

Voluntary Action North Lanarkshire

What is Volunteering?

Volunteering has three clear characteristics which must be present and respected in all cases: Volunteering is a free will activity. It must not be undertaken through coercion and under no circumstances can it be mandatory; It is not undertaken for financial gain. Outside of reasonable expenses there must be no financial transaction to encourage someone to volunteer; It is a public and civil good undertaken for the benefit of the community, society at large, or an individual other than the volunteer. The beauty of volunteering is that it can be what you want it to be. You don't have to give up large chunks of your spare time, or make huge commitments – it may be that you have one or two hours per week that you want to offer. Or it may be that you feel ready to give more time than that. Volunteering is a commitment, but ultimately can fit around your needs.

Who Volunteers?

The answer, really, is anyone who wants to and feels they have time to offer to a worthwhile cause in their community.

VANL has successfully helped thousands of people of ranging circumstances to find one or more volunteering placements that suit their own individual requirements. Staff at VANL have worked with people from a variety of backgrounds to help them find a rewarding volunteering opportunity.

The best thing is, you can volunteer too! Volunteering is one of the most inclusive activities in our community and it is open to anyone who wants to help out.

What Can You Do?

There are a wide and diverse range of volunteering opportunities available across North Lanarkshire.

The opportunities available are provided by local volunteer-involving organisations and charities that recruit new helpers by contacting VANL.

For further information about the types of volunteering you can do, you can view a national database of volunteering opportunities online by visiting Volunteer Scotland at www.volunteerscotland.net and entering your postcode to find local opportunities.

Why Do People Volunteer?

People volunteer for all kinds of reasons, both to help themselves and other people, in fact, most people who do volunteer achieve both of these things at the same time with great success.

Examples of why people volunteer include things like to use their spare time well, to help other people, to meet new people and to get involved in helping their community or simply just to gain another interest. Some have more specific goals like to gain a new skill, to improve the chances of gaining employment or entry into further education, while others volunteer because it is part of their values or beliefs.

Whatever the reason for first starting to volunteer, most who do volunteer soon find an added motivation to keep volunteering – the great enjoyment they gain from being involved and giving their time.

Where Can You Volunteer?

In North Lanarkshire, literally thousands of volunteering opportunities are available across all the towns and communities of the locality. Volunteering can take place in a variety of settings including schools, community centres, shops... It's up to you.

How Do You Get Involved?

A good first step, one which you may already have made, is to contact Voluntary Action North Lanarkshire if you wish to volunteer in your local area. By doing this, you will have the chance to discuss the type of volunteering you might be interested in, discover what is available in your local area, and ask any questions about becoming involved in volunteering with a Volunteer Development Adviser.

Remember, that all VANL staff are employed on the principle that they believe in the values of volunteering and that they will help you as much as they can.

From there your adviser can help you to find a suitable volunteering placement in your local area that involves the kind of things you are interested in. You can also drop in and have a chat

with one of our advisers. Voluntary Action North Lanarkshire operates from Airdrie.

You can access VANL's services by calling the Central Office on 01236 748011, or email: dutyofficer@vanl.co.uk.

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www.voluntaryactionnorthlanarkshire.org.uk