

VOLUNTEER VIEWS

THE NEWSLETTER FOR AGE UK SUNDERLAND VOLUNTEERS
November 2017 – January 2018

Hello, I would like to take this opportunity to introduce myself. My name is Tracy Hassan and at the end of April I was appointed as Operations Manager here at Age UK Sunderland.

Since coming into post I have met many of you and you have shared with me examples of the fantastic work you do as a volunteer. The dedication, hard work and commitment you give across our services is heart-warming and many of our services would not be available without your ongoing support.

Between now and Christmas I plan to get out and about to visit more clubs and groups across the city. This will give me the opportunity to meet more of you and hear about the valued work you carry out to enhance and improve the lives of older people across our city.

I have already received some feedback on volunteering and listened to some suggestions to support you in your different roles. I will be working with Barry and the team over the forthcoming months to ensure we have the support you need to help you in your roles.

I am based at the Bradbury Centre so if you see me around the centre please say hello and hopefully I will get to know you all over time.

Looking forward to meeting you.



Tracy Hassan - Operations Manager

Long Service Awards

A big thank you to everyone who attended the annual volunteer celebration and long service awards in the summer. The event was packed and everyone was once again entertained by magician Graeme Shaw, back by popular demand.

Congratulations to all the nominees for Age UK Sunderland Volunteer of the Year who included: Ray Turnbull, Raymond Davison, Paddy McConville, Pauline Smith, Valerie Wiberg, Eileen Charlton, Sandra Leeson, Pauline Taylor, Valerie Wilkes, Frank Haley, Catherine Welsh, Michael Armstrong, Sheila Bolton, June Hay, Irene Ridley, Judith Marshall and Liz Hiles. The Volunteer of the Year 2017 was David Goodfellow for his work on the telephone befriending service and fundraising.

The Volunteer Views Culture Quiz!

- 1) Sunderland is home to one of the best collections of paintings by one of the nations most loved painters. Who is it?
- 2) Which thriller writer set a series of novels in her hometown of Houghton le Spring?
- 3) This "little" comedian was born in Sunderland and became a north east legend. Who is he?
- 4) This internationally famous singer songwriter was born in Washington and attended art school in Newcastle in the 60's. Who is he?
- 5) Born in Sunderland, this actor is currently a main character in Coronation Street. Who is she?

Answers on the reverse

As we approach the Christmas period, two volunteers reflect on their befriending roles...

Dot Morris on becoming a telephone befriender

As a volunteer for Age UK Sunderland's telephone befriending service I have established great friendships with the people I call. I'm almost like another family member and get to know about their family's achievements etc.



Some of my clients are confined to their homes and have little news, so even my news is something they can chat about to family friends and carers. Most importantly I have time to sit and listen and they have a wealth of knowledge to share.

When I was widowed four years ago I contacted Age UK Sunderland regarding the lunch clubs they run. When the coordinator visited me he asked if I would like someone to ring me and I didn't like to decline the offer. How that lady who called me helped me during a time when close family were coping with their own grief.

Her successor and I also became friends – then I realised it was something I could do. My befriender wished me well, I applied; got the necessary approval and now get so much pleasure from volunteering myself. I have come full circle!

Culture Quiz Answers

- (1) L.S. Lowry, he considered Sunderland as his second home
- (2) Sheila Quigley, famed for her Seahills novels set in Houghton le Spring
- (3) "The Little Waiater" Bobby Thompson
- (4) Brian Ferry, born in Washington
- (5) Melanie Hill

Michael Winter Befriending Volunteer 'One Hour Out Of My Day'

I was first interested in voluntary work when I became a member of Sunderland Young Volunteers (SYV). As a SYV our brief was to visit people in the community who lived alone and needed help, support and someone to talk to. I used to visit a gentleman in his 80's who was blind. After my day at a music shop in Holmeside I would call in make his tea and read him the Echo. He could recall as a boy stagecoaches stopping at the town hall and how he would help passengers with their luggage – in return for a few coins. I would also visit him on Sunday's when he often told me tales about the First World War, then my girlfriend would pick me up in her red Hillman Hunter – Ah the 1970's!!

A group of SYV volunteers and myself also ran a weekly youth club for young people at the East End Community Centre, now an Alzheimer's centre. Then I worked at Mencap for the Gateway Club and did discos on Saturday nights – great fun! Avril Godfrey was a great inspiration and the young people I met then I would meet later as a Residential Officer for Social Services. I also worked with Hilary Armstrong MP on summer play schemes, looking back I have worked with such inspirational people.



I then became a member of the Sunderland Antiquarian Society and Raymond Davison told me about Age UK's befriending service and I volunteered. The two men I now visit are a real pleasure to spend time with. As I said one hour out of my day is nothing to me - but means so much to the guys.

We have a long list of older people waiting for a befriender, if you can spare a couple of hours a week and would like to join the Friendly Faces volunteer team please contact Nick Hall, Befriending Coordinator for further details on 5148335