

# Find your **One Good Reason** to...



## Volunteering for people over 50

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Newry/Armagh/Dungannon

# A Day For Action

**T**hirtieth of September marked the second annual One Good Reason Volunteering Action Day for people aged 50+ across Northern Ireland. The day was supported by Boots and held in 10 venues, with over 50 organisations taking part to offer a selection of one-off volunteering experiences. One such event was held in the beautifully historic setting of Bagenal's Castle in Newry - the same location as last year's event - and which was kindly provided by Newry and Mourne District Council. The Council of Dungannon and South Tyrone were also generous in their support of the Dungannon event, providing the venue and refreshments for the day. By all accounts both events were a success, with many people new to volunteering turning up to see what might

appeal to them and to give it a try.

In addition to the new volunteers, we also had the



pleasure of welcoming-in some volunteering connoisseurs, and were fortunate to have a current volunteer, Seamus Morgan, speak at the Newry event about his experience.

Many people across Northern Ireland signed up for the day and were offered a selection of volunteering

experiences with organisations such as Women's Aid, Guide Dogs, Cabbage Patchers in Warrenpoint, and Speedwell Trust in Dungannon, among others.

In Newry Mayor Charlie Casey, Colette Ruddy, Manager of Volunteer Now's Newry branch and Guest Speaker and volunteer Seamus Morgan all said a few short words about their own experience of volunteering.

For the organisations themselves it was a chance to recruit the fundamental element to their cause - volunteers - as well as being a chance to network with other local groups, and I'm pleased to say that quite a few partnerships were formed on the day.

If you would like to find out more about volunteering opportunities available, both one off and more long term, and the wide variety of things it can offer you then find out more at: [www.volunteernow.co.uk](http://www.volunteernow.co.uk) or call 02890232020.

## Your Local Unlocking Potential Contact



If you are a member of a group and would like someone to come and speak to you about volunteering, get in touch.

**Alice Murphy**

Bridging Generations Intern

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## Taster Sessions and Action Days



*“The time commitment required is as little or as much as the person involved can manage, flexibility is the key”.*

**F**or organisations, Taster Sessions are a way to promote volunteering opportunities and showcase their exciting or interesting roles. For everyone else, they are a way to experience volunteering with no further commitments- a way to try it out and see what you think.

Some of the most common reasons for not volunteering are hang-ups that people have in relation to commitment and necessary skills, but it was found that if people just gave it a try, they discovered volunteering to be a much simpler matter than they had anticipated, with many organisations willing to tailor their volunteer roles to suit their volunteers (especially in terms of skill and commitment).

The Unlocking Potential Project aims to increase the involvement of those aged 50 and over in volunteering. You can take part in events with your friends, or on your own, it will be a great way to

make some new ones. Volunteering is good for your health and doing something worthwhile can only lead to a healthier and happier you.

Volunteering is a fantastic way for older adults to boost their quality of life and the Unlocking Potential project wants to help everyone find their **One Good Reason** to volunteer.

If you are a member of a group and would like someone to come and speak to you about volunteering get in touch. If you are a volunteer co-ordinator and would like us to show-case your older volunteers, please let us know, we are always keen to feature local volunteers.



## Give something priceless this Christmas– Your Time

**Christmas Connections Event**  
Market Square, Dungannon Thursday 8th December  
10am-3pm,

**C**hristmas Connections in Dungannon will be a one off event where you can show your support for your local community and find out more about volunteering opportunities. You can give your time this Christmas by volunteering on the day, for gift wrapping, fundraising, toys, clothes and food donation, or by registering to volunteer more regularly with a local organisation.

There will also be cookery demonstrations, arts & crafts, dance, music and street art performances provided by local groups. We promise we'll do our bit to keep you warm through it all with hot beverages and Christmassy nibbles.



If you fancy a great day out, why not sign up as a group or club you're already a part of? Or come along on your own, and you will meet plenty of new people on the day. We hope you will take up this challenge as part of the Christmas Connections campaign to make a difference in your area as part of a great winter day out.



Give the gift of time this Christmas - find a festive volunteering opportunity in your area.

To search for a **festive opportunity in your area** go to our website [www.volunteernow.co.uk](http://www.volunteernow.co.uk) and select **Christmas Connections** in the drop down activities menu in the volunteer search. Check back for new opportunities being added each week.

## Volunteer Story: Maureen Ruddy, Volunteer Activist



**M**aureen Ruddy is a prolific volunteer- she spends much of her day volunteering in different organisations, including Citizen's Advice Bureau and Newry and Mourne Women. Maureen really is an inspiration when it comes to generosity of spirit and time, but how did she get started in Volunteering? And does she get anything out of it? We ask her a few questions about her experiences in volunteering.

"I first got involved in volunteering as a way of getting out of the house, getting involved in my community and giving back." she tells us, continuing "I have a long term mental health problem and I decided it was time to help myself by getting up and doing something so I signed up with the Volunteer Centre". Now Maureen is involved in all sorts of charitable and community organisations:

"I volunteer with the Good Morning project ringing older people, having a conversation and making sure everything is well with them. I volunteer as a receptionist in Citizens Advice Bureau. I am the secretary of Newry and Mourne Senior Citizen Consortium and also line manager to our employee. With Age NI I am a

committee member and attend training/meetings. With N&M Women I am a Chairperson dealing with the everyday running of the organisation.". That is quite a contribution, but what does she get from it we asked? "I enjoy my work as a volunteer. I find it is a way of giving back to my community. It boosts my self-esteem and self-confidence. I love to interact with people and I value every hour I spend volunteering."

Maureen obviously feels rewarded in the contribution she makes, and why not? There's nothing like that feel-good feeling you get when you help someone out or support a good cause. When we asked Maureen what advice she would give to all those potential volunteers out there she told us "I would encourage everybody who has a few hours to spare to volunteer – it will give you a new lease of life – you will enjoy it immensely and it is a very rewarding experience. You will learn new skills and have great support, meet lots of new people and feel valued. Volunteering is a truly rewarding experience."

Many thanks to Maureen Ruddy for sharing her Volunteering Story with us.

If you volunteer and want to tell everyone how fantastic it is, or pass on useful advice to people thinking about volunteering, please get in contact with us. You can email [alice.murphy@volunteernow.co.uk](mailto:alice.murphy@volunteernow.co.uk), or call us on 028 90232020 and ask to speak to your local branch.



## Pass Your Parcel

**T**his festive season Volunteer Now is calling on organisations, schools, or groups of family/friends to collect their unwanted Christmas gifts, clothing or bric-a-brac to donate to a charity shop in their area after Christmas.

Charity shops across Northern Ireland are in great need of good quality stock for their shops. This is a quick and easy way to 'give something back' during this season of goodwill.

To find out how to get involved, go to our website [www.volunteernow.co.uk](http://www.volunteernow.co.uk), click on Christmas Connections in the 'Latest News' section and follow the directions from there.



## Hot Opportunities

**GUIDE  
DOGS**



**Guide Dogs, Volunteer Driver in Dungannon:** Enjoy getting out and about and meeting people from all walks of life? Do you drive and have a car of your own? If you do, you could be an excellent candidate for hitting the road with Guide Dogs. Driving is a crucial service provided by Guide Dogs' volunteers across the country. Dogs and puppies often need to be transported short or long distances. Guide dog owners may also need assistance from a four-wheeled friend with getting to a venue, or equipment may need transporting to an event. All you need to help is an ordinary driving licence with the use of your own vehicle, and be happy to carry dogs in your car. We pay the mileage and provide the company! We're not asking for lots of your time – by giving just a few hours a week you'll be making a real difference by helping Guide Dogs enable blind and partially sighted people to enjoy the same freedom of movement as everyone else.

**N. Ireland** To register go to <http://bit.ly/tEA8bl>

**Marie Curie  
Cancer Care**



### **Marie Curie Cancer Care Shop Customer Service Volunteer in Dungannon**

Assist the Shop Manager and Assistant Manager in the day to day running of Dungannon's Marie Curie Cancer Care shop, contributing to the success and development of the shop by supporting the implementation of the Shops Department's policies and procedures. The front shop role is one where there will be constant contact with the public, as well as volunteers and staff.

To register for this opportunity go to <http://bit.ly/u5ob01>

### **Cabbage Patchers Warrenpoint Office Volunteer**

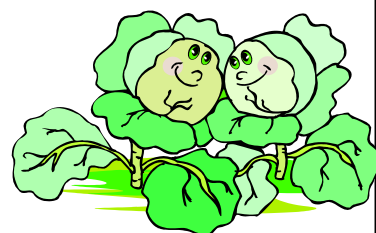
Are you interested in helping local people create a greener environment? Do you have office skills and a few hours to spare every week? Then join us at Cabbage Patchers and make a real difference.

We are a voluntary organisation based in Warrenpoint and growing organic vegetables, herbs and flowers is our passion. We need someone with experience to organise and look after our new office and help us with general admin. tasks, including record keeping.

If you have good IT skills, like to get on and organise things and would like to work with other volunteers in a creative, informal and friendly place, then this is the opportunity for you!

To find out more about Cabbage Patchers go to [www.volunteernow.co.uk](http://www.volunteernow.co.uk) and search for opportunities under conservation/gardening.

Or go directly to <http://bit.ly/viv5ZE>



## I want to volunteer! What do I do now?

**VOLUNTEER NOW**  
*think · act · do*

Registered Office: Volunteer Now, 129 Ormeau Road, Belfast, BT7 1SH T: 028 90232020, E: [info@volunteernow.co.uk](mailto:info@volunteernow.co.uk) W: [www.volunteernow.co.uk](http://www.volunteernow.co.uk) A Charity (Inland Revenue) No. XT22896. Company Limited by Guarantee No. NI602399.

To find out more about these opportunities or to discover what other opportunities are available in your area visit the website [www.volunteernow.co.uk](http://www.volunteernow.co.uk) or telephone 028-90-232020. You can also pop into the Volunteer Now office in Ballybot House, Newry (Mon-Fri 9-4) where a trained member of staff will be more than happy to provide you with all the information you need to find your **One Good Reason** to volunteer!

[www.VOLUNTEER now.co.uk](http://www.volunteernow.co.uk)