

New project to bring real change and hope to the city's unemployed

Organisations across Nottingham are part of an exciting new project launched to get unemployed people back into work - whilst helping to make the city a greener and more sustainable place to live.

The Community Garden Project gives unemployed people aged 18-65 the chance to take on volunteer placements in the city's environmental sector, packed with training and support, so that they can learn new skills and get plenty of hands-on work experience.

For example, the placements will give people the opportunity to learn about food growing and retail, horticulture and landscaping, environmental design and planning, project management, event organisation, community work, food preparation and healthy eating - boosting their chances of finding employment in the environmental sector, which is a growing sector for jobs.

As well as unemployed people, those in low paid, low skilled, part-time jobs and anyone who's recently been made redundant or is at risk of redundancy is welcome to apply for a volunteer placement. Especially if you want to learn new skills and find out more about working in the environmental sector.

In addition, parents thinking about returning to work after having children, and young people over 18 but not in education are also eligible.

The Community Garden Project is being led by Nottingham's Partnership Council charity and involves a wide range of green organisations including Ecoworks, Stonebridge City Farm, Summerwood Lane, Groundwork Greater Nottingham, Nottingham City Council Parks & Open Spaces team and Nottingham City Homes.

Volunteer placements are available around the city, based at the green organisations involved in the project, with each placement lasting a minimum of 3 months. Volunteers will be expected to work for a minimum of 8 hours per week but can do up to 16 hours depending on the placement - without losing any benefits they're entitled to.

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Dori Kirchmair from the Partnership Council explains:

“The project has been launched to give people the chance to learn valuable new skills and gain experience in the environmental field in order to improve their job prospects. Plus, it will help people to grow in confidence and develop the skills that are vital for all jobs such as how to deal with people or work as part of a team.

The project will also help Nottingham to become a greener place to live, helping the city to grow more food locally for example, which will help reduce its carbon footprint as well as creating new community allotments and gardens for everyone to enjoy.

In addition, it will raise awareness of environmental issues and the benefits of healthy eating and getting active out of doors.”

To help people get back into work the project also offers volunteers a wide range of free training - from an OCN in horticulture for example, to short courses in food hygiene, first aid, health and safety and healthy eating.

The Community Garden project is part of One Nottingham’s Community Programme and Nottingham City Council’s Job Plan to help get over 2,000 city residents into employment and training.

Anyone interested should call Dori Kirchmair at the Partnership Council on 0115 970 8200 or email dori@partnershipcouncil.co.uk.

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