

Overseas Volunteers at Leonard Cheshire Disability

Bradbury House

Leonard
Cheshire
Disability



What is my role?

At Leonard Cheshire, we value the role our Overseas Volunteers have in our services throughout the United Kingdom. Due to the length of the placements for overseas volunteers (12 months) volunteers have the opportunity to acquire a range of skills, improve their English, enjoy the best of British culture and life, and develop fulfilling working relationships with our residents, staff and local volunteers which often develop into long-term friendships.

Overseas volunteers support our staff teams in providing an active, involving and stimulating environment for our residents. Through our overseas volunteers, disabled people in our care homes are able to access their local community services and social opportunities more easily and regularly, thus improving their independence and quality of life. This means that in their roles overseas volunteers are engaging in a wide range of activities both inside and outside the home.

There is no typical day for volunteers as our customer's needs and interests determine what volunteers will be doing on a daily basis. Volunteers may be required to accompany residents on activity weekends and short holidays, as well as providing support to the customers who have regular work, education or volunteering commitments. While it is a lot of fun going out with residents, it is also very challenging as volunteers experience first-hand the issues faced by people with disabilities every day.

What opportunities can I expect for training & skills development?

Thorough training on working with vulnerable adults is provided to all our volunteers, and Leonard Cheshire Disability staff helps volunteers during the induction process to understand the needs of each individual. Risk

assessments ensure that volunteers are not asked to contribute outside of their capability or boundaries.

Volunteers acquire a range of knowledge, skills and experience including a greater understanding of the issues affecting disabled people. They gain improved interpersonal skills and the ability to interact with a wide range of people. There will also be an opportunity to learn about the wider activities of the charity, for example our campaigning/lobbying activities and fundraising events.

The volunteers develop solidarity with disabled people. They see the implication of what being disabled means and the inequalities. They become active citizens by overcoming prejudice and learn to recognise it in others.

About Bradbury House

Bradbury House is a purpose built building located in the small town of Crook, County Durham. We are a care home supporting 22 permanent residents alongside 2 respite rooms and a day service which operates three days a week. Bradbury House provides care and support to disabled people from the ages of 17 to 65 years old. All our customers work towards personal goals which cover a range of examples from sporting achievements to visiting people and places.

Bradbury House have good transport links in to the city, which in turn has a main line station making it very easy to travel north to Newcastle and Edinburgh or south to York and London. Bradbury House itself is within walking distance of all local amenities such as banks, post office, shops and a weekly market. Durham is a stunning county with a lot of historical places to visit and beautiful landscapes including the Pennines which are classed as an Area of outstanding Natural Beauty.

Volunteers are encouraged to socialise in the local community and in the past have been part of local sporting teams and have made a lot of friends in the local area. If there is a specialist hobby the volunteer can access various social clubs at Durham University, for example a volunteer from Germany joined the Table tennis team and played in tournaments all over the region. There are gyms, art classes and churches locally with a lot more offered in Durham city with art and culture festivals held all year round. Volunteers will be encouraged to identify their goals for their stay and we will support these goals to the best of our ability.

Expectations & Accommodation

Volunteers are expected to comply with Leonard Cheshire policy & procedures & codes of conduct. Failure to comply with this could result in the programme being terminated. Behavior that causes concern as a result

of excessive alcohol is not tolerated. The misuse of illegal substances will not be tolerated and will result in instant dismissal. Volunteers are expected to behave in a socially responsible way, and in consideration to fellow volunteers and residents. Overnight guests are permissible only a temporary basis, and with permission.

Accommodation: participants to the project would have their own room within Bradbury House. This is allocated on the second floor of the building, separate from the working environment. The participant's rooms include bed/sofa, wardrobe, drawers and a sink. Kettle and tea and coffee facilities are also available within the rooms. There is a shared bathroom with bath and shower and separate toilets all are allocated near bedrooms on the second floor.

There is a shared communal area on the second floor that has facilities to make hot drinks and food in a small kitchen area. Access to the second floor can be made through the main building but there is a side door that is open during office hours. Outside doors are locked on a night for security but the participants will have access to main door at all times.

All meals are provided through the project even on participants rest days.

Volunteer Profile

We are looking for enthusiastic people with a good sense of humour who enjoy working with people and working as part of a team. Volunteers should have a genuine interest in working with disabled people.

Our members of staff provide the necessary care and assistance to enable customers to live as independent and full a life as possible. However, it is the volunteer who can give extra time and attention to our customers, encouraging and supporting disabled people to access facilities in their local area.

The volunteer placement promotes anti-discrimination, awareness of disability and the need to challenge prejudice. It achieves these aims through disabled people becoming more visible in the community, with the support and encouragement of overseas volunteers. Thanks to the assistance of volunteers, our customers are able to access services that non-disabled people take for granted.

Activities

The role of EVS volunteers is to support the staff team in providing an active, involving and stimulating environment for our customers. Having volunteers will enable our clients to access their local communities and

social opportunities more easily and regularly. EVS volunteers are involved in a wide variety of activities both inside and outside the home, enabling them to see the challenges faced by people with disabilities in everyday life. There is no typical volunteer day, as our customer's needs and interests determine what the volunteers will be doing on a daily basis.

Examples of activities:

- Day trip and weekends away - volunteers would assist staff and clients on trips out into the community, these trips may vary in length. Volunteers might also attend an activity weekend at Kilder Water, which would include partaking in team building activities (sailing, shooting, abseiling).
- Day centre activities include activities such as quizzes, bingo, karaoke, craft sessions, gardening, and IT-skills sessions. Volunteers are encouraged to develop and implement their own sessions within the day centre and within the service.
- Attending community groups with clients, such as Pub quiz nights, live bands, cinema, and museums.
- One to one social support; befriending within the service, reading the paper or book to a customer, chatting about likes and dislikes, playing games.
- Host a party for an event; this could be a national event from home country or a UK event (Halloween, Christmas, football).
- Fundraise/awareness in the community - hold a stall at a local Fete, fair, collage school.
- Hold a community cinema - this can be within the service or in the community. Invite customers and their families to attend.
- Develop part of the garden into a sensory area - using the support of the staff and the community develop/ revamp part of the gardens into a nice area.

Volunteers bring new, fresh ideas with them, and they would be encouraged to make suggestions of ways of broadening our customer's experiences and interests. The planning of 'themed' evenings and cultural activity exchange days for example, where volunteers can share their culture, through introducing our clients to new recipes, stories, forms of dance etc. are enjoyed by staff and customers alike and bring the volunteers' culture to life. This exchange is naturally a 2 way process and volunteers also experience British culture and how it is to live and work in England.

Contact details

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