

Community Action: Bedfordshire Luton Volunteering Newsletter

09 October 2020

Included in this newsletter:

- Current volunteering opportunities
- Free volunteer training
- Keeping in touch
- Staying safe whilst volunteering

Community Action Bedfordshire is the accredited Volunteer Centre for Central Bedfordshire and Luton. You are receiving this newsletter because you have registered on our online volunteering platform, Volunteer Connect, and opted-in to be part of the Volunteer Bank.

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

Current volunteering opportunities

See below current volunteering opportunities from a variety of organisations across Bedfordshire. Some roles below may be temporary to support organisations or individuals during the current COVID-19 crisis, whilst other opportunities may be ongoing, and therefore may require a regular commitment.

Organisations currently recruiting volunteers:

- **Age Concern Luton**
- **Samaritans (Luton, South Beds & Harpenden)**
- **Luton Irish Forum**
- **Campaign to Protect Rural England (CPRE Bedfordshire)**
- **Bedfordshire Local Emergency Volunteers Executive Committee (BLEVEC)**

Click on the role titles in [blue](#) below to find out more and apply on Volunteer Connect.

Luton volunteering opportunities

Age Concern Luton

Age Concern Luton is Luton's largest charity working with older people and has been helping older people and their carers get the services they need, improve their overall quality of life, receive timely practical help, make their voices heard and make a contribution to their communities for 20 years!



Could you befriend an older person in Luton during these difficult times?

[COVID-19 Distance Volunteer Befriender \(Luton\)](#)

This is an interim volunteer role until the organisation resumes face-to-face services. This role is to befriend an older person in Luton who may be feeling lonely and isolated during these challenging times. This may be via video chat (e.g. Skype/WhatsApp video call) or meeting face-to-face adhering to

government guidelines (i.e. 2ms distancing, masks etc see below). People usually commit to a one-hour visit per a week, this is flexible and up to you and the older person you visit.

[COVID-19 Telephone Befriender \(Older People\)](#)

This role is to befriend an older person in Luton who may be feeling lonely and isolated during these challenging times, over the telephone. Volunteers usually commit to between 1-2 hours a week but this flexible depending on your circumstances.

Samaritans (Cardiff Road, Luton)

Giving some time to be a Samaritan means being there for people who desperately need someone. And that really matters.

Right now, Samaritans need volunteers more than ever.



[Listening Volunteer](#)

As a listening volunteer you will be there to answer calls and messages from people who are in distress and seeking a safe space.

Does this sound like you?

- Are you interested in listening to people who are going through a tough time?
- Are you open-minded and non-judgmental?
- Are you able to listen without telling people what to do?

Listening volunteers can change the course of someone's life but many calls to Samaritans go unanswered because we don't have enough volunteers.

Get support every step of the way

You'll receive full training to prepare you for the kinds of conversations you'll have. And when you start out, you'll have a mentor with you, to give you confidence you're doing the right thing.

[Support Volunteer](#)

Perhaps the idea of listening and talking to people who are having a tough time, is something you do not believe you can do, but recognise the important of this service, and wish to help those who do.

Running a Samaritans branch takes a lot of skills. We need support with tasks such as cleaning, maintenance, event organising, IT, publicity, fundraising, social media and marketing. If you have skills in these kinds of areas, volunteering is a great way to help Samaritans.

Learn new skills

We need your help if you're happy to be trained in new skills. For example, you'll learn how to use our IT systems or help raise money. These skills often prove useful at work – and on your CV.

Give something back

Whatever you do for Samaritans, you will be helping to change people's lives for the better. That's even true for your own life. Our volunteers say they find volunteering incredibly rewarding.

Luton Irish Forum

Are you a wizz with computers and technology?

Are you keen to volunteer and help others in the community? ...if yes, this is the perfect role for you!



Digital Skills Support Volunteer

To support programme participants aged 50+ to develop digital skills and thereby improve their chances of securing employment.

- Providing classroom support during IT sessions and employability workshops
- Mentoring of participants, particularly focussing on applying for employment
- Inputting data
- Assisting with room set up, clearing and cleaning after sessions

CPRE Bedfordshire

Photography Contributors

CPRE Bedfordshire is looking for creative people with a passion for the



The countryside charity
Bedfordshire

Bedfordshire countryside. The local charity is recruiting Volunteer Photographers to help promote the work of CPRE Bedfordshire and raise awareness of important issues such as climate change, waste reduction and protecting the Bedfordshire countryside. Our Volunteer Photographers help us celebrate special places in Bedfordshire – whether that's a beautiful landscape or wonderful wildlife.

You can do this role wherever you want to! You can volunteer in your local neighbourhood or further afield. Take photos when you are out and about – so long as it is in Bedfordshire we don't mind!

Assistant Planning Volunteer (Various locations)

This is an excellent opportunity to play a key role in a charity standing up for Bedfordshire's countryside, applying your experience to make a real difference to the effectiveness of this respected local environmental organisation. CPRE Bedfordshire's volunteers engage in the local planning system on behalf of the charity and campaign on local planning issues to help make a positive contribution to Bedfordshire's countryside. This role is home based, flexible and can be done remotely.

Chair of CPRE Bedfordshire

CPRE Bedfordshire needs a new Chair to lead our board of Trustees and develop our future work. If you love the Bedfordshire countryside and want to help us grow in capacity and influence, we would like to hear from you! This role is home based with meetings either virtually or at agreed location in Bedfordshire. Office is in Bedford.

Bedfordshire Local Emergency Volunteers Executive Committee (BLEVEC)

BLEVEC has been at the heart of co-ordinating Bedfordshire's emergency response to Covid-19 and providing vital support to the most vulnerable people in our community during this challenging time.



BLEVEC is a local partnership of charities, community groups and volunteers who work together as part of the **Bedfordshire and Luton Local Resilience Forum (BLRF)** to prepare for, and respond to, emergencies.

BLEVEC's role is to ensure a **coordinated response to an emergency in Bedfordshire** from the voluntary sector, public volunteers and Community Emergency Response Teams (CERTs) to **best meet the needs of people affected** in an emergency.

BLEVEC Emergency Volunteer

Would you like to join BLEVEC as an emergency volunteer?

Emergency volunteers may be deployed to any incident where volunteer assistance is required by statutory authorities and emergency services. The incident may be a local situation, a major incident or a prolonged emergency (such as COVID 19). Situations include major fire, impact of severe weather (snow, flooding, storms), a major traffic incident, aftermath of a terrorist incident or a pandemic situation.

In most cases volunteers will be deployed to an Assistance Centre or Evacuation Centre away from the incident and asked to undertake a range of tasks dependent on their organisation's role and/or their personal capabilities and skills: Examples include

- Transporting people or material
- Car park marshalling
- Registration of those coming in and out of the centre
- Looking after children or young people
- Facilities management – keeping the centre adequately supplied and clean
- Providing refreshments
- Providing emotional or mental health support
- Providing advice and guidance
- Providing basic hygiene and welfare packs

Volunteers will normally work as part of a team with a team leader supervising and work on a shift basis that may last between 6 and 12 hours.

Volunteers will require a high level of interpersonal skills, good communications skills, the awareness and ability to follow safeguarding procedures for vulnerable groups and identify own personal practical and emotional needs.

Volunteers will require DBS clearance and to complete relevant induction and training provided.



If you have any questions and would like to speak to find out more to help you to decide whether this is the role for you, please contact volunteer@cabeds.org.uk.

BLEVEC Commanders

Do you think you have the passion, skills and commitment to make a real difference to the Bedfordshire community in emergency situations?

This is an extremely rewarding role for someone with the right skillset who is looking for a challenge and wants to make a difference in their local community.

"I am always amazed at how quickly BLEVEC resources can be activated and how much BLEVEC Commanders are respected by our statutory partners and have an equal voice in the planning for, and involvement in, the management of emergency situations. It is a privilege to see the dedication of our emergency volunteers at every incident we have responded to " - Robert, BLEVEC Commander

What skills are required to be a BLEVEC Commander?

- Organisational and interpersonal
- Situational awareness
- Independent decision making
- Team working
- Knowledge of health & safety issues, risk assessment, safeguarding, volunteer wellbeing.

What training is provided?

BLEVEC provides ongoing training and support for volunteers to equip them with the knowledge and expertise to carry out their role effectively.

What is the time commitment?

BLEVEC can receive an urgent call for help at an incident at any time, 24/7, and Commanders can be asked to deploy, if they are available, at short notice. Expenses can be claimed for (mainly) traveling costs once called out but could also be for prolonged telephone calls/virtual meetings etc.

If you have any questions and would like to speak to a BLEVEC Commander to find out more and help you to decide whether this is the role for you, please contact volunteer@cabeds.org.uk.

Training

NOAH Enterprise 2020 -2021 Courses in Luton

Location for all courses below is NOAH Academy, 20-22 Hightown Road, Luton, Beds, LU2 0DD

DIGITAL LEARNING FOR BEGINNERS

Learn to create a document or CV, use the internet and email, search for work online, and use online storage.

When: Mondays & Wednesdays 09:30am – 12:30pm

[View the Digital Learning Flyer 2020 -21](#)



IT AND CONFIDENCE

Master basic IT skills and use technology to connect with others, while learning relaxation and wellbeing skills to manage stress and anxiety. Learning is delivered in a small and supportive group.

When: Tuesdays and Fridays 09:30am – 12:30pm

[View the IT for Confidence Flyer 2020-21](#)

SEW CONFIDENT

Practice your spoken English in a fun and creative setting with our five week Sewing and ESOL course. This programme is for ladies who's first language is not English.

When: Fridays 09:30 – 12:30

[View the Sew Confident Flyer 2020-21](#)

ESOL PROGRAMMES

Improve your English while gaining practical work experience and receiving mentoring support. Courses are designed for learners who are at pre– entry level (below level 1). Twelve weeks, four days per week.

When: Please contact The Academy for availability.

[View the ESOL for Work Flyer 2020-21](#)

COMMUNITY GARDENING

When: Fridays 13:00 – 16:00

Interested? Call or email to book your place!

FREE to eligible participants academy@noahenterprise.org 01582 726152

Luton Adult Learning

Please find attached to this email, three leaflets for the following courses provided by Luton Adult Learning.

Passport to employment

Skills – CVs – Applications – Interviews: Four simple steps towards the right job for you!

These free, interactive and online workshops have been designed with Luton in mind and are not to be missed.

Passport to Childcare

Do you want to work in the childcare sector or in a childcare setting? Then this course is for you! On this three-session course you will:

- Identify the skills and qualifications required to work in a childcare setting.
- Develop an understanding of the importance of safeguarding children in an early years setting.
- Identify how to promote Health & Safety in a childcare environment.

Art for Well-being

Would you like to improve your mental wellbeing and move closer to achieving your goals by engaging in wellbeing activities to improve self-esteem, engagement and awareness?

Be proactive in looking after your own wellbeing by engaging in craft activities. During the course we will explore ways to look for new and different opportunities and identify ways to recognise your skills.

View the attached leaflets, email passport@ltonacl.ac.uk or [click here](#) to find out more.

Keeping in touch

Keeping in touch

Please let us know if you have continued volunteering during Covid-19, or whether you have taken on any additional volunteering relating to Covid-19 over the past few months.

The Volunteer Centre team are currently working remotely and providing support via phone and email. Please get in touch if you would like help or advice on any of the following:

- Using Volunteer Connect
- Volunteering during Covid-19
- Searching for volunteer opportunities
- Contacting an organisation for an update
- Any other volunteering-related questions!

Using Volunteer Connect during Covid-19: Please note that during the current Covid-19 situation, some organisations may take longer to reply. Many organisations may have paused their volunteer recruitment due to working remotely and having to adapt their services. We are working with organisations to try to keep Volunteer Connect as up to date as possible but we thank you for your patience and understanding. If you have any queries, please contact us on volunteer@cabeds.org.uk.

Contact us on: volunteer@cabeds.org.uk 07584 687657

Kay Henderson – Volunteer Centre Manager | Karen Hall – Volunteering Adviser

Staying safe

Keeping Safe whilst Volunteering

Always follow the Government [staying alert and safe social distancing guidance](#) even when you are helping others or volunteering.

Please remember:

- Only volunteer if you feel well enough, and are not self-isolating
- Always follow [government social distancing guidelines](#)
- Do not place yourself in positions where you may feel unsafe
- Always adhere to the latest government advice - [click here for more details](#)

Government - Coronavirus (COVID-19): safer travel guidance for passengers

If you are travelling to and from your volunteering then please ensure you are familiar with the latest [Government guidance](#) on how to travel safely during the outbreak including travelling by public transport and other means. Other guidance includes how to wear a face mask, how to make a face mask, who does/does not need to wear a face mask and what to take with you if you are walking or cycling. <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-safer-travel-guidance-for-passengers#travel-safely-during-the-coronavirus-outbreak>

The British Red Cross have prepared [short video and quiz](#) to help you volunteer safely.

This newsletter was produced on 09/10/2020 and follows government recommendations correct at this time. Please keep checking the [GOV website](#) for official advice and the latest information on staying alert and safe.

This email has been sent Community Action Bedfordshire. You are receiving this email because you registered your interest in volunteering via the CBC website or opted-in to be part of the "Volunteer Bank" when you registered on Volunteer Connect – you can opt-out at any time by un-ticking the box on your profile.

Alternatively, please reply with 'Unsubscribe' in the subject line.

Community Action Bedfordshire - www.cabeds.org.uk/coronavirus - volunteer@cabeds.org.uk

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