

Volunteering at Hinckley and District Museum

Volunteering can be very rewarding and is a great way to meet new people. It offers the opportunity to learn new skills, or use existing ones, gaining experience making a difference to your community whilst telling the history of Hinckley and the surrounding area. It's also a great way to enhance your CV or use towards a Duke of Edinburgh Award. Current volunteers say how much they enjoy being part of the team. Jen from Hinckley said, "It's such a beautiful building and cottage garden and it's a pleasure to be involved with the dedicated team of volunteers running the museum."

Here are a few of the many ways volunteers spend their time helping at the museum:

- **stewarding the exhibition spaces** - Volunteers staff the galleries during open hours to keep an eye on the exhibits, chat to visitors (if they wish it), and maybe help with queries. You don't need to know all the answers as there will always be someone on duty to help. It can be very interesting listening to visitors too, as often an exhibit will spark memories. To comply with Covid-19 safety guidelines volunteers may also be required to regularly clean the display cabinets and other flat surfaces likely to be touched by visitors.
- **tearoom** - This involves getting teas, coffees, soups etc. from the overhead cupboards and returning them at the end of the day, making drinks and selling food items (a credit/debit card reader is available so that visitors do not have to pay by cash), and checking sell-by dates on the food items, Also of course it involves washing up and keeping the kitchen and tearoom areas clean and tidy and if you are there at the end of the day, doing the kitchen closing checks and signing the register. There are a few health and safety requirements to be followed (a list of these is displayed on the kitchen notice-board).
- **working on reception** - This involves a welcoming attitude to visitors, taking entrance money and issuing tickets, selling stock and recording sales (a credit/debit card reader is also available to record card transactions and to print receipts). It also involves keeping a record of other visitors including Friends of the museum and people making enquiries. Recording visitor numbers is important for Accreditation and Lottery Funding. Cash handling experience would be helpful but training can be given.

all of which often lead to interesting conversations and new information from visitors.

Other volunteer opportunities:

If your preference is for a specific volunteering role, the team which catalogues acquisitions, welcomes new members and they handle very interesting objects relevant to local history. Each season, from Easter to the end of October, new exhibits which have been prepared during the closed season, are presented for the public to view. You could use your practical skills assisting in the preparation of these exhibits or, if you have marketing skills, promote the museum to a wider audience. Events such as our Historical Days during school holidays are great fun to take part in. They involve assisting children in crafts, making such items as Stone Age cave paintings, Roman sandals or Tudor crowns and is very satisfying.

ALL volunteers are required to complete a Volunteer Registration Form as part of their recruitment enquiry.

Interested? Please contact *Phillip Lindley (Secretary)* at email: hinckleymuseum@hotmail.co.uk