



Newsletter and Update No. 19 - 11th December 2020
Special Volunteering Edition

Message from Cath Witherington - Chief Officer



It's so uplifting to see the sparkle of the festive lights which are springing up in our local communities and town centre. The shining stars that now adorn Doncaster Royal Infirmary are as poignant as they are bright. Such a fitting tribute to all those we have lost this year, but also hopefully, a symbol of a brighter and better future ahead. I have seen on the news about the very first Covid vaccinations which have been administered across the country this week. Whilst the logistical challenge is immense and cannot be underestimated, this historical week does provide some light at the end of a very long tunnel. The indications are that from Spring 2021 we can expect to see some relaxation in the restrictions which have rapidly become the norm during this year. That will of course depend on everyone playing their part - whether that be sticking to the rules, being patient, taking up the offer to be vaccinated when you are called, and helping out in whatever way you can.

In this edition of our newsletter, we are taking the opportunity to focus on volunteering. We are providing a reminder about the Doncaster Volunteer Hub. Since the launch of the Volunteer Hub back in September, we have been successful in matching volunteers with organisations who need help. We want to build on that success going forward.

I fully expect opportunities to grow in the coming months, not only because of the seasonal volunteering recruitment trends, but also in anticipation that there will be a call for volunteers to support the roll out of the Covid vaccine in non-clinical roles from the New Year. We need to be ready for that and manage business as usual. One of our newest member organisations, the Doncaster branch of the Samaritans are looking for volunteers to help behind the scenes - in a range of administrative roles. We expect to be advertising those roles to our registered volunteers through our e-bulletin in the coming weeks. So please do encourage anyone who may be

interested in volunteering in Doncaster to register with us via our [website](#) now so they don't miss out.

We have also been working with Voluntary Action Sheffield who have kindly agreed that we can adopt some of the useful information they have developed for and about volunteering which we will be adding to our website soon.

Volunteer Funding

Voluntary Action Doncaster has a modest Volunteer Fund. Grants of up to £200.00 can be awarded to enable local people/informal groups to help towards pay for a variety of volunteer expenses including:

- DBS fees
- Travel expenses related to the volunteering activity.
- Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) to enable volunteers to safely carry out their role (for example gloves, face masks, sanitiser stations etc).

Further Guidance is available on our website (load and link to the guidance I've recrafted and attached but remove draft).

To apply for this grant, please complete this [form](#).

Updated Government Advice on Volunteering

We have previously shared information the Government has provided regarding volunteering during the COVID-19 pandemic, and as the information has been updated in light of the changes in restrictions, we are sharing this information again to make sure everyone is aware and can stay informed.

They have two information pages currently: one for [enabling safe and effective volunteering during coronavirus](#) and another containing [information specifically for volunteers](#).

Samaritans Volunteering Opportunities

“Doncaster Samaritans has been providing emotional support for people who are struggling to cope for over 50 years. We work to reduce the number of deaths by suicide. When people contact Samaritans for emotional support, they often mention several concerns: some of the primary concerns relate to isolation and loneliness, family, mental health, physical illness or relationship problems. Suicidal feelings are expressed during 1 in 4 calls for help that involve emotional support.

Individuals contact us by telephone, by email or in person (post Covid). We support

them by listening. Having someone to listen can help relieve distress and often help to lift a weight. We don't give advice, judge or tell anyone what has been said. Through listening we offer time and caring to those in need who call us.

Recruiting in Samaritans is undertaken nationally via Samaritans and focuses upon listening volunteers. However, the other, at times hidden roles are just as important to our existence. We need help with Media; Communications or publicity; Fundraising – outreach; bid writing; running Samaritans Campaigns locally, Technology – IT and phones; Administration; Health; Safety and looking after the building.

Our hope, in joining with Voluntary Action Doncaster is to recruit to these specific voluntary roles not only to help us maintain what we have worked to achieving but also enhance our profile within Doncaster to ensure we meet our primary aim serving people in our community and beyond.”

You can find out more about Doncaster Samaritans in their [full statement](#). They have started posting roles on our [Volunteering Hub](#) with more to come, so if you're interested in joining the Samaritans team please register on the Hub to stay updated and apply!

Canal & River Trust Volunteering Opportunities

A new opportunity has been posted on our Volunteering Hub by the Canal & River Trust, they're looking for Volunteer Lock Keepers across 8 locations in Doncaster. If you're looking for an exciting new challenge, enjoy being outdoors, meeting new people, improving the environment and helping others, lock keeping might be the perfect opportunity for you! They also have 3 Towpath Ranger roles available, find out more by heading to our [Volunteering Hub](#) and if you're interested in volunteering, get yourself registered and apply for a role!

Sign Up to be a local COVID-19 Volunteer

During the COVID-19 pandemic, we've had lots of people getting in touch with us wanting to help their communities in any way they can. In light of this, we have created a specific [registration form](#) for people to sign up as a volunteer specifically to support COVID-19 response. This could be picking up shopping or prescriptions for vulnerable people, telephone befriending, or potentially helping with the vaccination rollout. If this is something you're interested in, please sign up!

Supported Internships - Dearne Valley College

Dearne Valley College is running a Supported Internships course, these are placements that give young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) the chance to gain valuable work experience to improve their future employment opportunities, at no cost to employers. The employers are supported with full recruitment and induction of learners, full employer support and engagement throughout the Internship, a job coach assigned to learners on placement, vocational profiling of learners to match them with a company that suits them and progression planning.

To find out more about this or to express interest in taking part, have a look at their [flyer](#).

South Doncaster Mental Health Support Networking Event

Within the South of Doncaster, we have seen an increase in groups offering mental health support. On **Tuesday 12th January** 1-3pm, Well Doncaster are inviting all groups who offer this service to a [virtual networking event](#).

For more information or to book on to this event, please email faye.mcdool@doncaster.gov.uk.

Supermarket Toolkit for the Clinically Extremely Vulnerable

Doncaster Council has provided us with a supermarket [toolkit](#). The purpose of this document is to help local authorities and VCFS Organisations support Vulnerable (including Clinically Extremely Vulnerable) individuals to access food via supermarkets. The toolkit provides information on the policies and pricing of supermarket deliveries, to enable local authorities and VCFS Organisations to help vulnerable people access food in a way that best meets their needs as well as other helpful information on what supermarkets offer to support vulnerable people.

Further Advice on Cyber & Financial Protection

Yesterday we had a great Cyber and Financial Protection Session with officers from South Yorkshire Police. It was a really informative session which really showed how those people who are elderly, lonely, socially isolated or bereaved are particularly vulnerable and at risk of becoming victims of scams and cyber crime. Victims of this type of crime often suffer a decline in physical and mental health as a result. In addition to the booklet we shared in the last edition of our newsletter - we can now also share this [Little Book of Big Scams](#). Please do take a look and share widely with colleagues, friends and family. The key takeaway messages I'd like to share are:

- Always report suspicious activity:

- For traditional post: report to scam.mail@royalmail.com
- Emails: forward to report@phishing.gov.uk mark as spam then delete
- Texts: forward to 7726
- Telephones (landlines and mobiles) are a main gateway to these types of crime so people need to be extra vigilant, and call blocking phones do help. For those most vulnerable, www.truecall.co.uk/ was recommended.

Let's Talk About It and ACT

This is an initiative which aims to give practical guidance to the public to help stop people becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism. We want to make sure that anyone who may be in a position to identify and support someone who may be vulnerable to becoming involved in extremism or terrorism, can spot the signs and know how to act safely and responsibly when they do. For further information please visit the Let's Talk About It [website](#) for further details and to access helpful resources.

There is also a new website called actearly.uk which contains lots of information about noticing vulnerability and reporting, particularly encouraging family and friends to report if they have concerns about a loved one.

Doncaster Climate & Biodiversity Commission Report

“A new, ambitious plan to help Doncaster to get to net zero emissions over the coming two decades has been published. The report comes during the week that The United Nations and Britain will co-host a landmark global event to mark the fifth anniversary of the 2015 Paris Climate Agreement, ahead of the COP in 2021. The report also coincides with the Climate Change Committee (CCC) publishing its advice on the Sixth Carbon Budget.

The Doncaster Climate and Biodiversity Commission has reported that Doncaster is already experiencing the impact of climate change, which is likely to escalate dangerously over the coming years and decades unless fundamental action is taken. The report commissioned by Team Doncaster has concluded that urgent action is required to tackle climate change over the next two decades.

Last year the council declared a climate and biodiversity emergency and, in Doncaster, effects of climate change have included flooding as a result of much greater rainfall in the region than usual and serious wildfires on Hatfield Moors peatlands.

The report concludes there is a “window of opportunity” for Doncaster to help play a part in international climate change agreements, and that it should be ‘net-zero’ in

greenhouse gas emissions by 2040 – the same as the target for Sheffield City Region, and ten years ahead of the Government’s own 2050 target.”

You can read the full article on the Doncaster Council [website](#), and the full report on Team Doncaster’s [website](#).

Working Win

Working Win is a free service that supports people who have a health condition to stay in work.

They’ll work with you to build on your strengths, talk to your employer about your needs at work, and to feel settled and flourish in your role. Their personalised, one-to-one support is for people who are struggling in work, and for people who are off work sick and want to return.

Their support also includes:

- Fast-track debt and benefits support
- Advice on employment, housing and finance
- Support from a qualified team of health professionals
- A free Westfield Health and Wellbeing package

You can sign up to Working Win on www.workingwinreferrals.co.uk

Places are limited, and referrals are open until 31st January 2021. You can also talk to your GP or Health Professional for support to sign up.

Good Work

Good Work offers free, expert support to help you find a job that’s right for you. They work with people with physical and mental health conditions, learning disabilities and other needs to find employment. They also offer support to individuals to continue working if they are struggling to manage their health condition at work.

Your Good Work coach will work with you to find a role where you can use and grow your talents, and that has the hours, skills and requirements that suit.

Contact the team via phone on 0114 2900 218, via email at goodwork@syha.co.uk, or online at www.findgoodwork.co.uk/refer/ to take part.

Funding Opportunities

DMBC's [December Funding Newsletter](#) is now available.

Local Connections Fund

“Book clubs, walking groups and other community projects will be able to apply for a £4 million fund designed to help reduce loneliness in the coming months.

The Local Connections Fund – made up of £2 million from the Government and £2 million from The National Lottery Community Fund – will be used for hundreds of small grants worth between £300 and £2,500.

These investments are designed to help local organisations bring people and communities together as the country recovers from the coronavirus pandemic. The Local Connections Fund will be split into two rounds of funding – each with its own application window, one in January 2021 and one in the summer 2021.

Funding will be available to small charities and community groups in England with an annual income of £50,000 or less, which are working to reduce loneliness by helping people feel more connected.

The Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport will provide the first round of funding, totalling £2 million, and this will open for applications on 5 January 2021.”

Organisations can find more information and apply for this fund via [The National Lottery Community Fund](#). Grants from the first round will be distributed and spent by the end of the financial year.

Support us via AmazonSmile

We have now registered on AmazonSmile! When people shop using this, Amazon will give 0.5% of the net purchase price (excluding VAT and other shipping fees) of eligible AmazonSmile purchases to the charitable organisations selected by their customers.

If you would like to support us when you're doing your online shopping, please follow this [link](#).