Care team are ready to help with advice and support on our freephone number **0800 284 533** or by emailing daretocare@csv.org.uk

Celebrity Support

You can also receive 'how-to' guides such as 'how-to set up your own mini games' supported by Dame Kelly Holmes, 'how-to plant a community garden' supported by Charlie Dimmock, 'how to share your skills', supported by Trevor Nelson and 'how to take kids on a Big Day Out' supported by Sian Lloyd.



Have you got what it takes to be a volunteer?

Volunteering at Willow Wood is more than just a job – it's calling to help others. There are many reasons why people choose to volunteer at Willow Wood whether it's to make new friends, experience a new line of work or to simply "give something back" to the community.

Whatever the reason, volunteering can and does make a real difference to your life and to the lives of people in our community.

Most people, throughout their working lives, pick up helpful skills either from their workplace or their home that could be useful to the hospice – so why not put your skills to good use? Dozens of men and women of different ages, backgrounds, cultures and faiths give up their time for the hospice for the benefit of those in need of its specialist services.

The hospice is fortunate to have more than 430 active volunteers working in a variety of roles. Some spend their time working in one of the hospices' seven charity shops, which are run almost entirely by volunteers, others help out in the hospice itself undertaking roles as diverse as working on reception or in the laundry department.

Volunteering is about people willingly giving their time for the benefit of others. People have different motivations for why they volunteer at the hospice and they get different rewards in return. Volunteering at Willow Wood can provide new experiences, new skills, a chance to meet new friends and it gives you an opportunity to feel useful. It's an opportunity to put your spare time to good use and gives you a sense of "giving back".



Bea Robinson, volunteer co-ordinator, said "We are tremendously proud of our voluntary staff and thank them for the wonderful work they do on our behalf. If you have a desire to help, have a little time to spare and would like to take a challenging role and join a band of committed individuals, then call us today and see how your help can really make the difference."

If you're interested in volunteering call Bea on 0161 330 1100.

In Touch: Improving access to arts venues for disabled people

Despite Manchester being one of the most vibrant places to live, work and socialise, access to some of our arts organisations leaves a lot to be desired.

Arts organisations across Manchester are dedicated to improving access for disabled people but they need your help. Theatres, cinemas, museums and galleries across the city would like to invite you along for a couple of hours each month so that you can share your views on everything from websites to programming, customer service to how easy it is to get a drink at the bar. As a thank you we will provide you with complimentary tickets to various arts events and the occasional free meal.

Organisations involved include The Bridgewater Hall, Cornerhouse, The Manchester Museum and The Royal Exchange Theatre. Whether you are a regular visitor or are yet to attend, we want to hear from you now. If this is something you would like to be involved in then please get in touch.

Please contact Catherine Beachill at Arts About Manchester:

0161 234 2967 (telephone)
07872 178 863 (text)
catherine2@aam.org.uk (email)

Or write to:
Catherine Beachill
Audience Development Assistant
Green Fish Resource Centre
46 - 50 Oldham Street
Manchester
M4 1LE

LATEST VOLUNTARY OPPORTUNITIES

Cut out and take to the Volunteer Centre for more information

Car Scheme Driver

Volunteer Centre Tameside

Volunteer Drivers use their own cars to transport people who due to illness, age or disability are unable to use public transport to get about, would struggle to use taxis, or would find using public transport too stressful due to mental ill-health. Drivers would pick up the passenger from the passenger's home, take them to the destination and, in most cases wait with the passenger until they are ready to return home. In the majority of cases these appointments are daytime and on weekdays, though occasionally there are requests for journeys outside these times.

General Helper/Volunteer

Tameside Arts Ltd

To take part in drama, art, dance and music sessions, to support people with learning disabilities to attend meetings with other drama companies, support with admin, marketing and practical duties like making tea/coffee, shopping and driving.

'Partnership For Older Peoples Project' (POPPs) Volunteer

Age Concern Tameside

To work within older peoples homes and complete a 'check & support' questionnaire using electronic or paper based methods, returning the data to a central point, (CORA Coordinator).

Training Provided:

- Personal safety
- Protection of Vulnerable Adults
- Electronic data collection

Fire Prevention Volunteer

Volunteer Centre Tameside

To inform and advise vulnerable people about fire safety issues, by completing questionnaires devised and supplied by Greater Manchester Fire & Rescue Service. Providing and installing smoke alarms and other equipment to reduce fires in the home.

Toy Library Volunteer

Sure Start St Peters

To establish regular toy library sessions within the St Peter's area, Operate toy library sessions, clean and maintain toys, promote early learning by offering good quality toys and ideas for activities.

At present we can only recruit volunteers from the St Peters Ward of Ashton-under-Lyne

Volunteer

In my role as Planning & Commissioning Officer for the Joint Commissioning & Performance Management Team I recently had cause to contact Sue Vickers at the Volunteer Centre Tameside. It reminded me I had agreed to write a short article for the newsletter a year or so earlier but had never got around to it. So here is my story of how the Volunteer Centre changed my life.

In 1995 I had left university, but without any definite career plans I ended up working in a retail warehouse and then for the Greater Manchester Pension fund. I knew I wasn't really in the right job but I didn't know where to find 'the right job' or even what 'the right job' might look like. I saw an advert somewhere for a six week evening course in 'volunteering for community work' which was being coordinated by what was then called 'Tameside Volunteer Bureau'. I enrolled and attended the course at the Council Offices one night a week for six weeks. The course was welcoming and friendly and encouraged everyone to believe that they could contribute in some way.

At the end of the course I found myself volunteering as a youth worker at a youth club in Stalybridge called 'Network S' – the club has long gone and is half of an off-licence shop now. My first experience of youth work was nerve-racking at first but I had excellent support from a small group of very dedicated youth workers and proper supervision from the manager. We organised ice skating trips, camping trips, canoeing and other activities for young people on the Carrbrook estate. In hindsight it was very rewarding work. I built some good relationships with staff and young people. It can be very educational for adults to see the world through young people's eyes.

Not long after I started volunteering a paid opportunity came up in a Social Services Adult Assessment team. It was a team clerk job and in the interview I referred to my volunteering work and got the job. Soon after, I was promoted to Community Care Officer and after that my manager agreed to me starting my Social Work Training at Salford University. I have always been fortunate in having supportive managers. Three years later I was a qualified social worker and then spent four years working at Tameside General hospital with older people. In recent times I have joined the Planning & Commissioning side of the business and am learning a whole new job role again, working with people with disabilities.

My first decade in Social Services has been very exciting and rewarding for me. It was the Volunteer Centre which first gave me the confidence to get started though and I would recommend it to anyone who feels they want to work with people but don't know how to get started.

Paul Nolan
Planning & Commissioning Officer

Viewpoint



Volunteer

Helping others can help you

Volunteering. It's all about U. Not only does it offer the chance to learn new skills and pursue your own interests, it will help you gain the skills to improve your life and career prospects in so many exciting, rewarding and maybe, unexpected ways.

It can be something you do in addition to the day job or can be a great way of getting you back into the workplace if you are not working.

Give whatever time you can spare and you'll be amazed at what you can achieve. Even an hour a week can make a huge difference.

Helping a voluntary organisation or charity can provide you with training, useful experience and even a recognised qualification.

Anyone can volunteer because all of us have abilities, talents and qualities that are useful in some way.

Make being a volunteer work for you. We all have a bit of the volunteering spirit in us, a desire to develop and succeed, and we can all have some fun whilst helping others.

Whatever stage you're at in life, there are lots of things you can get from volunteering that you might not have realised. For more information call 0800 0681 800 or visit www.itsallaboutu.org.uk.





Community Options for Remaining Active (CORA)

The Opening Doors for Older People project, which is a 2 year government funded approach to helping older people remain independent and well in their own homes for as long as possible, has now been up and running for almost 6 months.

The project is progressing well and has made extremely good progress in terms of the numbers of older people requesting the CORA Check and support service and the number of Volunteer CORA Personal Advisors recruited.

CORA Advisors are specially trained to visit older people at home and to tell them all about the available services in Tameside which may be useful to them.

This means that we are now sign posting older people to a range of services available within Tameside. CORA advisors are also collecting information about what new services older people want and need so that we can extend the range of services even further.

However, for the project to achieve its overall aim of helping more older people across the borough to live longer, happier and healthier lives in their own homes, it is essential that older people act on the information that they receive in their personalised information pack.

To request a CORA visit or to volunteer to become a CORA advisor please contact Age Concern Tameside on 0161 308 5007 or email cora@ageconcerntameside.com.

Fun Run to Raise Money for the Crisis in Darfur

Take action against poverty and the malnutrition in Darfur/Sudan. Thousands of children killed every year from Malaria, Cholera, Tuberculosis, AIDS/HIV, Cell Thalassaemias and other blood disorders.

Urgent Action Needed: As well as the fun run we are also collecting clothes, shoes, footwear, mobile phones, playstations, notebooks, pens, pencils, games, stationery, etc...

Please help us to help them! For more information contact Cristo on 07984 072740.

Congo Fellowship Community, 36 Lockton Court, Ardwick Manchester, M1 7JP

Congo Fellowship Community

Drop-in for refugees and asylum seekers

Every Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday, 10am to 1pm at Manchester Refugee support network - 129 Princess Road, Moss-side, Manchester, M14 4TH.

Come along for advice, housing benefit and family activities, signposting for immigration advice, sport, music and excursions, council services, interpretation and translation.

For further information, contact Cristo on 07984 072740