



## NEWHAM'S VOLUNTEERS

Newham London

# Newham's Volunteers Official Newsletter

February 2011

Welcome to the New Year edition of the newsletter. We would like to start by wishing you all a very happy 2011. With new beginnings comes new year resolutions and with a wealth of new volunteering opportunities and training available, we are hoping that volunteering will be up there as one of your resolutions. Hopefully this edition will inspire you to get involved with some of the activities coming up and as always we would love to hear your ideas.

Newham's Volunteers is a community in itself and we share the good and the bad times. One of those good times was the Christmas party which was held on the 10 December. About 200 volunteers attended and enjoyed speeches from the Deputy Mayor Andrew Baikie, Councillor Richard Crawford and volunteers Simon Reddecliffe and Glyceria Alexander. There were raffle prizes, dancing and Christmas dinner. You can see some photos later on in the newsletter.

The volunteer programme recognises that these are tough times and we are urging volunteers to share things with us if they require any assistance. It doesn't necessarily have to be about volunteering, but if there is anything that we can do to help we will always try. The hotline is available from 9am – 5pm Monday to Friday. Please don't hesitate to give us a ring if you need to.

Kind regards, Nancy Whiskin

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## Event news

### Calling all volunteers

Are you interested in supporting vulnerable and sometimes quite isolated adults in various aspects of health and social care?

We are working along side the Council's Adults Services and have a number of exciting, yet challenging roles available. Perhaps you are working towards a career or qualification in social care and require some experience, or maybe you have a couple of hours to spare each week to help a local resident. Roles may include visiting a person in their home to read their post or newspaper to them, accompanying someone to the shops, or simply offering friendship and conversation. Ongoing training will be given to support you in your role. These are very rewarding roles and can be catered and fitted around you. If you are interested and require any further information, please contact Hannah Singh.

### Christmas party and Personal Best graduation and award night 2010

The Volunteer's Team held their annual Christmas party and Personal Best ceremony at The Old Town Hall Stratford on Friday 10 December 2010.

The Personal Best ceremony had another superb attendance this year with over 80 graduates completing and achieving the NVQ level 1 qualification in event volunteering. This scheme helps people to get back into employment through volunteering and is managed by Stella Ikanik and Abigale Sasu.

Many came dressed in black tie and formal attire to the three course dinner, dance and awards ceremony. The evening comprised of Personal Best participants and volunteers, as they were honoured for their hard work and commitment to the programme.



Volunteers enjoying the Christmas party.

Many Personal Best participants commented on how the programme had boosted their confidence and empowered them to pursue further training or move forward with looking for employment. At present Newham still remains the highest performing borough for achieving outstanding

results in getting local residents into work, training, and volunteering in comparison to other neighbouring boroughs. Unfortunately, the Personal Best programme will now end in March 2011 with no further plans to recruit for any more classes.

Here are a few words from last year's 2010 participants:  
Lisa Ford: "I've learnt a variety of things including how to conduct myself in an interview and how to write a CV but also made new friends, improved my confidence and developed my social skills."

Shivagami Muthiah: "The highlights of the course for me were the teamwork, the role plays we participated in, the mock job interviews and the CV writing skills. The most enjoyable experience about the course was working with people from different backgrounds."

### Personal Best

The aim of The Personal Best programme was to encourage participants to do and become their personal best. If you have a potential job interview coming up here are some top tips we've complied for creating a lasting impression on a potential employer.

1. Smile and greet with a hand shake on arrival.
2. Dress to impress.
3. Make sure you understand the job role.
4. Do some background research on the organisation.
5. Personal safety is important. Make sure someone knows your whereabouts).



Should you need additional support, advice or guidance with completing job application forms, preparation for job interviews or CVs, please contact the Personal Best Team on 020 8430 3598 to arrange an appointment.

### Dragon's Den

Theo Paphitis, from the BBC's Dragon's Den, recently met some of Newham's Volunteers to congratulate them for bringing a major international skills competition to London.



From left to right Katie Blake, Theo Paphitis and Morium Khanum.

World Skills London 2011 - the world's biggest and best skills competition – will take place from 5 - 8 October 2011 at ExCeL, London. Four of Newham's Volunteers Katie Blake, Morium Khanum, Sabba Dyer and Helen Lam were pivotal in securing this event in the UK, after successfully presenting the UK bid in Australia.

The competition will bring together 1,000 young people from 50 countries to compete in 45 skills areas. At stake, the honour of being the best in the world at their chosen skills.

The event will require 2,000 volunteers. Newham's Volunteers will be supplying around 10 per cent, who will benefit from accredited training and personal development.

### Newham's Volunteers team under the spotlight

The Newham's Volunteers team recently put their money where their mouth is and gave up their annual leave to participate at Christmas events in Newham. Gill Teather, Manager of The Older People's Resource Centre, thanked the volunteers team for helping with their Christmas party for over 100 service users, many with dementia, adding: *"It was such a pleasure to have you all here. I thought you did so well and I look forward to working together in the New Year."*



We all had a great time and it helped to raise our awareness of how many vulnerable people are lonely and isolated at Christmas. The centre does great work in providing such a warm and friendly environment and the staff are really dedicated.

### Young volunteer is a budding success

The volunteer team have received some wonderful news from Tayo Sogbanmu. Following on from an opportunity we advertised for young people to take advantage of a free ten week gardening course we are proud to learn that Tayo has won a place. The course is being run by the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB) as part of their Wild Place, Your Space programme. Tayo took part in a clearance day at Ashburton Wood late last year. Her enthusiasm and hard work have certainly paid off. We wish her all the best with this fantastic course.

### Volunteering makes a difference...

Simon's done well! We are pleased to announce that Simon Reddecliffe, one of our regular environmental volunteers, has been successful in getting a two month placement with Thames21 as part of the Vodafone World of Difference programme.



His success has been down to the hard work, energy and enthusiasm he has shown for the wide variety of tasks he has been involved in. From the creation and development of a community garden to the many activities with Thames21 (where he is currently a River Keeper) Simon has been as committed as ever. I'm sure that you will all join us in wishing him every success with this fabulous opportunity.

## Environmental opportunities

Over the past few months you may have noticed that there have been an increasing number of opportunities to 'get stuck in' – quite literally in some activities – and help Newham become cleaner and greener. Tasks range from bulb and tree planting, developing community gardens, site clearances and community clean ups to becoming Recycling Ambassadors and Beautiful Borough Action Team members. The volunteers who have been involved have found the experiences fun and rewarding and more and more of you are taking an interest and coming along.

Tina Evans joined the volunteer programme in November last year and since then she has taken up many environmental challenges. Over one weekend she went along to two activities and told us: *"I thoroughly enjoyed both events and look forward to lots more in the future. It gave me a renewed sense of community and achievement."*

However, it is not all about digging, chopping, planting and picking up litter. These events and activities give everyone a chance to meet and work with new people and have an opportunity to learn new skills. Currently we are training volunteers to learn how to plant trees so that in the future they can be the leaders at community planting events, and in the long term, go on to careers in horticulture and conservation.



So, what next? Would you be interested in becoming a member of a Friends of the Park group; or become a team leader to help council officers plan and deliver exciting events in the parks? How about taking advantage of different training opportunities in horticulture and conservation? Keep an eye out for these opportunities and get on board.

Finally, I would just like to add that I have been mightily impressed by the dedication and enthusiasm of all of you who have taken part so far. Feedback that I have had from partner organisations has been glowing. Please feel free to contact me to discuss our opportunities further.

Liz Whitworth, Environmental Volunteers Co-ordinator  
Telephone: 020 3373 1269  
Email: liz.whitworth@newham.gov.uk

## Sports volunteering opportunities

### Otters Disability Swimming Club

A new voluntary sports committee has been established for the Otters Disability Swimming club. This club has been non-existent for a number of months now as there was no funding or committed members to drive it forward. Thanks to Newham's Volunteers, we have



established an executive committee with a number of roles formulated, which are: chair, secretary, treasurer, public relations officer, and community liaison officer.

The club is now about to be re-registered with the ASA and a bank account opened so we can get it up and running again. So many thanks to those of you who have enabled this to happen and offered your support. We are still looking for other roles to be filled.

### Physical activity – Lets Get Moving programme

The 'Lets Get Moving' physical activity programme is currently being delivered in Newham by the Sports and Activities team.



In the last two months we have assisted five Newham volunteers to gain a qualification in motivational interviewing and also the walk leaders award. These volunteers are now about to embark on supporting the team in delivering gym sessions, exercise to music, walks, cardiac rehabilitation and offering general support and advice to people wanting to keep fit and healthy.

### Gamesforce

Gamesforce is a volunteering programme targeting people who aged 18-25 years and focuses around the London Youth Games. It offers training in a variety of areas and opportunities to gain immediate experience. If you are



interested in sports development / event management, sports officiating, sports media / journalism or photography and would like to access free training and the opportunity to practice your skills at the London Youth Games 2011.

### Coach education

The sports coach education programme has already qualified a number of Newham Volunteers through coaching qualifications and they have been placed into sports clubs to practice their new skills and gain experience. If you have been a Newham volunteer for a minimum of a year, are a Newham resident, volunteered for more than five events, then you could also be eligible to access free coaching courses. Also if you are interested in volunteering in sports clubs in various other roles, (non-coaching related) there are many opportunities available.



For more information contact:  
Alison Mitchell, Sports Volunteers Co-ordinator  
Telephone: 020 3373 7661  
Email: alison.mitchell@newham.gov.uk

## ACT – Active Community Team

Dear Newham Volunteers,

Are you interested in taking up a great new opportunity in volunteering in Newham? I am recruiting active local people who have shown a real commitment to Newham to volunteer for the Active Community Team in your neighbourhood.

This is a very rewarding and varied role. It involves working with your neighbours, the Council, and Councillors to develop community projects and community events that respond to local needs. Some examples of community projects that have been delivered by Active Community Team volunteers in the past include: developing a community garden, working with young people on a music project, and leading on a local history initiative.

I understand that you may have a number of demands on your time – however the time commitment for this role is flexible - you can be involved for as little as an hour a month or commit a great deal more time if you choose to.

Local knowledge and skills of residents is vital to the success of neighbourhood projects and that is why I am asking Newham Volunteers like you to get involved. If you are interested in volunteering for the Active Community Team then please contact Newham's Volunteers on 020 8430 3598 or e-mail [volunteers@newham.gov.uk](mailto:volunteers@newham.gov.uk)

Yours sincerely

Councillor Richard Crawford

## Are you ready to welcome the world to London?

WorldSkills London 2011 is coming to ExCeL London from 5-8 October 2011 and needs to recruit around 2,500 volunteers to help make the event a success. From greeting competitors on arrival at the airport, to escorting special guests around the event, and to helping to manage the media, it will be volunteers who make it happen. As a member of the crew you can expect to make new friends, develop skills and play an important role at the centre of the world's biggest and best skills competition.

Newham's Volunteers have been offered the unique opportunity to volunteer at competition preparation week which takes place from 28 March to 3 April 2011. This event brings together the entire management team with delegates from all over the world to help prepare and shape WorldSkills London 2011. As a volunteer you will be working at key locations such as ExCeL London and official ports of entry where you'll be the first person to meet visiting delegates.

In order to volunteer for this exciting role you must be available for four shifts between 28 March – 3 April and attend training (details to follow).

## Sporting newsflash

Nancy Whiskin, Newham's Volunteers Manager will be taking part in the upcoming 10K run held on the 27 March at Stratford Park. Nancy would be greatly appreciative if you are available to come along and cheer her on as she takes to the streets of Newham in the bid to do her Personal Best!



## Annual Volunteers Meeting (AVM)

You are invited to attend the Newham's Volunteers (AVM) meeting on the 11 May at 6.30pm. The AVM is your opportunity to elect a new steering group, discuss ways forward for 2011, and ask any questions you may have. The role of the steering group is to guide and support the overall function of Newham's Volunteers. To date, the steering group have supported key decisions, including the review of the volunteer hand book and tool kit. It is important that the steering group is a true representation of Newham's Volunteers, so we would also like to hear from you if you would like to become a member. The Newham Volunteers steering group meets for two hours, approximately every six weeks. No experience is necessary. If you would like to attend the AVM or become a steering group member, please call 020 8430 3598 or email [newham.volunteers@newham.gov.uk](mailto:newham.volunteers@newham.gov.uk)

## Let us know...

Do you have any important news you would like to share with us? If so, please contact the volunteer's hotline. We would love to hear from you.



## Census 2011

The Office for National Statistics (ONS) will carry out a census across England and Wales on Sunday 27 March 2011. The Census is a legal obligation and everyone must complete the Census questionnaire that will be posted to all households. The information is used to plan and fund public services and resources that people need such as transport, housing, healthcare and education.

Please help us by promoting and explaining the Census to your family, friends and communities. For people who need help, we are organising completion events in libraries, Local Service Centres, community centres and schools from 19 March – April 2011. You can also apply for a variety of Census jobs that offer great rates of pay and flexible working hours. There are around 200 full-time and part-time local Census jobs available for local people. You can find out more information from [www.censusjobs.co.uk](http://www.censusjobs.co.uk)

For more information on the Census, please contact Hani Ahmad, Newham Census Area Manager (north) on: 07801 331442 or email: [H126@census.gov.uk](mailto:H126@census.gov.uk)



## Important notices

### Events

If you are unable to attend an event you have previously requested to be booked on, please notify us as soon as possible either by email or via the volunteer's hotline. This allows us to give the opportunity to another volunteer and prevents you from having a strike against your volunteering record. Please be aware that if you attend an event without booking on, event organisers might turn you away.



Volunteers, some dressed in nativity costumes, braved the snow and cold, to entertain the community at a Christmassy Central Park in December.

### Volunteer information

We frequently like to update our database SPAN and are aware that some of you have changed telephone numbers, email addresses or moved homes. If this applies to you, or perhaps you would like information sent directly to your home address please let us know.

### ICT

If you would like to brush up on your ICT skills or have always wanted to learn how to use a keyboard, create CV's or search the internet. Newham's Volunteers are launching a fantastic ICT training opportunity starting in February at Katherine Road Community Centre. Certificates will be awarded after each successful completed module. If you would like to participate contact Hannah Singh on the volunteer's hotline 020 8430 3598 for bookings or further information.



Maria Garaj supporting service users at the East End Hamlets Project.

### Thank you

Thank you for all your hard volunteering effort over the last months. With many new and exciting opportunities arising and the Olympics and Paralympics around the corner we look forward to seeing you in the coming months

Please note the latest volunteering menu of events and opportunities can be found on  
[www.newham.gov.uk/volunteering](http://www.newham.gov.uk/volunteering)



Volunteers at the Stratford and West Ham Active Community Team Summer Festival worked hard to make sure this family event was loads of fun.



## Photo gallery



Volunteers working hard at a clearing and planting activity at Ashburton Wood on a chilly and windy day in November.



For more information or if you wish to give feedback or suggestions on our newsletter please contact the Newham's volunteer hotline on **020 8430 3598** or email: [volunteers@newham.gov.uk](mailto:volunteers@newham.gov.uk)

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