

Community Action: Bedfordshire Central Beds Volunteering Newsletter

28 October 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](#)

Cheering Volunteering Awards 2020

Central Bedfordshire
**CHEERING VOLUNTEERING
AWARDS AND EVENT 2020**




Central
Bedfordshire
Together

Cheering Volunteering Awards 2020

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](#).

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:

- Kids in Action
- CPRE: The Countryside Charity, Bedfordshire
- Leighton Buzzard Voluntary Patient Transport (LBVPT)
- Respite at Home Volunteers West Mid Beds and Ivel Valley
- Hospice at Home Dunstable
- Central Bedfordshire Council
- Samaritans – listening vol and support vol
- Age Concern – Tel Befriending

Please scroll down to find out more and click on the [role title](#) for more information!

Central Bedfordshire volunteering opportunities

Kids in Action

Coffee Shop Assistant

Kids in Action provides support and social opportunities for children and young adults with special needs and disabilities. Volunteer Coffee Shop Assistants with good customer service and time keeping skills, are needed to help at our busy Saturday Youth Club, which also opens on Tuesdays and Thursdays during half terms. Our Youth Club is for children and young people ages 4-17 and the coffee shop is open from 10am-4pm, with our busiest period being 11am-2.30pm. This role involves helping with food preparation, making sandwiches and hot beverages/refreshments, cash handling, and keeping the coffee shop clean. The coffee shop is located at our centre known as 'The Base' in Dunstable at Unit 26, Apex Business Centre, Boscombe Road, LU5 4SB.



Volunteer Play Assistant

Volunteer Play Assistants are needed to help at our Saturday Youth Club. This role entails supervising the children and their health and well-being whilst they take part in various activities at our establishment. Our Youth Club is for children and young people ages 4-17 and as a Play Assistant you will supervise and interact with special needs children and young adults that attend the youth clubs. If available to volunteer for a full day, a half an hour lunch break is given, and we have a Café on site at our centre where you can also purchase food/refreshments. The youth clubs run from 10am-4pm, however, we are grateful for any hours that can be offered from our volunteers. Our centre known as 'The Base' is located in Dunstable at Unit 26, Apex Business Centre, Boscombe Road, LU5 4SB.

[Click here](#) to view information about how Kids in Action are operating in the current Covid-19 situation.

CPRE Bedfordshire

Photography Contributors

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



The countryside charity
Bedfordshire

Assistant Planning Volunteer (Remote)

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

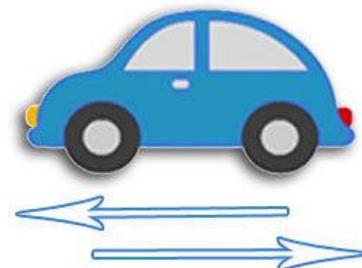
CPRE Bedfordshire needs a new Chair to lead our board of Trustees and develop our future work. If you love the Bedfordshire countryside and want to help us grow in capacity and influence, we would like to hear from you! This role is home based with meetings either virtually or at agreed location in Bedfordshire.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

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.

L B V P T



Respite at Home Volunteers West Mid Beds and Ivel Valley

Volunteer/Super Friend

Respite at Home Volunteers are a charity which have been coming to the rescue of hundreds of families across Central Bedfordshire over the last 21 years. The charity provides a befriending service to families living with life limiting illnesses.

There has never been a better time to help others, so we are calling for new Superhero Friends everywhere to join our lively team

Our service is limited at the moment due to social distancing, but If you have a phone and enjoy spending time chatting and listening and have a sense of humour then this could be a real-life changing opportunity for you

No capes required, but full telephone training and support are given, and no prior experience needed, just your extra special powers of warmth and empathy to help others. You could really help to change someone's world for the better at this time, just by a telephoning a family a couple of times a week.

For more information on our Volunteer/Super friend volunteering role [click here](#) or for more information about our Super Friends service, or to make a referral if you are lonely and just want a friendly chat, then we can come to your rescue! Call 01234 743063 or email: respiteathomevolunteers@aol.co.uk



Hospice at Home Volunteers (Dunstable)

Hospice at Home Volunteers

Hospice at Home provides a voluntary Service to the Community of Dunstable, Houghton Regis, Toddington and surrounding villages, offering extra care and support to those with life-limiting illness and their carers.



We are looking for caring people to help us carry out our valuable work in the community. If you have as little as 3 hours per week we will train you to become a volunteer visitor, supporting people with life-limiting illnesses. This may involve sitting and chatting with the client or taking them out. No housework or medical care is provided by our volunteers. Due to the current pandemic however, we are currently not able to visit clients in their homes and are supporting our existing clients by telephone, shopping on their behalf and taking them to appointments always complying with all PPE requirements. Training is also currently on hold but we would still like to hear from you if this role appeals to you. Due to the nature of the role, an Enhanced DBS check will be required for all volunteers. Please note: Min age for this role is 18 years.

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? Online Activities Programme in Central Bedfordshire

Central Bedfordshire Council is hosting a programme of online activities for customers who would normally attend its day centres. We are looking for volunteers who could offer 1 hour a week to provide an activity of their choice. Current volunteers are offering activities such as nature talks, memory games, sing-along's, bingo, book readings and calming the mind sessions. If you'd like to get involved in this exciting opportunity, we would love to hear from you! For an informal chat, please email: claire.blankenship@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk

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.

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 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.

Testimony from an Age Concern Volunteer Befriender:

“At the start of the pandemic I volunteered to do shopping for those who were shielding. As the need for shoppers diminished, I was asked if I would like to volunteer to do something else. As I had returned to work and didn't have so much free time, I opted for befriending on behalf of Age Concern. I started on the 20th August and I have rung five elderly people every week since then. I ring on the same day of the week and usually in the afternoon. Rarely do they all answer the phone and it usually takes me about half an hour.

I have had some interesting conversations and they are always pleased to hear from me. I am enjoying the experience and shall continue indefinitely.”

Level Trust - Uniform Exchange

The Level Trust Uniform Exchange is set up like a high-end shop, providing free school uniform to children in Luton. Any family can use it by swapping items they have finished with for items they need. But it's more than somewhere to get uniform; it's somewhere children can play and families can get emotional support from our friendly team.



[Uniform Exchange Retail Volunteer](#)

We are looking for motivated and reliable volunteers who are passionate about and committed to making a positive difference to children living in poverty in Luton. Our volunteers are friendly and work well together. Volunteers will sort stock; checking its quality, washing and drying and putting uniform in the right place. Volunteers will pack items for families; you'll need to be on your feet for most of the shift; carrying small crates of clothing and making trips along the corridor to the stockroom.

Keeping You Safe - In response to COVID-19, we will operate a click and collect service for families to ensure the safety of staff, volunteers and customers. Most of our work will take place in the stockroom which is not accessible to members of the public. We will adhere to physical distancing and provide PPE and hygiene products appropriate to the setting.

The Uniform Exchange is open: Monday to Thursday and Saturday 10am to 2pm

Leonard Cheshire

Leonard Cheshire aims to support disabled people to live life as they choose through initiatives and enabled by volunteers. We want to expand access for disabled people to engage in local community, maybe try something new.



We are keen to work with community partnerships and have a number of initiatives already, such as our "Can Do" projects which are skills development programmes for 16-35, with any long-term health condition.

Leonard Cheshire would like to help anyone with a disability set up social or sports clubs. Perhaps you would like to become a volunteer, or join our speaker network?

The local community volunteer coordinator is keen to set up an online focus group to see if there is anything that your area is lacking in terms of support or access for people with disabilities. We would then endeavour to help in any way we can.

If we can help, or you are interested in working with us, please contact **Sara Cole, Community Volunteer Coordinator** at sara.cole@leonardcheshire.org. Telephone: 07562 158164

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](#).



Central Bedfordshire Council

Do you enjoy walking your dog, watching wildlife, being physically active or spending time with your family at one of our countryside sites?

Have your say on our countryside sites by completing a short survey to tell us your thoughts about how they could be improved. The survey covers topics around cleanliness and maintenance of the site, wildlife and conservation projects and the range of visitor facilities and/or events that are available. It only takes a few minutes to complete and your feedback will help us to manage our sites to meet the needs of our community. Thank you.

Please [click 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 28/10/2020 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.

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.](#)

Keech Hospice Luton

Shop Manager – Flitwick – Salary £17,321.60 pa (FTE £21,652.00) 32 hours per week – Duties include implementing correct pricing policy, dealing with till readings, balancing and banking. Ideally you will come from a retail/customer service background and have cash handling experience. Good communication skills, great team spirit and management experience essential plus and interest in working in the charity sector and ability to travel independently within the local area. Closing date 8th November 2020. For further information [click here.](#)

Healthwatch Central Bedfordshire

Engagement Officer - Part time, permanent, £17,000-£24,000. We are seeking to recruit an experienced, outgoing, pro-active, Engagement Officer to develop, design and maintain high quality and effective community engagement activities and to co-ordinate Healthwatch Central Bedfordshire's volunteers which includes recruitment, on-going support, training and involvement in community engagement activities. Closing date 15th November 2020. 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.](#)

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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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