

FINDING VOLUNTEERING OPPORTUNITIES IN BARNET

Volunteering can be a very good way for someone who has suffered from depression to reengage with society and find meaningful activity and a structure to life. It can be a small step back into the workplace for some – and for those on benefits like ESA, voluntary work is encouraged. For those whose depression may be linked to stopping work – e.g. on retirement, voluntary work can also be beneficial. Indeed, quite often people find voluntary work more fulfilling than their normal paid work because it so often involves engaging with people in need – and people like us who have suffered from depression and anxiety often have a lot of understanding, patience and empathy with others who are struggling. And for those who are not ready to engage with people, there are many voluntary opportunities available that can utilize skills you may already have e.g. accounting, computing, office admin – or jobs involving work with animals or in nature. Please have a look at some of the ideas below – you may be interested to see the variety of roles available – we often think of volunteering as boring repetitive work such as helping in a charity shop and litter picking. But there are in fact, some very interesting roles on offer which may surprise you!

BARNET AND LONDON VOLUNTEERING ORGANISATIONS AND WEBSITES

VOLUNTEERING BARNET

Inspiring and supporting volunteering since 2015, Volunteering Barnet is the Borough's accredited Volunteer Centre and is delivered by *Groundwork London*. They are part of *Barnet Together*. This is a collaboration between Inclusion Barnet, Volunteering Barnet and the Young Barnet Foundation, to promote quality training, volunteering support and provide vital resources and advice for Barnet's community organisations.

Opportunity database

Volunteer Connect is an online database (called Team Kinetic), connecting voluntary organisations and 4000+ local people who are interested in volunteering. This is where you can find volunteering vacancies and apply for roles. You are invited to register for free to start volunteering.

1. Complete the registration forms with all your relevant details.
2. You will receive a confirmation email.
3. You will then be able to search the database for volunteering opportunities. Search using your postcode and try the Advanced Search to refine your results.

Current opportunities can be found here: <https://barnetvolunteersc19.co.uk/volunteers/search>

Contact details

Website: <https://volunteeringbarnet.org.uk/>

Telephone: 0300 365 9960 (lines open 10 am to 4 pm every weekday)

Email: enquiry@volunteeringbarnet.org.uk

Facebook: @barnetvolunteer

Twitter/ X: @volbarnet

Volunteering Barnet also offers one-to-one support, advice and training as well as virtual support. You can email to request a meeting.

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VOLUNTEERING MATTERS

Founded in 1962 (and known as Community Service Volunteers until 2015), Volunteering Matters has been leading UK volunteering in policy and practice for more than 50 years. They have a particular interest in supporting people with disabilities into volunteering. They also focus on supporting young people, disabled people, families and older people.

Volunteering Matters claims to have a slightly different approach to volunteering than other charities. It describes its mission thus: *We believe volunteering is an act of optimism. A quiet rebellion against the idea that one person cannot make a difference. When people come together, they create lasting change. Not just for others, but for themselves too.* They therefore focus on projects which are community focussed and some of their key areas of interest include combatting loneliness, improving health and wellbeing, breaking down barriers and creating social cohesion.

Contact details

Website: <https://volunteeringmatters.org.uk/>

Tel: 020 3780 5870

Email: fill out form on website

DO-IT

UK volunteering database for volunteers as well as organisations wanting to recruit volunteers. However, you first need to sign up as a volunteer, and then you can browse thousands of volunteer opportunities.

Contact details

Website: <https://www.doit.life/>

Email: hello@doit.life

Or use contact form on website here <https://www.doit.life/contact>

CHARITY JOB

CharityJob is the UK's first and foremost specialist job board for the non-profit, NGO, social enterprise, CIC and voluntary sectors. Founded over 20 years ago, Charity Job runs an award-winning website connecting UK charities with paid staff and volunteers. It is easy to browse their website for jobs – and using the filters available you can choose to search only for volunteer jobs and narrow down your search area to your local area. This is a good site to use if you have specific skills such as accounting or a legal background as well as voluntary roles in administration or caring roles. Many of the opportunities are remote and work from home, so your actual location does not matter.

The website also offers feature articles on a wide variety of related topics, such as the benefit of volunteering to work with animals – and linking this with current volunteering opportunities.

You can sign up on their website for their newsletter, or you can just use the website to browse local jobs without signing up.

Contact details

Website: <https://www.charityjob.co.uk/>

Email: info@charityjob.co.uk

Telephone: 020 8939 8430

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SIMPLY VOLUNTEER LONDON

<https://simplyvolunteerlondon.uk/>

HANDS ON LONDON

Worth a look – has some interesting and unusual opportunities e.g. some of them challenging roles with specialist training e.g. helping out with the British Transport Police, to niche roles such as helping to support ballroom dancing classes for the visually impaired!

<https://www.handsonlondon.org.uk/volunteer>

KINGS COLLEGE, LONDON

<https://kings.cloud.opencampus.net/opportunities>

Variety of volunteer roles available here.

JEWISH VOLUNTEER NETWORK

Based in London and Manchester. Wide variety of opportunities available. Search for local opportunities in Barnet using your postcode.

<https://www.jvn.org.uk/>

VOLUNTEER ROLES IN SPECIFIC AREAS OF WORK IN AND NEAR BARNET

If you have an area of special interest, do take a look at the websites of some of these organisations as many of them will advertise paid and voluntary roles. There are far too many of these to list in this handout, but here are a few of them which you might like to check out:

Volunteering with Children

NSPCC -- offers a wide range of opportunities: <https://join-us.nspcc.org.uk/volunteers/home/>
<https://join-us.nspcc.org.uk/volunteers/types-of-volunteering/>

Bookmark – help children to read

<https://www.bookmarkreading.org/volunteer>

Special Educational Needs

Barnet Council SENDIASS is recruiting here:

<https://www.barnet.gov.uk/children-and-families/our-special-educational-needs-and-disabilities-information-advice-and-10>

Volunteering with the social isolated and families in need

Friend in Need (Barnet) is a local charity that provides services to older and disabled people. There are a variety of roles available including activity facilitators, admin roles, driver and escort roles etc.

<https://fin-eastbarnet.org.uk/volunteer/>

HomeStart Barnet

Helps families with young children who need support.

<https://homestartbarnet.org/volunteer-with-us/>

Volunteering to help over 55s and senior citizens

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Omega is a charity which offers telephone and letter befriending service and which relies on volunteers.

<https://omega.uk.net/volunteer/>

Age UK Barnet

<https://www.ageuk.org.uk/barnet/get-involved/volunteer/>

Many roles on offer including befriending, help with shopping, walking, handyperson, digital inclusion support session, cooking, kitchen help, help at events, help with later life planning etc.

Volunteer to help your community

Good Gym

<https://www.goodgym.org/>

<https://www.goodgym.org/v3/areas/barnet>

Combines keeping fit (running etc) with community jobs such as litter picking, gardening, planting trees, helping the elderly etc.

Foodbanks

There are about nine foodbanks in Barnet and many very flexible volunteer roles here. Here are some of them:

Finchley Foodbank: Volunteer roles here: <https://www.finchleyfoodbank.org.uk/volunteer-with-us#volunteer-apply>

Chipping Barnet foodbank Volunteer roles here: <https://chippingbarnet.foodbank.org.uk/give-help/volunteer/>

There are also volunteer opportunities at foodbanks in Child's Hill, Colindale and Mill Hill.

Jewish Care

Runs a large volunteer programme with a wide variety of roles available across many areas in Barnet. Roles include client facing and non client facing and include driving, meals on wheels, befriending, helping with activities and many others.

<https://jewishcare.org/get-involved/volunteer>

Volunteer with Citizens Advice, Barnet

<https://barnetcab.org.uk/get-involved/volunteer/>

Full training is given.

Barnet Library Volunteers

Wide variety of roles – you can contact your local library or you can view some of the roles on Barnet Council website here:

<https://www.barnet.gov.uk/libraries/library-volunteers>

Inclusion Barnet runs two of the Barnet Libraries and you can visit their volunteer page here:

<https://www.inclusionbarnet.org.uk/volunteering/>

Become a school governor

School governors form one of the largest volunteer groups in the country. If you are interested in becoming a school governor in Barnet please see the guidance below:

<https://www.barnet.gov.uk/schools-and-education/school-governors>

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Volunteer to help the homeless

Homeless Action Barnet

Join a team of about 40 volunteers.

<https://www.habcentre.org/why-volunteer/>

There are also additional opportunities to help out at Christmas with the Winter Shelter Scheme run by Barnet churches with HAB's support. Volunteers receive training.

Volunteering to help the environment

London Wildlife Trust

<https://www.wildlondon.org.uk/volunteer>

<https://londonwt.teamkinetic.co.uk/volunteers/search>

The opportunities listed include regular sessions at Totteridge Fields, Barnet.

Darlands Conservation Trust

<https://darlandsconservationtrust.org/volunteer/> -- volunteer to help preserve Darlands Nature Reserve in Totteridge and Mill Hill

Barnet Greenspaces Volunteering

<https://www.barnet.gov.uk/community/get-involved-your-community/get-involved-your-local-area/green-volunteering-and>

Volunteering with animals

Dog Fostering

All Dogs Matter <https://alldogsmatter.co.uk/get-involved/fostering/>

And volunteering <https://alldogsmatter.co.uk/get-involved/volunteering/>

All dogs Matter is based in North London.

Underdog International – this charity has opportunities for fostering animals and for training therapy dogs for visiting hospitals, schools etc.

Equine Therapy

Strength and training through horses

Based in Edgware

<https://strengthandlearningthroughhorses.org/volunteer>

The Cinnamon Trust

Nationwide charity which recruits volunteers to help older people and terminally ill people to look after their pets so they do not have to give them up. Includes fostering animals, dog walking and pet sitting.

<https://cinnamon.org.uk/>

Volunteer as a First Aider

St Johns Ambulance

<https://www.sja.org.uk/get-involved/volunteering/first-aid-roles/>

London Ambulance Service

<https://www.londonambulance.nhs.uk/working-for-us/volunteering-with-us/>

The Red Cross

<https://www.redcross.org.uk/get-involved/volunteer>

Many of the roles here will involve training which can be both interesting and rewarding.

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Volunteer to help in hospitals and hospices

There are many volunteer roles in hospitals, and the major North London Hospital Trusts have volunteer portals

CLCH <https://clch.nhs.uk/get-involved/volunteers>

Royal Free <https://royalfreecharity.org/get-involved/volunteer>

Ann Robson Trust – Butterfly project – trains volunteers to support people who are dying. Full training and support is provided. <https://annerobsontrust.org.uk/what-we-do/volunteering>

North London Hospice

Based in Woodside Park, the hospice has a large volunteer programme with a variety of jobs including supporting patients at the hospice, driving, helping in the charity shops, helping with complementary therapies etc.

<https://northlondonhospice.org/join-us/current-volunteering-opportunities>

Noah's Ark Children's Hospice

Based in Chipping Barnet, this hospice has an award-winning volunteer programme with opportunities to help in many ways – from gardening, kitchen work, administration, driving, fund raising, hairdressing etc

<https://noahsarkhospice.org.uk/support-us/volunteering>

Volunteer to help victims of crime

Victim support – recruits and trains volunteers to help support victims of crime.

<https://www.victimsupport.org.uk/get-involved/volunteer/>

The Metropolitan Police

The police have a volunteer programme here:

<https://www.met.police.uk/police-forces/metropolitan-police/areas/c/careers/police-volunteer-roles/>

Volunteer as a patient to help train doctors!

The Royal College of Physicians has a volunteer training portal for people willing to role play patients to help train doctors and nurses. You will receive lunch and refreshments and a gift voucher for your sessions.

<https://www.rcp.ac.uk/events-and-education/education-and-professional-development/exams-and-assessment/become-a-volunteer-patient/>

Volunteer as a casualty!

Casualties Union

Want to help the emergency services? Consider volunteering as a casualty

<https://casualtiesunion.org.uk/>

These are unpaid volunteers, giving up spare time to perfect techniques and assist clients with their training. They create the illusion of injury through make up, staging and acting.

<https://casualtiesunion.org.uk/volunteer-with-casualties-union/>

Full training provided.

Email: London Branch:

london@casualtiesunion.org.uk

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Volunteer to help the mentally unwell and distressed

You need to be well yourself to consider working in this area – but for those of us who have recovered sufficiently, we may find we have a lot to offer to others who are suffering a mental health crisis. There are many charities which recruit volunteers to support people in crisis. These are just a few of them. The links below link to their volunteer pages online.

The Samaritans: The North London Samaritans recruit throughout the year. They are based near Bounds Green Tube Station. There are also openings at the Central London branch.

<https://www.samaritans.org/support-us/volunteer/>

The Listening Place

<https://listeningplace.org.uk/volunteer/>

Volunteer to help in Clinical Trials (depression & anxiety)

You will need to Google to search for these – there are many opportunities in London. Many of these roles will offer some remuneration. And for those trials which seek to help people with depression and related issues, you may well find that you benefit from them yourself.

- **King's College London (KCL):** The Psychoactive Trials Group at the Centre for Affective Disorders conducts pioneering research into psilocybin and related therapies for treatment-resistant depression. You can also contribute to their large-scale **GLAD (Genetic Links to Anxiety and Depression)** study by visiting the [GLAD Study](#) platform.
- **South London and Maudsley NHS Trust (SLaM):** SLaM collaborates with major research partners on mental health studies. You can browse their active trials and register interest via the [South London and Maudsley NHS Foundation Trust](#) directory.
- **St Pancras Clinical Research:** Located in Central London, this centre runs trials for Major Depressive Disorder and treatment-resistant depression. Learn about their screening and requirements on the [St Pancras Clinical Research](#)
- **Clerkenwell Health:** Based in Central London, this clinical research organisation specializes in psychedelic-assisted therapies for mental health conditions, including depression and anxiety. You can view their current studies at [Clerkenwell Health](#).
- **National Database:** To search for a broader range of studies across the UK or globally based on your specific symptoms, check the [Be Part of Research](#)

These are just a small number of organisations with voluntary roles – there are many more! Some of these include large organisations like the National Trust which has its own volunteer programme. There are also opportunities to work with local libraries, museums and stately homes – consult the websites directly. And of course, do not forget that there are always openings here at Barnet Depression Alliance for members to join our committee and help run the group!

If you know of any opportunities which may interest our group members which we have omitted, please let us know so we can add them in.