

Volunteering with Age Concern Kingston upon Thames

Frequently Asked Questions

Why should I volunteer?

For you:

- To meet new people
- To learn new skills
- To find new interests
- To share your hobbies and passions
- To have your existing skills used and appreciated
- To pass on your skills and experience to a younger generation
- To improve your CV
- To have fun!

For your community:

- To help those people who may be struggling and need support
- To help a worthwhile cause
- To promote a passion or interest
- To put the 'community' into your community

Why Age Concern Kingston?

Age Concern Kingston has a proven track record of working with volunteers. This work has been honoured by HM the Queen - we won the Queen's Award for Voluntary Service 2007. ACKuT delivers a variety of projects and services, meaning that there is a great choice of opportunities for volunteers, whatever your skills and interests.

'People like volunteering for Age Concern Kingston because they feel they are part of something.'

Angela, Raleigh Volunteer

I have skills, qualifications and experience which I'm not using right now - what opportunities are there for me?

We could always employ more skilled and talented people if we could afford it. We don't have the resources to do this, but we have opportunities for volunteers with skills in, for example, marketing and publicity; writing; design; finance; HR; business planning, IT ... Your skills will be used and appreciated, and your volunteering will enhance your CV.

There's nothing I'm particularly good at ... what can I offer as a volunteer?

Everyone has something to offer. Everyone has life skills! Managing the family budget, caring for friends and relatives, writing letters, talking to people, or simply enjoying a hobby or interest - all of these activities equip us with the kind of skills that are highly valued by the people we support.

Combine these with commitment and enthusiasm and you will be warmly welcomed.

'Everybody can be great. Because anybody can serve. You don't have to have a college degree to serve. You don't have to make your subject and your verb agree to serve.... You don't have to know the second theory of thermodynamics in physics to serve. You only need a heart full of grace. A soul generated by love.'

Martin Luther King, Jr

What can I do?

That depends upon your interests and skills.

'Anything you can do needs to be done, so pick up the tool of your choice and get started.'

Ben Linder

Are you a caring person, able to understand people and empathise with their situation?

Befriend a lonely older person in a residential care home as a 'Home Buddy'; become an 'In Touch' telephone befriender and make a regular call to an isolated older person; join our brand new Home Response service visiting people in their homes or act as a general helper in a centre or lunch club.

Are you a good organiser?

Could you set up and run a fund raising committee?

Do you speak a language?

Could you lead a small beginners' conversation group?

Are you artistic?

We need volunteers to lead art and craft activities in our centres, and to take photographs of people and events.

Do you have financial skills or qualifications?

We need a Treasurer to join our Trustee Board.

Are you confident and self-motivated?

Could you help run our Bradbury Active Age Centre - perhaps opening up at weekends?

Do you like solving problems?

You could support our Advice, Advocacy and Information Team.

Do you have a special interest?

You could lead an activity group or give talks.

Do you have IT skills?

We need people to help older people learn computer skills and also to provide training to staff.

Do you have practical skills?

We need 'handy' people to help with odd jobs in our centres and gardeners to help keep our grounds looking lovely.

'You make a living by what you get, but you make a life by what you give.'
Winston Churchill

What you can expect
from us

To be treated as a valuable member of our organisation
To be treated fairly and with respect
To be given a clear description of what is expected of you
To get regular support and a supervision meeting at least annually
To access training and development opportunities
To work in a safe environment
To be reimbursed for agreed out of pocket expenses
To be invited to social events twice a year
To be thanked for your contribution!

'Volunteers don't get paid, not because they're worthless, but because they're priceless.'
Sherry Anderson

Why do I need to give
references?

We provide services for vulnerable people and need to make sure that volunteers are trustworthy. We need to make sure that you are who you say you are and that you are of 'good character'.

What is a CRB check?

CRB stands for Criminal Records Bureau - if you volunteer with vulnerable older people or with children you will be asked to complete a CRB disclosure form to ensure there is nothing in your background that makes you unsuitable for this role.

Having a criminal record does not mean that you can't volunteer, but you must be open about any cautions or convictions you have on your record.

The results of a CRB check or any details you give about your background will be treated in the strictest confidence.

How do I find out more about Age Concern Kingston?

Visit our website for full and up to date details of our many services and activities:
www.ageconcernkingston.org

I want to volunteer - what happens now?

Contact our Volunteer Coordinator, Jyoti Patel on 020 8942 8256 or jyoti@ageconcernkingston.org so that she can match you with available volunteering opportunities.

You will be asked to come in and meet us and to complete an application form, giving the contact details of two referees.

Depending on the role, you may be able to do a 'taster' volunteering session to see if the role suits both you and ACKuT.

If we can't match you with a suitable role, we can refer you to the Kingston Volunteer Centre to find out about other opportunities locally.

We will take up references before you start regular volunteering.

You will be invited to a general induction session about ACKuT and be given any necessary training for your role.

http://www.ageconcernkingston.org/whatyoucando_volunteering.htm

