

Community Action: Bedfordshire Volunteer Management Newsletter

10 December 2020

Included in this newsletter:

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- Festive volunteering
- Volunteering opportunities
- Fond farewell from Kay & keeping in touch
- Publications and reports
- Training, events and additional information (*VCS job vacancies*)



Community Action: Bedfordshire is the Accredited Volunteer Centre for Central Bedfordshire and Luton.

www.cabeds.org.uk | volunteer@cabeds.org.uk | [Facebook](#) | [Twitter](#) | [@CABedfordshire](#)

Covid-19 Volunteering update

Latest Government Guidance

New [GOV.UK](#) guidance aimed at organisations and groups helping them to understand how to involve volunteers safely and effectively during COVID-19 is now live and can be accessed [here](#).

This guidance complements other [GOV.UK](#) guidance on [volunteering](#) and [helping others safely](#) during the pandemic, which are aimed at potential and existing volunteers.

Local restriction tiers: what you need to know

[Click here](#) to view Government guidance, updated 30th November 2020 which sets out the local restriction tier system that was put place from **Wednesday 2 December**, including what you can and cannot do in each tier.

There are 3 tiers for local restrictions:

- **Tier 1: Medium alert**
- **Tier 2: High alert**
- **Tier 3: Very High alert**

Government guidance states that at all tiers, people who can volunteer from home should do so.

People can choose to volunteer outside their home if:

- They cannot volunteer from home
- They do not need to [self-isolate](#)
- They follow [social distancing guidance](#), or [COVID-secure guidance](#) if volunteering in a workplace
- Their workplace has not been [ordered to close](#), if the role takes place within a workplace.

This will also apply to [clinically vulnerable](#) people, which includes the over 70s.

At all tiers, [clinically extremely vulnerable](#) people should volunteer from home. If they cannot do so, they can still choose to volunteer outside their home. However, they are advised that they may wish to ask for extra support from their organisation or group to maintain social distancing and minimise contact with others.

At all tiers, the rules around gatherings and travel will remain the same. This means that where people can volunteer outside their home, they'll be able to:

- Meet in groups of any size, indoors or outdoors, while volunteering
- Travel to volunteer or while volunteering.

Government guidance aimed at [volunteer-involving organisations and groups](#) has been updated in line with these restrictions.

NVCO Latest updates to our coronavirus guidance

NCVO have updated all their [Knowhow Covid](#) Guidance on 4th December including their [Involving Volunteers](#) guidance to help you be clear about the new tiered system that came into effect on 2 December.

Local Information

Keep up to date with specific guidance on what is happening in your local area here:

[Luton Council](#)

[Central Bedfordshire Council](#)

Festive Volunteering

We appreciate that festive celebrations, projects and activities are going to look little different this year. If you are looking for additional ideas to share with your volunteers who may not have had the opportunity to share their time and skills in recent months and are keen to help others over the festive holiday, then here are a few suggestions.

Connect and give kindness this Christmas

Community connections have become an important part of our changing lives over the past few months. As we enter the winter months, connecting with others is even more important, especially for those who are socially isolated and lonely. Despite current restrictions, which have meant a lot of the usual festive volunteering projects are not able to go ahead this year, there are still lots of ways to connect with others during the festive period. For example,

- reaching out to a friend who you know is struggling and sending them a text to let them know you are thinking about them
- asking a neighbour if they want anything from the shop when you are going anyway
- calling someone you know may be feeling lonely and listening to them for at least 15 minutes
- writing a letter or thank you card to someone you appreciate
- giving someone a meaningful compliment
- donating an unused item such as warm clothing or technology
- simply smiling can go a long way to spreading a little kindness into someone else's day



Alternatively, you could join in 'The Great Winter Get Together' from 14th December – 18th January and be part of Jo Cox's vision of a less lonely, more connected world, a kinder, more compassionate society where every individual has a sense of belonging and where we recognise that we have more in common than that which divides us. Featuring a different theme each week encompassing five ways people can connect, this vibrant online celebration of community and connection is sure to educate, inform and entertain! [Click here to get involved.](#)

#40,000 Reasons to Care - Encouraging support for Leighton Buzzard residents this winter

On 1st December a local campaign is being launched by Leighton Buzzard and Linslade residents to encourage everyone to support those who are struggling this winter, especially neighbours experiencing loneliness. There are circa 40,000 residents in Leighton Buzzard. 40,000 individuals that make the town what it is. #40,000 reasons to care is a social initiative inspired by a local resident of Leighton Buzzard. It is a response to the growing strain the pandemic is having on the community, heightening the pressure on people experiencing loneliness, mental health challenges and those without support networks. It acknowledges the power of communities to support where traditional infrastructure cannot and wants to raise awareness of these issues over the winter period.

To keep in touch with #40,000 Reasons to Care and to get ideas about what you can do, go to:

Website: www.reasonstocare.org.uk

Twitter: @Reasons2Care

Instagram: reasonstocarelb

Facebook: 40,000 Reasons to Care (Leighton Buzzard)



Donate while you shop

Feeling overwhelmed or daunted by the prospect of Christmas shopping? There is one way to shop online whilst also raising money to support a cause close to your heart. By joining www.easyfundraising.org.uk you can select one of the 150,000 good causes and collect free donations every time you shop online at over 4,421 retailers, including John Lewis, Amazon, eBay and Apple. You could be part of the 2 million supporters who have raised over £34 million so far. It won't cost you a penny extra but your support will go a long way this Christmas.



Volunteering opportunities

Please share these opportunities with colleagues, volunteers & your networks!

If you haven't already signed up to be a Covid-19 Community Champion, we would encourage you to do so using the links below. Community Champions receive timely key messages and updates around Covid-19 to be shared with members of the community and play an important role in providing feedback to the Local Authorities on how the messaging is being received, to influence the format and style of messaging moving forward. Your input will be invaluable!

Community Champions

The Community Champion roles are open to everyone, all ages and backgrounds to reflect the diversity of the population. The aim is for volunteers to share key public health messages with friends, family and their own networks and communities in whatever way works best.

This is a great way to make a difference to your local community – please share with colleagues, partners, service users and volunteers!

Luton Council – Covid-19 Community Champions

“Luton’s volunteers and community groups have been exceptional throughout the coronavirus crisis in supporting each other and helping people in need.

So many countless acts of love, care and kindness are what makes us all so proud to live and work in this wonderful town.

To build on this we are looking for Covid-19 community champions from a wide range of backgrounds, cultures, faiths, ages and interests to reflect the diversity of Luton, who can help pass on important public health messages and keep people safe from this deadly disease.” **Councillor Khtija Malik**

[Click here](#) to find out more and sign up!



Central Bedfordshire Council – Community Champions

We are calling on people throughout Central Bedfordshire to help us to reach their friends, family, neighbours, colleagues and thousands of other local people, with trusted information and advice related to COVID-19. Sign up and join our existing network of 197 community champions.

We know there are a lot of myths that need busting and questions people are asking when it comes to COVID-19 and we need to know what they are. Which is why we are asking as many of you as possible to please sign up, reach out and help keep Central Bedfordshire safe. Anyone interested in joining our network of 197 Community Champions should visit and register [here](#).

Keeping in touch

Message from Kay Henderson – Volunteer Centre Manager – Community Action Bedfordshire

After six years working at Community Action Bedfordshire, I am now moving on to pastures new. I have thoroughly enjoyed working for Community Action and really enjoyed my work in this role - I feel incredibly lucky and grateful to have had the pleasure of meeting and working with so many wonderful individuals and organisations! I have seen first-hand the extremely positive impact volunteering can have on someone’s life, and have found it rewarding to match volunteers with organisations who work so hard to deliver incredibly valuable work in their community –

I truly believe that Volunteer Managers are amazing at what they do and have really enjoyed working with you all, I hope our paths cross in future (I am sure they will as I am not going far)!

My last day at Community Action will be this Friday 11th December – for all ongoing Volunteer Centre enquiries, please continue to contact the Volunteer Centre team on: volunteer@cabeds.org.uk

Gina – Community Engagement Manager

Karen – Volunteering Adviser



From the start of the new year I will be working as a Careers, Information, Advice and Guidance Advisor for Central Bedfordshire Council – Bedfordshire Employment and Skills Service. The service provides Careers Advice, training and support into employment – if you, your clients or contacts are looking for some advice or support with all things careers-related, it would be great to hear from you when I am in my new role!

Details for Bedfordshire Employment and Skills Service details:

Email: ncs@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk

Telephone: 0300 300 8110 [Website](#)

Best wishes,

Kay

Keeping in touch

The Volunteer Centre team are currently working remotely and providing support via phone and email. Please keep your roles updated on Volunteer Connect and keep in touch to let us know if you are looking for volunteers in Central Bedfordshire or Luton.

[Click here](#) to log in, review and manage your organisation profile and opportunities on Volunteer Connect. If you have any questions about Volunteer Connect, please contact Karen at: volunteer@cabeds.org.uk

Please note our offices will be closed over the holiday period from 21st December to 4th January 2021.

Publications and Reports

Pro Bono Economics

Key findings from the latest edition of **Pro Bono Economics'** Covid Charity Tracker show that 63% of charities surveyed are experiencing higher demand for their help right now compared to last year and 75% of respondents are preparing for high demand through 2021.

The research, conducted in partnership with the **Chartered Institute of Fundraising** and **Charity Finance Group**, showed that most respondents have already seen a rise in demand, in part due to people turning to charity services for the first time as well as existing service users seeking more help than previously. [Click here to read more.](#)

The Kings Fund – Prioritising self-care during the Covid-19 crisis.

The King's Fund recently spoke to Fatima Khan-Shah, Patient Leader and Partnership Lead for the Unpaid Carers Programme, West Yorkshire and Harrogate Health and Care Partnership, about why it's so important to prioritise self-care during the Covid-19 crisis. The burden of working through a pandemic can lead to a drop in resilience and self-confidence. Fatima encourages setting aside time and space to focus on things that restore energy and allow for self-reflection. [Click here to watch the interview.](#)

Tobi Johnson & Associates - The Complete Guide to Better Volunteer Thank You Notes

Check out our guide and tips [here](#) to writing more powerful and better volunteer thank you notes to ensure your appreciation notes are authentic, meaningful, and creative, AND motivate your volunteers to keep serving in a meaningful capacity.

Training, events and additional information

NHS Confederation - Exploring a more sustainable future for NHS and voluntary and community sector partnerships

Webinar: 10.30am, 17 December - Join this session to explore how the NHS and voluntary and community sector can work together to create a more sustainable partnership.

This webinar will explore the impact of COVID-19 on VCS finances, what that means for the services they provide and the impact on the health and care sector. It will also explore how the NHS and VCS can work together to create a more sustainable partnership. [Click here to register.](#)

The Swap Shop

This free-platform enables charities and small businesses across the UK to swap services and support each other during the COVID-19 pandemic and beyond. Create your free account on the UK Swap Shop now, [click here](#) to get started.

Care2's - Toolkits and guides

Care2 creates and curates a bunch of free guides each year. [Download](#) and discover these latest strategies in non-profit fundraising and communications.

They include topics such as:

- Online fundraising
- Email marketing
- The power of images

Hootsuite – Instagram Story hacks

Hootsuite have made a handy list of 20 things you can do with Instagram Stories such as patterned backgrounds, sharing them with specific groups and even how to make your own filter. [Click here to learn more.](#)

NCVO Information and Training

vHelp - Secure, fast, auditable, online reimbursement of volunteer expenses

vHelp is the handy app that helps organisations make quick, secure and low-cost transfers to reimburse volunteers' expenses. The easy-to-use system is designed to save charities and community groups time and money. vHelp spoke to 30 charities and found it cost them as much as £18 in administration costs to process a single £6 expense claim. Using the vHelp Expenses app, this cost falls to less than £1. vHelp Expenses also provides a complete audit trail and links with accounting software, making it easier to monitor amounts and types of expenses. Speedy repayment means that volunteers are not left out of pocket for long periods of time. Charities and voluntary groups that sign up to vHelp Expenses before 1 January 2021 will access the app for free, for an initial two-month trial. For more details [click here](#)

Disclosure and Barring Service update

The Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) have announced [new filtering rules](#) which will affect all Standard and Enhanced DBS certificates issued on or after 28 November 2020. The new rules will result in less being disclosed on certificates, particularly for young people; youth cautions, reprimands and warnings will not be automatically disclosed. Unlock, the charity that campaigns for people with convictions who face stigma and barriers because of their criminal record, [have published this blog](#) explaining how the changes will enable greater inclusion.

NCVO training

From 2021, our popular Good Practice in Volunteer Management will take place over two half days from 10.00 to 13:00. You need to attend both days because they are two parts of one course. Costs start at £46 - [Book your place here.](#)

January course

Session 1: Tuesday 19 January, Session 2: Thursday 21 January

February course

Session 1: Tuesday 16 February, Session 2: Wednesday 17 February

March course

Session 1: Tuesday 16 March, Session 2: Wednesday 17 March

We are also running a course called Project Management in the Voluntary Sector. [For more information and dates from January to March, click here.](#)

Job vacancies

Keech Hospice Care - Assistant Shop Managers (Luton) - The roles are to assist the Shop Manager in achieving sales and profit targets. You will be required to provide an excellent level of customer service and have the ability to assist in the recruiting, managing and developing a team of volunteers. A background in retail is desirable.

- **Birdsfoot Lane, Luton** - Part-time (24 hrs per week) - permanent - £18,304 pro-rata - Closing date 13 December. For more information [click here](#).
- **Park Street, Luton**. Full-time (40 hrs per week) – permanent - £18,304, Closing date 13 December. For more information [click here](#).

Luton Homeless Partnership - Homeless Health Participation Coordinator - full-time, fixed-term (one year), £26,000 per annum. The Homeless Health Participation Coordinator will work with all the services in Luton to set up and manage a peer advocacy service. You will recruit a team of peer advocates with lived experience of homelessness, with the aim of improving health outcomes locally, as well as offering the peer advocates a number of participation opportunities across the sector. Closing date 14 December. For more information [click here](#).

Hft - Senior Support Worker (Shefford) - full-time, <£23,059 (inclusive of 47 sleep-ins per year). As a senior support worker at Hft you'll be supporting adults with learning disabilities to live the best life possible. You will be a role model to others through demonstrating excellent support to those we support and you will help the registered cluster managers to coach, support and manage staff teams effectively. Closing date 18 December. For more information [click here](#).

Level Trust (Luton) - Youth and Schools Project Manager - part-time/full-time (32-40 hrs), contract, £25,000 - £28,000 pro rata, Key duties include: Project Management of our holiday club for 8-12 year olds; running young leaders groups across High Schools; overseeing the delivery of free shoes, coats and learning resources to children and young people in need; managing relationships with key staff across our partner schools, organisations and community; supporting the development of our training centre. Closing date 4 January. For more information [click here](#).

Level Trust, (Luton) - Administration Manager - permanent, part-time (24 hrs), £21,000 - £24,000. Join the office team to support the charity in financial administration, record keeping, mailings, answering general enquiries and other administrative duties. Closing date 4 January. For more information [click here](#).

Mind BLMK – Peer Mentor Facilitator – Full time £20,500 pa - Mind BLMK have an exciting opportunity for a Peer Mentor Facilitator to coordinate a team of peer volunteers to deliver mentoring across Bedfordshire, Luton and Milton Keynes. Closing date 15 December. For more information [click here](#).

Mind BLMK – Recovery Coordinator – 34 hours per week £21,548.80pa pro rata (actual salary £19,801.60) An exciting opportunity for an individual who shares our ethos and values to join Mind BLMK as a Recovery Coordinator for our Mind Matters Service which runs across Central Bedfordshire and Bedford Borough. Closing date 22 December. For more information [click here](#).

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www.cabeds.org.uk | volunteer@cabeds.org.uk | @CABedfordshire*



Volunteer Centre
Central Bedfordshire

