

Community Action: Bedfordshire Central Beds Volunteering Newsletter

September 2020

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

You are receiving this newsletter because you have either registered your interest in volunteering on the CBC website or 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](#)

Central Bedfordshire Council Announcements

Thank you for your continued support!

Central Bedfordshire Council would like to say a huge thank you to everyone who is supporting local residents during the Coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak delivering food parcels, checking in on neighbours, collecting prescriptions and other essential tasks.

Volunteers are making an invaluable contribution to our communities every day, giving their own time to help others. All our volunteers are showcasing the amazing spirit of the people of Central Bedfordshire.

Please feel free to download our [thank you certificate](#) in appreciation of your support.

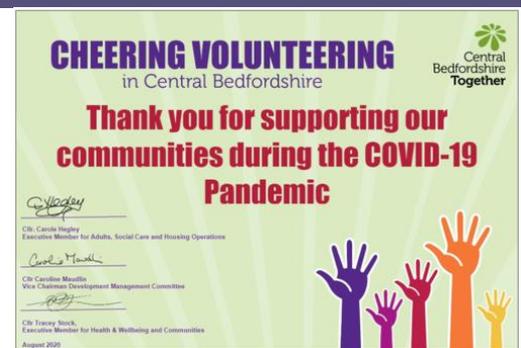
If you know a colleague or neighbour who has demonstrated fantastic volunteering effort why not nominate them for a Cheering Volunteering Award - you can nominate them on our [website](#).

Cheering Volunteering Awards

Although the Central Bedfordshire Council (CBC) Cheering Volunteering celebration and awards event cannot be held publicly this year, CBC want to continue to recognise the efforts and outstanding achievements of the amazing volunteers in Central Bedfordshire across all types of volunteering in the community. The awards are open to all volunteers who have been volunteering both prior and during the pandemic. The celebration event will take place virtually via video which will be released in December and you will be able to view it via social media and YouTube. Nominations are welcome from both individuals and groups. Now's your chance to nominate our unsung heroes who volunteer throughout Central Bedfordshire.

The Cheering Volunteering Awards categories for 2020 are:

- Young Volunteer of the Year (open to individuals aged 18 and under)



- Volunteer of the Year (open to individuals aged 19 and over)
- Volunteer Group of the Year
- Captain Sir Tom Award for Outstanding Contribution
- Lifetime Achievement
- Sport & Wellbeing Volunteer of the Year
- Supporting Communities during COVID

Closing date for nominations is 5.00 pm on Friday 20th November 2020.

For more information or to complete a nomination form [click here](#).

Inspiring Volunteering: a grant from Cheering Volunteering

£5,000 is available as small grants to support local voluntary and community sector projects, from the Inspiring Volunteering grant scheme. Funding should be used to inspire volunteering through the purchase of equipment that encourages / kick-starts new activities involving volunteers. Grant awards will be made from a minimum of £100 to a maximum of £1,000.

Applications for a grant can be made by any group or organisation, the money is spent on a project within Central Bedfordshire and / or will support primarily the residents of Central Bedfordshire. **Apply online for the Inspiring Volunteering Grant [here](#).**



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:

- **Leighton Linlade Helpers**
- **Bedfordshire Local Emergency Volunteers Executive Committee (BLEVEC)**
- **Central Bedfordshire Council (CBC)**
- **Leighton Buzzard Voluntary Patient Transport (LBVPT)**
- **Autism Bedfordshire**
- **Thomas Pocklington Trust (TPT)**

Please scroll down to find out more!

Central Bedfordshire volunteering opportunities

Leighton Linslade Helpers (LLH)

The Leighton Linslade Helpers is a group of dedicated individuals who formed this new group extremely quickly to support those in need in Leighton Buzzard during the COVID-19 situation. LLH have been and are continuing to demonstrate a fantastic community response to this pandemic at a local level.

LLH are currently looking for volunteers to assist with the following tasks:



Delivery Driver Volunteer – LLH operate a delivery service on Monday, Wednesday and Friday afternoon and need volunteer delivery drivers with their own vehicle to deliver food parcels and prescriptions locally. A T-shirt uniform, ID, PPE, hand sanitisers are provided and volunteers will receive a contribution towards petrol costs.

Warehouse Volunteer – Help is needed in the LLH warehouse 2 days a week from 9am-5pm to assist with preparing deliveries, planning driver routes, helping with stock rotation, sanitising the work environment, and answering Duty Officer Phones.

If you are interested or would like to find out more about these roles please contact volunteer@cabeds.org.uk or email Sarah Cursons at: help@leightonlinsladehelpers.org.uk

Bedfordshire Local Emergency Volunteers Executive Committee (BLEVEC)

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. Expenses, usually for travel, will be refunded. Volunteers will complete an induction training session, a two-hour BLEVEC training evening once a month and a one-day Assistance Centre training once a year.

This role doesn't have a specific regular time commitment due to the nature of the role as major incidents usually only occur a couple of times a year on average. If called out to an incident, volunteers will usually support for a minimum of a 4-hour shift, with a possibility of being up to 8 hours depending on the incident and volunteers' availability. Tasks for the COVID response may include leafleting, traffic management at testing centres, sorting and delivery of PPE from time to time.

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.

BLEVEC Commanders have 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.

The purpose of the committee is to ensure that the voluntary and community sector and CERTs in Bedfordshire are fully integrated into emergency planning and response.

"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.

Leighton Buzzard Voluntary Patient Transport (LBVPT)

Volunteer Drivers

Leighton Buzzard Voluntary Patient Transport (LBVPT) is a local service that has been in operation for over three years. Using a volunteer team of call handlers and drivers, they take people to hospital/clinic outpatient appointments. LBVPT has been operating safely throughout the pandemic and are now looking for volunteer drivers to join their team. Drivers will be briefed on necessary precautions in line with current government guidance and individual hospital procedures. A mileage allowance is offered to cover volunteers' costs.



For more information, please register your interest on Volunteer Connect [here](#) or contact lbvpt@outlook.com or go to www.lbvpt.co.uk.

Central Bedfordshire Council (CBC): Community Champions

You can make a massive difference in a really simple way – by sharing coronavirus information and advice with your friends and family!

Why we need Community Champions

We talk every day online to thousands of our residents via our social media and through email updates we send out.



The thing is, we know we don't reach everyone. There are local Facebook groups in communities. Friends and families chatting on WhatsApp. Plus lots of casual Zoom catch ups we're all having these days!

These are all great opportunities to reach more people - and that's where we'd need your help.

You could help us get the latest information and advice out to friends and other people you know through sports clubs or social clubs for example.

Maybe you're not in an organised group but you are part of a wide social network and want to help out. You could share information via WhatsApp groups, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram or just by word of mouth. We'll give you information each week on the current infection rates and we'll give you information on messages we need to share.

We'll make this really simple, sending an email alert which with the tap of a button you can quickly share into your WhatsApp and social media groups. Bingo – we're up and running. You don't need to create your own messages; we'll do that for you. With just a few clicks you'll be helping us to reach hundreds and thousands more people. The power is in your hands.

It's going to be a two-way conversation too. We also want to hear from you about how the information is being received – what works well and what doesn't, what questions are people asking and if there are any myths that need busting!

[Find out more and sign up here!](#)

Do you have a hobby, passion or skill you could share with others online?

There is a brand-new opportunity to run online activities for day centre customers in our area, changing the lives of older people and adults with physical and learning disabilities across Central Bedfordshire. During the pandemic we had to suspend the operation of our day centres. These day centres support older people and adults with physical and learning disabilities to live fulfilled lives.

Our centres are now working towards opening with reduced capacity (social distancing requirements mean we can't accommodate as many people) but speaking to customers and their families during lockdown has shown that some people would really benefit from alternative support arrangements.

So, we want to undertake a pilot project to run online activities because nearly a third of customers said they'd benefit from that sort of support and interaction.

Here are some examples, but your ideas are welcome!

- Playing a musical instrument, singing
- Talking about your interests, a period of history, memories
- Poetry or short story readings, book reviews
- Art and Creative skills, knitting, crochet
- Cooking or baking tutorials
- Visiting attractions or talking about places visited
- Health, fitness and wellbeing
- Religious readings

The pilot will run for six weeks from 5th October and will offer online day activities via Zoom. If you would like to be part of this exciting project and have a hobby, passion or skill that you would love to share with others online, contact volunteer@cabeds.org.uk ASAP.

Autism Bedfordshire

Assistant Support Worker - Bedford Loads of Autistic Fun

Autism Bedfordshire are looking for motivated and enthusiastic team players with good communication and organisational skills to provide 1:1 support for autistic children and young people at our LOAF (Loads of Autistic Fun) groups in Bedford.



Key aspects of the role include assisting Support Workers in supporting individuals in our care; assisting in setting up safe areas for scheduled activities; promoting social and communication development through stimulating activities appropriate to age range and abilities.

This is an ideal opportunity for individuals to gain valuable experience in childcare, youth work and special educational needs, specifically autism and related conditions.

To express an interest on Volunteer Connect [click here](#), alternatively an application form, guidance notes and the roles and responsibilities can be downloaded [here](#).

Thomas Pocklington Trust (TPT) *(coming soon to Volunteer Connect)*

Sight Loss Council member

Are you blind or partially sighted and interested in advocating for others? Join TPT's community of blind and partially sighted advocates and help support visually impaired people in your area to live the lives they want to lead. As a Sight Loss Council member your duties may include putting forward local issues affecting your community at Sight Loss Council meetings (i.e. pavement parking, guide dog refusals etc) or taking part in accessibility testing sessions, forums, seminars and contributing to public consultations.



TPT are launching a new Sight Loss Council in **Bedfordshire**.

If you're interested in gaining advocacy experience, are a great communicator and confident with technology (or willing to learn), TPT want to hear from you! To find out more about becoming a Sight Loss Council member, [download the volunteer role description](#) and/or email volunteering@pocklington-trust.org.uk

CBC Countryside Volunteers

Central Bedfordshire Council oversees a series of countryside sites across the county which are managed in partnership with Friends groups who carry out practical management work, organise events and raise funds to improve the site. Prior to Covid-19 groups were meeting on a monthly basis and usually at weekends, with occasional one-off tasks/events at other times. Support and PPE equipment is always provided. Some of the volunteer groups are now starting back after lockdown (currently Friends of Tiddenfoot and Linslade Wood) while observing social distancing guidance rules.

If you are interested in conservation and the environment, enjoy being outdoors and socialising with a small friendly group of like-minded individuals and would like to volunteer by joining a Friends group near you [click here](#).



LL Town Council – Community Volunteer Awards

Leighton-Linslade Town Council is thrilled to announce the launch of its new Community Volunteer Awards. Up to three local volunteers will be recognised each year for their huge contribution to our community.

The first awards are set to take place in February 2021 and the closing date for nominations is 31 October 2020.

If you know someone who has volunteered in our parish for 5+ years, why not nominate them now? This could be someone who helps at a school, charity or community group, for example. Has this person had an impact on you personally or on our local community? We'd love to recognise and celebrate those who give their time to help others.

The nomination form and scheme details can be accessed [here](#).



Time 2 Connect Houghton Regis

Central Bedfordshire Council have commissioned Community Action Bedfordshire to deliver a new community development project in Houghton Regis. The Time 2 Connect Houghton Regis project aims to connect residents with others in their community and involve them in community activities.

By developing the social infrastructure, community connections will be strengthened, allowing residents to become actively involved in their community. This will reduce social isolation, improve mental health, increase self-esteem and well-being and reduce health inequalities in the local population.



Residents will be invited to express their priorities and aspirations through local forums, consultations and a variety of media, designed to capture the thoughts and ideas of all sections of the community. Community Connection Advisers will seek to bring residents together to build effective and trusting relationships. Existing strengths of individuals and groups will be identified to support the ongoing success of the project. Everyone has something to contribute and everyone will have a role to play in the positive development of their community.

To get involved or find out more please contact the Community Connections Adviser by email or phone Bex on: 07392722296 bex@cabeds.org.uk

Free volunteer training

NOAH Enterprise 2020 - 2021 Courses in Central Beds and Dunstable

GET STARTED WITH IT – A four-week course, with two classes per week. Learn the basics of using a computer, how to use the internet, and how to create documents such as CVs and cover letters to apply for jobs. This course is available in Dunstable, Leighton Buzzard, and Biggleswade.

CREATIVE CONFIDENCE - A six-week course, running on Wednesday mornings. Explore new arts and crafts techniques, socialise with new friends, and experience the positive



benefits of arts and crafts for wellbeing and relaxation. This course is available in Dunstable and Biggleswade.

Interested? Call or email to book your place!

FREE to eligible participants academy@noahenterprise.org 01582 726152

NOAH Online Courses

Due to the success of their online courses during the lockdown period, NOAH Academy will be continuing to deliver free online courses via Zoom. For these courses, we will deliver any necessary materials (such as cooking ingredients or gardening tools) straight to the participant's home.

Current online courses include:

Staying Positive

Discover strategies and techniques to build resilience to stress, anxiety and depression.

English Speaking and Listening

Develop use and confidence of English skills, improve wellbeing through language, and connect with others.

Cooking on a Budget

Cook new recipes from the comfort of your own home, as well as socialising and connecting with new people.

Creative Confidence

Learn to demonstrate new arts and crafts techniques, connect with peers, and experience the positive benefits of creativity on wellbeing.

Gardening for Wellbeing

Discover how to grow your own fruit, vegetables and herbs inside the house, whilst exploring the positive benefits of gardening on mental health, learning new techniques, and connecting with others.

Interested? Call or email to book your place!

FREE to eligible participants academy@noahenterprise.org 01582 726152

Bedfordshire Employment and Skills Service

National Careers Service Team

The National Careers Service is for people over the age of 19 (over 18 if on job seeking benefits). Anyone can access the service whether employed or unemployed and it is completely free.

We are currently helping people in groups and on a 1-2-1 basis to meet their goals using an online service via telephone and video calls and will resume face to face support as soon as we are advised we can do so. Support includes:

- Labour Market Information – access to online tools to establish job demand in the local area; skills required by employers and in-depth information on specific careers
- Career Direction – giving people information about careers they are interested in, advising them on the labour market and by using career diagnostic tools including the Skills Health Check and Adult Directions
- Courses – advising on the best course to meet their needs, which training providers offer the training and what funding options are available
- CV – helping people to write a CV or review a current one

Employees and residents can arrange 1-2-1 support by using the contact form which can be accessed [here](#).

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

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.

If you are returning to a volunteer role, always discuss the individual risks and talk to your volunteer manager about the measures that have been put in place to keep volunteers safe.

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](#)

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

This newsletter was produced on 24/09/2020 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.

Additional information

Voluntary and Community Sector Job Vacancies

Autism Bedfordshire

Children's Services - Senior Team Leader – Wanted Fun in Luton - Part-Time - £10.83 per hour. We are looking for a motivated and enthusiastic Senior Team Leader at our Wanted Fun group in Luton to plan, supervise and run activities subject to guidance from the Children's Services Team. For further information or to discuss this post please call Amy on 01234 214871 or [click here](#).

Senior Team Leader – Loads of Autistic Fun in Leighton Buzzard - Part-Time - £10.83 per hour. We are looking for a motivated and enthusiastic Senior Team Leader at our Loads of Autistic Fun group in Leighton Buzzard to plan, supervise and run activities subject to guidance from the Children's Services Team. For further information or to discuss this post please call Amy on 01234 214871 or [click here](#).

Support Workers – Loads of Autistic Fun in Bedford, Biggleswade & Leighton Buzzard - Part-Time - £9.19 – £9.77 per hour. We are looking for motivated and enthusiastic team players to join the Autism Bedfordshire team. Successful applicants will provide support for autistic children and young people who attend our LOAF groups. Applicants will need to have relevant experience & qualifications: For further information [click here](#).

Carers in Bedfordshire

Operations Manager - Responsible for overseeing all aspects of the charity's service delivery to clients, primarily carers of all ages but also people with care needs. Permanent contract – Salary £34,846 – 39,527 FTE – Full time (35 hours/week) - 28 hours/week - closing date 12th October 2020 – for more information [click here](#).

Bedfordshire Rural Communities Charity

Project Officer – Greensand Country Landscape Partnership - 3 days a week, including some evening and weekend work, 9-month fixed term contract. SCP 23 (£26,999 for full-time equivalent) per annum pro rata, plus contributory pension scheme and travel expenses. Are you a general all-rounder, with a multitude of skills, a can-do attitude and a joy for being with people? Do you have passion, enthusiasm and are you highly motivated? For more information [click here](#).

Bedford Refugee & Asylum Seeker Support

Benefits Advisor - 2 days per week, actual salary £9,902.23 pa. (3 months contract initially) - to join their passionate, small team dedicated to improving the lives of refugees and asylum seekers. Advice sessions are currently held on Tuesdays and Wednesdays and help is given to clients needing help with benefit matters, including assistance with form completion. Closing date 28 September. Further details [here](#).

Keech Hospice Luton

Hospice at Home Co-ordinator - Permanent role -Job share 3 days a week - Salary £20,589-£23,177 FTE. The successful candidate will provide support and management to the volunteers, which will include developing and delivering training, facilitate Volunteer support meetings, while managing their daily activity. This role will involve completing formal risk assessments including Health & Safety and Lone Working. Closing date 4 October. For more information [Click here](#).

Volunteer Engagement Manager - 37.5 hours per week £28,179 - £32,525 pa - We are recruiting for an experienced Volunteering Engagement Manager, who will ensure we attract and retain volunteers from a wide range of backgrounds who contribute to the delivery of our strategic purpose. The Volunteering Engagement Manager will also manage a professional volunteering service that sits at the core of the organisation and reflects our Organisational values. Closing date 18 October. For more information [Click here.](#)

Urban Saints

Fundraising Manager Luton - £37,837 pa plus excellent benefits - 37.5 hours per week. The Fundraising Manager is a new hands-on role that will rekindle contact and support from the hundreds of thousands of people who have benefited from Crusaders and Urban Saints in the past, as well as starting relationships with new supporters who become inspired by our life-changing work with young people. Closing date 12 October. For more information [Click here.](#)

Compass Wellbeing CIC

Healthcare Assistant – COVID-19 Community Swab Testing Service - Full-time, part time and weekends, £9.11 - £9.85 per hour. We are developing our new COVID-19 Community Swab Testing Service for Bedfordshire, Central Bedfordshire and Luton and require Healthcare Assistants to support the testing facilities in the area. Successful applicants will be required to swab test both staff and patients from various settings including care homes and day centres and ensure this is done in a safe and effective way. All staff will be provided with adequate PPE and will be kept safe at all times. For more information [Click here.](#)

St John Ambulance

Community Fundraising Manager - £27,250 - £29,967 per annum - permanent - full-time Luton, Chelmsford or Cambridge. For more information [Click here.](#)

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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