



Volunteers Handbook



Your Guide to Volunteering at Crossroads Together

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Welcome to Crossroads Together



We are delighted you are volunteering with us. We recognise and appreciate the time commitment you are making.

Volunteers are so important to Crossroads Together, helping us to support carers and their families.

Our volunteers are involved across the charity by:

- Spreading the word in their local communities about what we do
- Helping with administration tasks at our offices
- Providing catering support at our café
- Offering companionship and support to people in their homes and local support groups
- Lending a hand in any way they can to help support carers
- Sharing skills, sewing facemasks, tidying a garden, writing a letter, the options are endless....

Whatever inspired you to join us at Crossroads Together, we want to make sure you feel valued and supported throughout your time with us. This handbook will help you to get started in your role; we hope you find it useful.

If you would like more information, please speak to your assigned Co-ordinator at your location, they are always ready to help if you have any questions.

If you know someone who would like to join us as a volunteer, please ask them to contact our Volunteer Resource Advisor, Maria McGregor, on 0333 323 1990 or email volunteer@crossroadstogether.org.uk

About Us

It's all in the name ...Our History

Crossroads Together started life in 1990 as Macclesfield & District Crossroads and over the years merged with local Crossroads Care Schemes eventually becoming Crossroads Care Cheshire East, Manchester & Merseyside in 2011. Why Crossroads? Because the charity was originally formed as the result of a storyline in the television series 'Crossroads'.

Crossroads ran on ITV between 1964-88. A major storyline involved a character becoming paralysed following a car accident. A viewer, who was himself severely disabled, contacted ITV querying their portrayal of the disability, which resulted in the creation of a new character with a permanent disability. The difficulties he and his family encountered were modelled on those of that viewer.

Further storylines showed a character raising money to help families and carers of people with a disability. In 1974, the production company donated £10,000 to set up a real scheme in Rugby to provide care and Crossroads Care was born.

Since then Crossroads Care has evolved, in 2012 merging with The Princess Royal Trust for Carers to become Carers Trust, the largest UK charity supporting carers of all ages. In 2014 Crossroads Care Cheshire, Manchester & Merseyside became a network partner of Carers Trust and changed its name to Carers Trust 4all. The geographical reach of the charity grew over the next five years to add Shropshire and Herefordshire to its portfolio, supporting hundreds more carers each year.

A Network Partner of
**CARERS
TRUST**

In 2019, Carers Trust 4all merged with Crossroads Together, a carers support organisation that worked across Greater Manchester, and, after consultation with hundreds of staff, volunteers, carers, stakeholders and funders, renamed themselves Crossroads Together – bringing back that connection with their roots.

Find out more about Crossroads Together by browsing our website:
<https://www.crossroadstogether.org.uk>

Our CEO

Christine Aspin – Chief Executive Officer

I have been a part of the Crossroads Together team for over 25 years. Working in many roles from Support Worker, End of Life Care, Care Coordinator through to Management and now in my current position of Interim CEO. I have gained valuable experience and qualified to Level 5 Leadership & Management in Health & Social Care. Being part of the Senior Leadership Team I am involved in the strategy of the organisation, ensuring the safe, effective and ongoing sustainability of the organisation. I lead on the Care Quality sub-committee to provide appropriate governance and support with the aim to achieve the overall objective of becoming an 'Outstanding' provider of care and support. I ensure that all matters relating to quality, compliance, policies, procedures, training and health & safety are in line with current legislation and promoted at the highest level throughout the organisation.



I am continually exploring new areas of business, being creative and innovative to develop services to meet the ever-changing demand of Health & Social Care. Along with managing teams through change and direction to achieve financial savings, benefits and positive outcomes.

In my spare time, I enjoy the outdoors, mainly running and walking and find it gives me time to relax, unwind and reflect. I actively promote exercise to my team that has a wide range of health benefits and helps maintain positive mental health.

I am passionate about ensuring Crossroads Together do all they can to support carers, young carers and people with care needs. Carers are vastly unsupported by the social care system, so charities like ours are a lifeline for many.

Carers are in essence volunteers themselves, choosing to provide care for someone without being paid. The fact that we can support them through our services with the help of our volunteers is a great achievement for any charity.

Welcome to Crossroads Together, thank you for dedicating your time to supporting our services as a volunteer.

Christine Aspin, Chief Executive Officer

Our Services

Care in the Home - At Crossroads Together, we want to ensure that everyone in need of support can access high quality, personalised care. We offer home care on a funded or private basis to support individuals of any age to live as independently as possible in their own homes and be part of their community.

Carer Breaks - We provide support for unpaid carers of all ages who look after someone with any type of illness or disability including adults with learning or physical disabilities, older people, people with mental health problems, dementia, children and young people with disabilities, parent carers and young carers.

End of Life Care - In Liverpool, we work in partnership with Marie Curie to deliver our End of Life service, STARS. STARS provides quality personal care and support for patients estimated in their last 3 months of life. It promotes continuity of care, dignity and offers the patient, their family and carers appropriate advice concerning their care.

Young Carers – Supporting children as young as 6, our young carers services give young carers a chance to talk to one another about their life as a young carer and share their experiences, undertake social activities, learn skills such as budgeting, cooking etc. One-to-one sessions with our professional young carers workers offer young carers a chance to talk about how things are going at home giving us an opportunity to identify if further support may be needed.

Activity Groups - Groups offer a range of weekend and school holiday activities for children aged 8 to 18 years with disabilities and complex needs. Our team provide a safe, stimulating environment where parent carers can leave their loved one for a few hours, safe in the knowledge they will be cared for by trained professionals. Activities can range from trips out to the zoo to hosted groups at our dedicated activity centres as well as structured Speech & Language Therapy groups for children and adults with autism.

Extra Care - We provide care and support to people living in Extra Care services, helping them to maintain their independence and avoid the need for a residential care setting.

CarerLinks - Every day 6,000 people will become a carer. Our CarerLinks service ensures our team of Carer Advisors are the first point of contact for carers. By offering practical and emotional support, advice, advocacy and signposting to all sources of support available to carers, they ensure that carers only tell their story once.

Our Values



Vision

We want carers and people with care needs to be identified, supported and offered outstanding care to help maintain their own health and well being.



Caring

We treat everyone with dignity and respect. We support people through clear communication, actively listening and responding to their needs.



Together

We are inclusive and work in partnership within the community to achieve the best outcome for the people we work with.



Integrity

We build trust through being transparent, acting responsibly and continually working in an honest, ethical and sustainable manner.



Quality

We continually review and adapt to all forms of feedback to ensure we maintain or improve upon our standards and outcomes.



Creative

We are open minded and seek new ways to be more efficient. We share and develop ideas to improve and grow our service offer.

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Supporting Carers

What is a carer?

A carer is someone of any age who cares, unpaid for a family member or friend who, due to illness, a disability, a mental health problem or an addiction, cannot cope without support.

What do we do?

Crossroads Together are here to offer carers the support they need, when they need it. Whether it is simply a little advice, some practical help or a break from caring responsibilities.

Why we need to identify carers

Caring can be very rewarding, but also very demanding and can affect physical and mental well-being. Many carers are trying to work, study and look after other family members in addition to their caring responsibilities. We believe it is important to ensure carers are aware of support available as early as possible.

Volunteering

What is a volunteer?

A volunteer is someone like you who registers with Crossroads Together to take on a defined role and offers their time, skills and expertise free of charge in order to help carers.

These roles have been created as volunteering opportunities and we will not ask any volunteer to carry out a role, which should be assigned to a member of staff.

Who are our volunteers?

We have had the opportunity to work with a number of talented and passionate volunteers from all walks of life.

Crossroads Together is committed to equal opportunities and wants to ensure our opportunities, services and support are accessible to all.

How we recruit

All volunteers will be asked to complete an application form. Some roles require specific skills or experience and may involve a longer application process, including an informal interview and a request for references. This does mean that for these roles, not all applicants will be successful. We will provide useful feedback and suggest alternative roles where possible to match your interests, skills and suitability. We are always open to new ideas and creative ways of using your skills.

Expenses

You should never be out of pocket through volunteering. We will reimburse reasonable expenses when supported by receipts and agreed in advance. Expenses should be submitted to your Co-ordinator within one month of you paying out. The current mileage rate is 45p per mile.

Your commitment

We try to be as flexible as possible to accommodate your other commitments.

If your role requires you to volunteer at a specific time, it would be helpful if you could let us know in advance if you're unable to make the session. However, we understand that sometimes things come up at short notice and notifying us may be difficult. We will work together to try and find the best arrangement for you.

Confidentiality

Whilst volunteering you may have access to confidential information relating to Crossroads Together, the people we support, our staff and our volunteers. We expect you to keep this information confidential and to not disclose to anyone other than your immediate staff team. If you should ever be concerned about another individual during the course of your volunteering, it is important that you speak to your Co-ordinator.

Your privacy

We sometimes take photographs of volunteers for use on social media or to promote the work of Crossroads Together. If you would prefer we didn't use your image, please make sure you let us know and we will respect your wishes.

Representing us

When carrying out voluntary work for Crossroads Together you are a representative for the organisation. You are responsible for presenting a positive image of Crossroads Together and must share our values. If you are ever unsure about what to say, write or wear during the course of your volunteering, just ask your Co-ordinator for tips and advice.

Volunteer FAQ's

Can I claim expenses?

You can claim for your travel. You will need to keep relevant receipts and complete an expenses form. You will find an expenses form in your Welcome Pack or you can ask your Co-ordinator for one. You will need to give the completed form and receipts to your Co-ordinator each month.

What do I do if I am not happy in my role?

If you are not happy with your role, please talk to your Co-ordinator. Together we will try and resolve any issues you may have.

What should I do if I am ill or cannot come for any reason?

Please ring and let your Co-ordinator know if you are unable to attend. It is also helpful for us to know in advance when you are planning any holiday, or a break from volunteering.

Who do I speak to if I don't know what to do or don't understand something?

If there is something you are not sure about ask your Co-ordinator, who will help you and answer any questions you may have at any time. You will also be invited to attend regular reviews to discuss how you are getting on.

What do I do if I have suggestions for the volunteering team?

We welcome all new ideas, please share these with your Co-ordinator or email volunteer@crossroadstogether.org.uk

Your Volunteering Experience

What can you expect from us?

- We will give you a clear and defined role profile
- We will reimburse your travel
- We will provide an induction programme and training in line with your role
- We will offer flexibility within volunteering opportunities and take into account any caring and other commitments that you have
- Support from a named Co-ordinator will support you in your role and discuss development opportunities
- Volunteers have a voice within the organisation; we'll ask for your views and ideas whenever we can

What do we expect from you?

- You'll perform tasks and undertake training in line with your role
- You'll support our values and show respect to your fellow volunteers, Crossroads Together members and staff
- You'll carry out your volunteer role within the organisation's health and safety policies and the boundaries of your role
- You'll respect the confidentiality of the organisation and its members
- You'll keep staff informed about your voluntary work and feedback to us about your activity
- You'll bring any comments or concerns you might have to the attention of your supervisor or a member of the volunteering team
- You'll maintain the good name and reputation of Crossroads Together throughout your time as a volunteer

Induction Checklist

Your induction will depend on your role, but typically, it will include:

- An introduction to Crossroads Together, what we do, our values and goals
- An introduction to the team and how your role fits into the team
- Your Co-ordinator will introduce you to the people you'll be working with
- Practical guidance; you will be shown where you will sit and how to use any equipment necessary for your role (for example, how to log on to a computer)
- A tour; if you are volunteering in an office or our cafe, you will be shown around so you know where to find the fire exits and how to make a cup of tea
- Crossroads Together policies; you will be given a log on to our staff portal to access the volunteer policies. Your Co-ordinator will check that you have read and understood these and answer any questions you may have
- Support: your Co-ordinator will check if you have any additional needs that might affect your volunteering and that we can help you with
- Training will be offered according to the role you are doing

Keeping Informed

As one of our volunteers, it is important we keep in touch with you. We have various ways of letting you know what is going on in the charity.

- Monthly Newsletter - Every month we will email you our monthly newsletter
- Our website - You can go online at <http://www.crossroadstogether.org.uk> to find out more about what we do.
- Facebook and Twitter - Follow us on Facebook (Crossroads Together) and Twitter (username @xroadstogether) for all our latest updates.

If you have suggestions on how we can improve things, or just want to let us know how everything is going, we would love to hear from you:

Address: Crossroads Together, Overton House, West Street, Congleton, CW12 1JY

Telephone: 0333 323 1990 or email Volunteer@crossroadstogther.org.uk

To the sewers, the administrators, the drivers, the group helpers, to those who are giving something back or paying a kindness forward, and to everyone in between, we want to say thank you on behalf of us and, more importantly, the carers who your volunteering makes a difference to every day. **Thank You**