

Overseas Volunteers at Leonard Cheshire

Fethneys

**Leonard
Cheshire
Disability**



What is my role?

At **Leonard Cheshire Disability**, 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 help 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 residents' 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 those service users 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 each individual. Risk assessments ensure that volunteers are not asked to contribute outside of their capability or boundaries. Fethneys is committed to providing training for EVS volunteers to enable them to carry out their role but also to improve their own skills and to allow for access to and involvement with as many aspects of the service's work as possible.

The expected learning opportunities for volunteers include gaining experience and/or skills in the following areas:

- Social work & different methodologies in the field of disability: Through the general volunteer role and the work of the organisation as a whole, volunteers will gain a deeper understanding and awareness in this area.
- Communication skills: through interaction with the staff and other volunteers and in particular through working closely with the service users.
- Teamwork skills: through living and working within the volunteer team, with the staff team, as part of the wider ICYE volunteer team.
- Intercultural awareness: By living and working in an intercultural setting, meeting young people from the UK and across the globe.
- Organisational skills: organising recreational activities for service users, through working with the rotas of the service and the individual service users programmes.

About Fethneys

Fethneys is a residential home offering supported living services for up to 10 residents. The service caters for young adults with disabilities and aims to equip the residents with the skills to be able to live as independent lives as possible. The service works towards each resident moving into their own home and living their life to its full extent.

The value of the individual is a core principle to Leonard Cheshire Disability and Fethneys, and this is reflected in the day to day running of the service. Each resident will have their own care plan and are encouraged to take control of this, choosing their activities and lifestyle. The aim of this principle is that people will look beyond a disability and treat the residents as individuals with potential.

Fethneys is located in the seaside town of Worthing on the South Coast of England. Worthing has the local amenities associated with a small town including a library, shops, cinema, leisure centre etc. Worthing has good

transport links to nearby Brighton and to other towns and cities in the UK.

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.

Volunteers will be accommodated in a newly refurbished rented apartment in Worthing with 2 single bed rooms, separated kitchen, dining room, and shared bathroom. Overnight guests are permissible only a temporary basis, and with permission. All meals are provided through the project.

This is a year-long placement and volunteers are expected to commit to the service for the whole duration of their project.

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. Simultaneously, it can be demanding and emotionally difficult to support people with disabilities, which require patience, understanding and confidence.

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 customers to access their local communities and social opportunities more easily and regularly.

Since we work with vulnerable people, it is essential that the volunteers understand instructions, policies and procedures explained in English. Therefore, it is a requirement that the volunteers can carry a conversation in English, and understand basic instructions. This will also ensure, from a health and safety perspective, that our volunteers follow all procedures in place for their own and our residents' safety.

Volunteers will acquire a range of knowledge, skills and experience including a much greater understanding of issues affecting disabled people. They will also gain improved interpersonal skills and the ability to interact with a wide range of people, as well as specific skills acquired through our induction and training programme.

Activities

The experience of volunteering at Fethneys will allow for young people's personal and social development while offering volunteers the opportunity to learn more about UK culture and also their own. Through their voluntary service it is aimed that each volunteer should learn more about themselves while developing independent living skills and increasing their disability awareness.

The role can include supporting residents in creative, educational or recreational activities. This could be through games, arts/crafts activities etc. that take place at Fethneys, or accessing activities, cinema visits, educational opportunities, sports activities, social events etc. outside of the service. Within the role, volunteers can develop their own skills while assisting the residents to develop the life skills needed to be able to live more independent lives. For example, volunteers can help the residents to further develop their abilities in cooking, doing household chores and attending college.

EVS volunteers are encouraged to share their own interests, as a way of developing their own role and also to allow the residents to benefit from volunteers individual skills and knowledge. For example where a volunteer has a particular interest/skill in music, sport or art they will be encouraged to share this with the residents, perhaps arranging classes or an activity for the residents.

Additionally, EVS volunteers will be actively encouraged to share their own culture, for example through holding an intercultural event or introducing residents and staff at Fethneys to traditional food or dress from the volunteers home country etc. This allows for a positive interaction between the volunteers and service users and brings an important and unique intercultural dimension to the work of the organisation.

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