

Careers in Health & Social Care Portal – Volunteering



**What is Volunteering?**

**Definition**

Volunteering is defined by the NCVO (National Council for Voluntary Organisations) as any activity that involves spending time, unpaid, doing something that aims to benefit the environment or someone (individuals or groups) other than, or in addition to, close relatives. Central to this definition is the fact that volunteering must be a choice freely made by each individual.

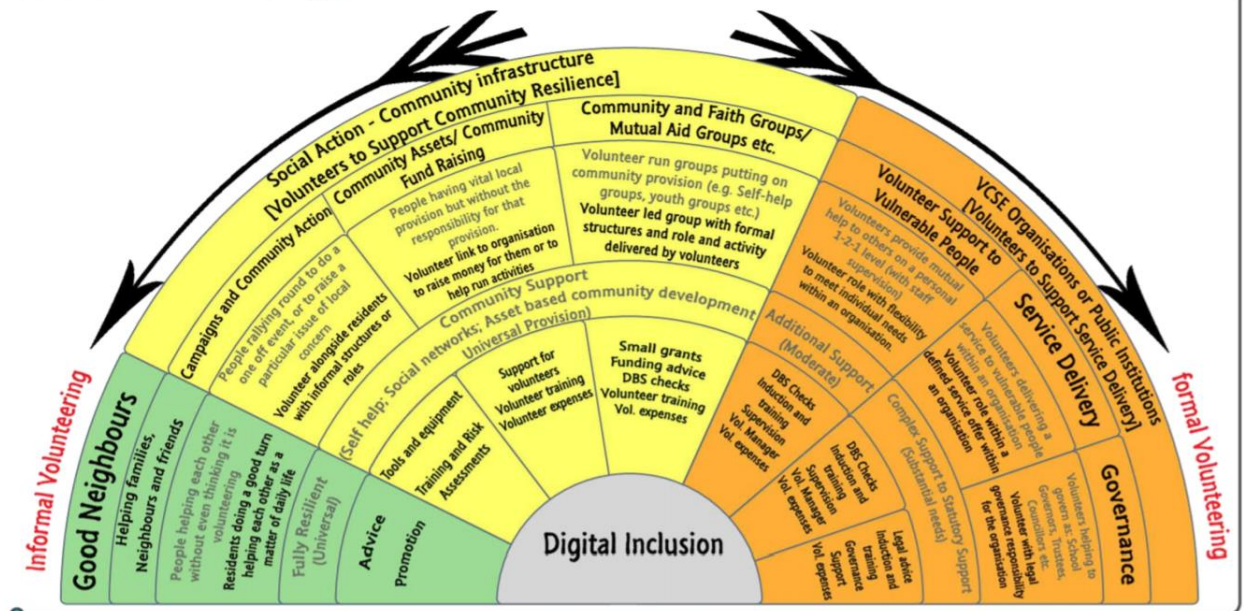
This can include formal activity undertaken through public, private and voluntary organisations as well as informal community participation and social action.

Everyone has the right to volunteer and volunteering can have significant benefits for individuals.

**Types of Volunteering**

Volunteering can take many different forms, with activities and roles ranging from providing a helping hand to a person in your community who needs assistance, to supporting a charity by becoming a Board Trustee. The continuum of volunteering is illustrated below:

Continuum of Volunteering ●



Produced by Prevention, Neighbourhoods and Learning Services, Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council, in collaboration with Blackburn with Darwen Council for Voluntary Services

In England, the top volunteering activities are:

- fundraising
- handling money
- organising or helping at events
- leading or managing a group
- giving advice
- information and counselling
- other practical help.

*(The Charities Commission)*

Typical Volunteer roles might be:

- Befriending - regularly talking to and checking on isolated or older people, either in person or by phone
- Community Support Volunteer - this could include activities such as doing shopping or collecting medication for those who need that extra support or distribution within a food bank or even providing gardening support within the local community.
- Community Centre Administration Support Volunteer
- Refugee Support Volunteer – helping migrant people to settle
- Charity Shop Volunteer – most high streets have shops needing help to prepare items for sale or managing busy sales counters
- Independent Living Volunteer – helping people with learning needs to live in communities
- Patient Transport Driver – taking vulnerable people to and from medical appointments
- Volunteer Police Cadet
- Breastfeeding support
- Canal and River Trust Volunteers

More specialist volunteering roles are also available, for example supporting those who are elderly, disabled, or have mental health or learning difficulties.

You may have some relevant skills, experience or knowledge in these areas, perhaps through supporting family members or friends; but in most cases specialist knowledge isn't required as long as you have an interest and enthusiasm to provide support and are willing to learn

### **Why volunteer?**

Evidence suggests there are 5 steps you can take to improve your mental health and wellbeing. Trying these things could help you feel more positive and able to get the most out of life.

# Five Ways to Wellbeing



To find out more about this, [click here](#)

Volunteering is an excellent way of achieving all of these! Volunteering increases self-confidence. Volunteering can provide a healthy boost to your self-confidence, self-esteem, and life satisfaction. You are doing good for others and the community, which provides a natural sense of accomplishment. Your role as a volunteer can also give you a sense of pride and identity.

## What are the benefits of volunteering?

Volunteering can make a real difference to your own life and the lives of those around you. It improves and strengthens local communities and can have a transformative effect for those who are recipients of support from volunteers.

Benefits include:

- Enhanced wellbeing
- Feeling valued and appreciated
- Increased self-confidence and sense of purpose
- Being part of a team: feeling more connected with opportunities to meet new people
- Learn new skills or develop existing ones
- A great way of building on career opportunities or can provide a route to employment (eg by developing skills and getting references)
- Doing something you enjoy, not just because you're paid to do it
- Satisfaction in helping others and knowing you make a difference.

Read here [case studies](#) like the [Active Lancashire](#) 'Tackling Inequalities Fund – Chorley Activity Buddies'.

The National Council for Voluntary Organisations (NCVO) is an organisation which champions volunteering and the voluntary sector, because they are essential for a better society. It represents and supports over 16,000 voluntary organisations, charities, community groups and social enterprises across England. You can find out more [here](#).

## Where can I Volunteer?

### Volunteering in the UK

Charities, community groups and non-profit organisations such as Age UK, Barnardo's, British Red Cross, Cancer Research UK, the National Trust, The Prince's Trust, and many more are in constant need of volunteers. You can also work in schools, hospitals and local community centres. Volunteering is possible in most roles, however, some organisations require experience and knowledge, so make sure you do some research before applying.

There are many ways and places you can volunteer locally across Lancashire & South Cumbria and beyond. They include:

**Volunteering at Schools** – such as helping children with reading, numeracy or giving talks on specific subjects.

**Emergency Volunteering** – Volunteering to help out in an emergency needs people who are prepared to take responsibility. [Lancashire Volunteer Partnership](#) were able to respond to the pandemic by being prepared – read more here: [LVP - emergency response](#)

### **Volunteering in Sports**

Many sporting activities rely on the skills and commitment of volunteers to exist whether it's as a coach for a children's football team or more specialised coaching to encourage physical activity for disabled people. Look at [Active Lancashire](#) for inspiration and how to get involved.

However, specialist knowledge or skills in a sport isn't always needed, everyone has something to offer, whether it's helping run sporting events, making refreshments, or book keeping for a local club, there are many different ways of volunteering in sport. The Sport and Recreation Alliance's new Volunteer Opportunity Finder [here](#), is a good way to start, or search [Join In](#).

There are also volunteering opportunities in other sectors such as:

- Hospitals
- Social Care
- Animal Welfare
- Conservation
- Mental Health
- Arts and Culture

**Add link to the section below regarding volunteering in L&SC.**

### Volunteering Abroad

There are a variety of different programmes and opportunities available to volunteer overseas. This might involve activities such as:

- Teaching abroad
- Wildlife or marine conservation
- Sports coaching
- Construction
- Supporting global public health

Overseas voluntary work can last from a couple of weeks to a year. For international opportunities you can search here:

- [Global Vision International \(GVI\)](#)
- [Frontier](#)
- [International Volunteer HQ](#)
- [Tru Experience Travel](#)
- [Voluntary Service Overseas \(VSO\)](#)
- [Volunteer Abroad](#)

### Where to Volunteer in L&SC

It's estimated there are over 10,000 charities and voluntary service organisations across Lancashire and South Cumbria.

Lancashire and South Cumbria is split regionally into five [Integrated Care Partnerships](#) and you can find out about local voluntary groups in each area usually through the local **Council of Voluntary Services** (CVS). They inspire people and organisations to action through volunteering, donating money or resources to make a positive contribution to the life of the community. They are experts in all things volunteering... You can also apply to the large NHS Trusts who have voluntary services:

CVS:	NHS
<b>Pennine Lancashire:</b> <a href="#">Hyndburn &amp; Ribble Valley CVS</a> <a href="#">Burnley, Pendle &amp; Rossendale CVS</a> <a href="#">Community CVS in Blackburn with Darwen</a>	East Lancashire Hospitals NHS Trust <a href="https://elht.nhs.uk/working-us/volunteering">https://elht.nhs.uk/working-us/volunteering</a>
<b>West Lancashire</b> <a href="#">West Lancs CVS</a>	Lancashire & South Cumbria NHS FT <a href="https://www.lscft.nhs.uk/Volunteering-Services">https://www.lscft.nhs.uk/Volunteering-Services</a>
<b>Morecambe Bay</b> <a href="#">Lancaster District CVS</a> <a href="https://cumbriacvs.org.uk/">https://cumbriacvs.org.uk/</a>	University Hospitals of Morecambe Bay <a href="https://www.uhmb.nhs.uk/get-involved/volunteer-us">https://www.uhmb.nhs.uk/get-involved/volunteer-us</a>

<p><b>Central</b>  <a href="#">Preston Volunteering</a>  (Local Authority)  <a href="https://helpinpreston.com/volunteering/">https://helpinpreston.com/volunteering/</a></p>	<p><b>Lancashire Teaching Hospitals</b>  <a href="https://www.lancsteachinghospitals.nhs.uk/volunteering-opportunities/">https://www.lancsteachinghospitals.nhs.uk/volunteering-opportunities/</a></p>
<p><b>Fylde Coast</b>  <a href="#">Volunteer Centre Blackpool</a>  <a href="#">Volunteering Wyre Council</a></p>	<p><b>Blackpool Teaching Hospitals</b>  <a href="https://www.bfwh.nhs.uk/our-services/volunteers/">https://www.bfwh.nhs.uk/our-services/volunteers/</a></p>
<p><b>Lancashire Volunteer Partnership (LVP)</b> was set up between public services who wanted to provide one gateway into public service volunteering in the local area. They manage various volunteering opportunities for organisations like the police, the Justice Service, libraries and local councils. Find out more about their volunteering opportunities <a href="#">here</a>.</p> <p><b>Our Lancashire</b> is the Lancashire-wide Social Action network to bring groups and communities together to make Lancashire a greater place to live, work and play. If you are looking to find a new activity in your local area you can put your postcode in their website and find out what is happening in your local area. Find out more <a href="#">here</a>.</p>	
<p>Other links  <a href="https://nhsvolunteerresponders.org.uk/">https://nhsvolunteerresponders.org.uk/</a></p>	

### What's the right volunteer opportunity for me?

#### How to find the right volunteer opportunity

There are numerous volunteer opportunities available. The key is to find a volunteer position that you would enjoy and are capable of doing. It's also important to make sure that your commitment matches the organisation's needs.

The following questions can help you narrow your options:

- Do you prefer to work alone or as part of a team?
- Are you better behind the scenes or do you prefer to take a more visible role?
- How much time are you willing to commit?
- How much responsibility are you ready to take on?
- What skills can you bring a volunteer job?
- What causes are important to you?

### How to Volunteer

The recruitment process is similar to employment and depends very much on the role and organisation. The process may involve an application form, reference checks, eligibility (proof of being a UK citizen/asylum seeker/resettled migrant) and DBS check (Disclosure & Barring Service). Having a criminal record will often not prevent you from volunteering for many roles but where you are going to work with vulnerable people or children, the organisation must be aware and you would usually notify them on a declaration part of the application. If you do need a DBS check, the organisation you're volunteering with will have to apply for the DBS Check on your behalf. You might also have an interview meeting, although digital applications and on-line meetings are becoming increasingly popular.

**How to apply** – find out from the organisation what they require. Or get advice from the local CVS [<inset link to where to apply section>](#)

**Do you need qualifications?** It is rare to need qualifications, but your skills, knowledge and experience will usually be of great interest to organisations. Sometimes they need specialist know-how like digital skills, including social media, project or time management, communication skills or finance and budgets and always they will look for sensitivity and discretion with personal information. Organisational skills are always useful too.

**What information do you have to give?** Usually your name and address and other details depending on what you are volunteering to do. They might need proof of your age or check your health for physically demanding roles. They will need to check your driving licence if you will be volunteer driving and also that your vehicle is road worthy. Organisations must treat your information in line with GDPR requirements and explain why they need information, how it will be stored and so on.

**What training will I get?** <link to Volunteer and learn>

**What age do I have to be to volunteer?** There is no legal reason why young people age 16 and 17 years cannot volunteer, however children are classed as a 'vulnerable group', so any organisation who takes on young volunteers must be careful to protect them. Legally a child is defined as someone who is under 18 years old, or under 16 if employed.

Spending some time with elders or vulnerable adults can be very meaningful for under 16 year-olds. Preteens can volunteer but of course with adult supervision and in suitable safe environments. Learning the ethos of giving and helping others at a young age can help build character. Most organisations will have their own policy.

### Volunteer and Learn

Depending on the role and organisation you may need to complete some basic mandatory training for example volunteering in health and social care. There are fifteen e-learning modules you can do at any time which are a great start to volunteering or a good refresher. They are written specifically for volunteers and useful. Look at the e-Learning for Health link here [Volunteer Learning](#)

Portfolio – keeping a record of your volunteering is a great idea especially when looking for work [record of volunteer experience](#)

National Volunteer Standards – if you are volunteering in health and social care you can apply for a [National Volunteer Certificate](#)

### A Career in Voluntary Services

**Pathways to employment.** Many people use volunteering to 'test the water' in a new environment and to gain useful skills and experience. It's a good idea to keep a record and summarise this in your CV. An example is the Dare to Care programme where people can obtain specific experience to help them to decide whether to apply to work: [Dare to Care](#) Expert advice is also available from the [Lancashire Skills Hub](#)

Volunteer Manager – typical role profile: [Volunteer Manager at NCVO](#)

Vol Co-ord  
<https://www.prospects.ac.uk/job-profiles/volunteer-coordinator>

Community Engagement Officer – get examples



Case studies

Debra Simpson - insert short text on jobs journey - profile please

### What to expect as a Volunteer: FAQs

**Will I get expenses repaid?** You cannot and should not be paid as a volunteer, but often organisations will reimburse travel expenses and sometimes meals. It varies between organisations, so if you want to claim expenses make sure you know what is on offer. This will not affect benefits and is tax free. See this link to HMRC : [Volunteers Expenses](#)

**What will I wear? Is there a uniform?** For some roles you may be required to wear a uniform – usually a polo shirt or tabard that has a volunteer logo and this will be provided. In some health and social care settings you will be given PPE (Personal Protection Equipment) for example working with vulnerable people during the pandemic. Sometimes you will need to wear high visibility jackets or tabard for safety. This will always be made clear by the organisation. Otherwise, smart, clean and casual is fine.

**How long will recruitment take?** It can take a matter of a few days or weeks – depends on the role you are applying for and organisational policy. It's best to ask at the start do you know what to expect.

**Will a mobile phone be provided?** For some roles like volunteer driving for the ambulance services, you will be provided with a phone for that specific purpose. Most volunteer roles do not require a phone to be provided. You might be asked for your personal phone number to receive calls and texts about volunteering opportunities and it's up to you to provide this, or you might prefer contact by land-line or email.

**Will it be fun?** Good question. Volunteering can be enormous fun especially doing team fund raising and community events where you will meet lots of other good people who are willing to give their time in good spirit. Passion can be infectious, so it's an important trait that all great volunteers must share. Other traits are reliability: There's nothing worse than depending on someone to do something and then having them fall through on their commitment, integrity and honesty, being a great team player and energy and enthusiasm are all needed. A good fun atmosphere *where it's appropriate* always helps.

**Will I be safe?** Safety of volunteers is of paramount importance and you will be given training and equipment where necessary for example crowd control at a football match or helping canal boats to pass through locks! If in doubt, always ask your Volunteer Manager or Co-ordinator

Where can I volunteer near me? – [<insert link to CVS section>](#)

### What will be expected of me?

**How many hours do I have to give?** How much time should you volunteer? Volunteering doesn't have to take over your life to be beneficial. In fact, research shows that just two to three hours per week, or about 100 hours a year, can confer the most benefits—to both you and your chosen cause. Remember the organisation will have invested time and money to recruit you so try to make some commitment and ask them what would be acceptable.



**Boundaries.**

In order to make the most of volunteering it's crucial you understand the limits, or boundaries, of your role. Understanding your boundaries will help you volunteer with more confidence as it informs your approach to issues of confidentiality and conduct and helps you to manage other people's expectations. Relationships can be complicated and in volunteering usually at arms length, but friendships do of course develop so having a clear understanding of what's expected of you in your role – and what isn't – will help ensure:

- the protection and safety of yourself and the people you support
- a safe and consistent setting in which relationships with others can develop.
- One of the National Volunteer Standards required for the National Volunteer Certificate is about 'Roles & Responsibilities' have a look: [Volunteer Roles and Responsibilities](#)

**What if I make a mistake?** Anyone can make a mistake whether simple or potentially catastrophic! The important thing is to talk to your Volunteer Manager or Volunteer Co-ordinator or other appropriate person as soon as possible. If in doubt, have a chat.

**Will I meet new people?** yes most likely, depending on the role and location, you will at least meet other volunteers as well as people who are beneficiaries of your support.

**What if I see or hear something that worries me?**

This is usually called 'safeguarding' and is particularly important when volunteering with vulnerable adults and/or children. There is an e-learning module and a National Volunteer Standard on this subject. It's very important to know what to do if you see or hear anything that concerns you. Look here: [Safeguarding - National Volunteer Standard](#) If worried or unsure speak to your Volunteer Manager or a member of staff or other responsible adult.

**Useful Information****Hints to help you start volunteering**

1. Decide why you want to volunteer. Think about what volunteering can offer you – such as new skills, being with others, fun, an opportunity to make a difference or contribute to a cause that you believe in.
2. Know what you have to offer an organisation. Is it time, enthusiasm, life skills, work skills, or passion about a cause?
3. Decide how much time you can offer towards volunteering. Think about your schedule and how much of a commitment you can give.
4. Research volunteer opportunities. You can find worthy causes by searching the internet, ([add link here to the section about where to volunteer](#)) through media (television, radio, newspaper), looking in the yellow pages, contacting organisations, and asking your friends and family.
5. Learn more about the organisation you plan to volunteer with. Find out what requirements and skills are needed and what training is offered to new volunteers.
6. Decide if you are interested in and comfortable with working alone, one-on-one, or in a group setting.
7. Volunteer with a friend.
8. Everyone can volunteer. There are many volunteer opportunities requiring varying skills and experience.

9. Call and talk to a volunteer manager at an organisation you are interested in providing volunteer services to. This person is an excellent resource to guide you through the application process and your volunteer involvement with the organisation.
10. Just do it! Volunteering is a great way to grow.

Become a volunteer today – you'll be glad you did!

#### Other useful links

- [Volunteering Matters](#) - website for young, older and disabled volunteers
- [Reach Volunteering](#) - website for volunteers with specific skills - like accountancy, marketing, law, management, mentoring or IT
- [Do-it](#)
- [NCVO](#)
- [Timebank](#)
- <https://www.prospects.ac.uk/jobs-and-work-experience/work-experience-and-internships/volunteering>
- [GOV Website](#)



<https://www.facebook.com/watch/?ref=saved&v=1820141684774381>