

Volunteering with Age Concern

I know I want to volunteer but I'm not sure what I want to do, how do I pick the right thing for me?

You can find a short description of our volunteering opportunities below. Some volunteering roles require more commitment, responsibility and experience than others. Think about what interests you, what are you good at and what skills do you want to make use of and develop?

Some volunteering roles require a regular time commitment, for example working in the charity shop once a week. Other roles are more "as and when", for instance providing transport to hospital appointments.

Talking to our Volunteer Development Co-ordinator or another member of staff might also help you decide which project is right for you.

What are Age Concern looking for from volunteers?

There are some key skills that we think all volunteers working with older people should have. These include being:

- A good communicator and a good listener
- Respectful of client confidentiality
- Reliable
- Trustworthy
- Courteous
- Responsible
- Empathic

We also ask that volunteers adhere to the guidelines we set out in our Volunteer Policy and are committed to keeping in contact and letting us know how things are going in their volunteer role.

How much time do I need to give as a volunteer?

It is better to start with a small commitment and gradually take on more than to take on too much and find that you cannot cope. Generally our volunteer roles require 2-3 hours a week.

Most of our volunteering opportunities take place during office hours 9.00-5.00, on Monday-Friday. There are some exceptions, e.g. working in our charity shop at Whitchurch Road on Saturday, leading activities in a care home, and helping out with fundraising activities at the weekend. Generally clients prefer having a visitor during the day; however, some clients don't mind seeing a volunteer in the early evening or at the weekend.

I am a student in my final year, can I volunteer with Age Concern?

Although we are always happy to consider applications from all students, the volunteering process can take 2-3 months before a volunteer can actually start.

This means that it is difficult to place students in their final year. With holidays and exam periods, we find that there is not much time left for final year students to volunteer with us. However, if you are planning to stay in Cardiff after your studies and would like to continue to volunteer with us, then we may be able to place you.

What happens next?

Step 1 – If you have decided that you would like to become a volunteer with Age Concern, please complete the application form and send it to us. You can download the form from our website. Alternatively, you can contact our Volunteer Development Co-ordinator and ask for the application form to be sent to you. If you would like to discuss volunteering further, please contact the project you are interested in or speak to the Volunteer Development Co-ordinator.

Step 2 – Once we have received your application, the project co-ordinator will arrange to meet you. They will request 2 references, after which a team leader will contact you to arrange a Criminal Records Bureau check, where appropriate. Unfortunately, existing CRB checks from your employer or other organisation do not transfer and we will need to complete another check for you.

Step 3 – When we have received satisfactory references from your referees, we will invite you to attend a Volunteer Induction session. This is for all new volunteers to welcome you to the organisation. The induction covers many useful topics including Confidentiality, Health & Safety and Protection of Vulnerable Adults. It is also an excellent opportunity to meet other new volunteers.

Step 4 – After you have attended the Volunteer Induction and we have received a satisfactory CRB disclosure for you, you will be ready to start your volunteering role. The project co-ordinator will contact you to arrange this. Please be aware that it may take a while before you actually start your volunteering role. For instance, it can take between 2-9 weeks to receive a CRB disclosure, once we have sent off the form. We hope this will not discourage you, and look forward to meeting you as one of our volunteers.