

City profiting from volunteering

Hyson Green based charity the Partnership Council is encouraging the city to recognise the amazing contribution made by volunteers - especially through the recession - in terms of providing community services in Nottingham.

Ruth Greenberg, Chief Officer of the Partnership Council explains:

"In the last three months alone, the work done by our volunteers would have cost in the region of £28,880, if the same work had been carried out by paid workers.

Although a large proportion of Nottingham's community services are provided by public sector organisations such as Nottingham City Council and NHS Nottingham City they don't have the resources to provide all the services needed directly, and that's where the voluntary and community sector comes in. Without the help of volunteers, the quality of people's lives would undoubtedly suffer."

95 people have volunteered via the Partnership Council in the last 3 months alone, which Ruth estimates to have benefited over 879 people directly and many more indirectly.

The Partnership Council supports a wide range of community groups run by volunteers, providing services such as children's play schemes, homework clubs, sports clubs, healthy eating workshops and youth clubs. Plus the charity helps volunteers to arrange neighbourhood clean-up days, children's activities and events which help bring communities together.

Moby Farrands is the Partnership Council's Volunteering Development Worker, she says:

"The work being done by volunteers in local neighbourhoods is having an invaluable impact on the community. For example, volunteers organised an event for over 40 young people in Forest Fields recently, which helped to bring young people together whilst introducing them to new activities such as DJ-ing and music production. Similarly, a voluntary project to improve Forest Fields has led to neighbours coming together and an increased sense of pride in the area, which helps to make people feel safer and can even cut down on crime, because people are more likely to look out for one another and keep an eye on neighbours' houses."

In addition, the Partnership Council supports volunteers and can help people to find the volunteering position that's right for them. From an individual perspective, volunteering is also helping to tackle unemployment in Nottingham, by providing work experience and the chance for people to learn new skills.

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According to Volunteering England, the national volunteering development agency, 86% of UK Volunteer Centres have seen an increase in volunteering enquiries over the last six months. 72% of Centres also reported placing more volunteers than they were six months ago.

Justin Davis Smith, Chief Executive of Volunteering England says:

“Thousands of people are increasingly looking for volunteering opportunities as a way of making good use of their time and as a route back into employment. The increase in the number of people wanting to volunteer can only be good news for local community services, which will benefit from the skills and time being given.”

If you're interested in volunteering at the Partnership Council or you'd like help to set up your own voluntary project in Forest Fields, Hyson Green, Radford, New Basford, Sherwood Rise or the Arboretum area of the city please contact:

**Ruth or Moby at the Partnership Council on 0115 970 8200
or email ruth@partnershipcouncil.co.uk or moby@partnershipcouncil.co.uk**

People from other areas of the city are also welcome to contact the Partnership Council for advice.

To find out more about the Partnership Council <http://www.partnershipcouncil.co.uk>

To find out more about Volunteering England <http://www.volunteering.org.uk/>

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