

## Volunteering

<b>Cost:</b> <b>High</b>	Volunteering should not cost you money, to find out about how to claim back expenses from the organisation you volunteer for talk to the Volunteer Centre Hartlepool
<b>Time:</b> <b>Medium</b>	The time you commit is entirely up to you
<b>Requirements for Position:</b> <b>None</b>	There are many different opportunities to suit most individuals
<b>Training Offered:</b> <b>Yes</b>	Relevant training will be provided if appropriate to your volunteering role

### Why Volunteer?

A volunteer is simply someone who willingly gives their time, without taking payment, to do something.

Although volunteers offer up their time and skills in order to benefit others it is also extremely rewarding and beneficial. You can learn new skills, improve and use existing skills you have, complete a qualification, gain valuable experience, pass on your skills and knowledge to

others, and meet new people; the benefits of volunteering go on and on.

If you are interested in getting back into employment you may also find that volunteering can reinforce your experience and confidence and help you get back into employment. Many of the volunteering opportunities in Hartlepool reflect about 85% of the jobs in the paid workforce. You can use volunteering to gain valuable experience to add onto your C.V., or fill gaps in unemployment, and many organisations may provide a reference for volunteers, usually after volunteering for a specified time period.

### Can I Volunteer?

You can volunteer in many different ways and the amount of time you spend volunteering is entirely up to you. There are opportunities to suit any amount of time you have available, be it regular hours or a one off day.

As a volunteer you do not have to have specific qualifications for the role and organisations will usually provide you with any training to enable you to carry out the role.

There may, however, be some instances where certain requirements will be needed for the role you wish to volunteer for. This may include having a Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) check if you are working with children or vulnerable people. Full

details will be given about each individual volunteering opportunity.

Volunteering should not affect your benefits if you are unemployed as long as you are available for work and actively seeking employment, you just need to inform the Jobcentre of your volunteering activities.

### How do I find out more?

The Volunteer Centre Hartlepool (VCH) is part of the Hartlepool Voluntary Development Agency and can supply information about the opportunities available in Hartlepool.

For more information about volunteering please contact 01429 262641, visit HVDA's website <http://www.hvda.org.uk/> or the national directory of volunteer opportunities at [www.do-it.org.uk](http://www.do-it.org.uk)