

Volunteering opportunities with South Gloucestershire Library Service

The library service has a range of volunteering opportunities

1. Computer Support Volunteer
2. Summer Reading Challenge Volunteer
3. Home Library Service

1. Computer Support Volunteers

South Gloucestershire's libraries provide free access to computers, the internet, email and online resources and, in some libraries free Wi-Fi access, for all members of the public. Library staff assist the public in using our facilities and when requested can sign-post to further local help through our colleagues in the Council's Community Learning Service, and through courses run by South Gloucestershire and Stroud College in many of our libraries.

Quite often, especially with those new to IT, a more in-depth one-to-one approach is needed and this is where we see a role for computer volunteers. We are thus seeking individuals who:

- Are competent and confident users of computers, conversant with use of the Internet and email, and are familiar with *Microsoft Office* software. An ability to manage photos and music downloading, along with an awareness of social networking sites such as Facebook, would also be desirable.
- Have a general interest in online information sites hosted by the library and an ability to explore these with customers, such as *Ancestry* and online encyclopaedias.
- Demonstrate excellent interpersonal and customer care skills, are comfortable with people of all ages and backgrounds; enjoy helping others and have patience.
- Especially encourage those who are afraid of IT, helping them make the most of the services on offer, particularly encouraging individuals to take advantage of online training resources such as Go On from UK Online.
- Supporting those who are applying for jobs, composing CVs, contacting the Council or using sites such as www.gov.uk

Volunteering is available at any time libraries are open. You can be as flexible as you like in the pattern of hours you do, and at times that suit you.

Interested in this opportunity? Please ask library staff for an application form to be returned to the librarian or for further information, please contact john.abraham@southglos.gov.uk or phone 01454 865 664

2. Summer Reading Challenge Volunteers (summer each year)

We are looking for enthusiastic, friendly volunteers to work as part of the team running the national *Summer Reading Challenge* for children aged 4 -12. Volunteers will spend their time engaging with children who are working their way through the challenge, participating in a range of fun activities with them and encouraging them with their reading.

This is your chance to develop your skills in communication, team working, and creative projects during the summer whilst having some fun and making new friends or working towards a volunteering award. Training will be given.

We are seeking volunteers in all libraries.

Interested in this opportunity? Please ask for an application form or for further information contact Emma Fisher, the Children & Young People's Librarian, at emma.fisher@southglos.gov.uk or phone 01454 868 006.

3. Home Library Service volunteer (ongoing position)

Volunteers in our Home Library Service visit people who are unable to use their local library because of disability, frailty or responsibility as a full time carer.

- Volunteers work from local libraries across South Gloucestershire and deliver a selection of books, information and other library materials direct to the homes of our members who are housebound in their own home or in residential settings.
- Volunteers usually take part in selecting books and other library materials for the people they visit.
- Generally volunteers make monthly visits.
- Volunteers use their own cars and a mileage allowance is paid by South Gloucestershire Libraries.
- All volunteers are issued with photographic ID and given some training and advice before they start visiting readers.
- Volunteers help to provide an important service which is greatly appreciated by its users.
- Our housebound members really look forward to their volunteer visits. They enjoy talking to their volunteers and selecting their next choice of books so we expect our volunteers to demonstrate excellent interpersonal and customer care skills; are comfortable with people of all ages and backgrounds; enjoy helping others and have patience.

Please contact your local library for current vacancies and an application form. The Social Inclusion Librarian also keeps a reserve list of those interested in volunteering if specific libraries don't have a current need.

For further information on the Home Library Service, please contact Gill Clayton, the Special Services Librarian, at gill.clayton@southglos.gov.uk or by phone on 01454 868 006

General information on volunteering

How to apply

As a potential volunteer, you will be asked to complete an application form and provide references that cover the last three years. References must be supplied by individuals who know you well – but must not be provided by members of your own family. Proof of Right to Work documentation will be asked for and you may also be required to have an enhanced check by the Disclosure and Barring Service. There is no cost involved and full details will be explained at an informal interview at the library. The interview is also an ideal opportunity to discuss the type of work involved and any questions you may have. If successful we will then take up references and start the DBS process.

Insurance

South Gloucestershire Council provides personal insurance to cover accidental injury to volunteers in the course of their work and also injury to third parties and damage to their property.

Home Service volunteers are responsible for arranging their own car insurance cover. If you use your own car, you should inform your insurance company *in writing* that you wish to use your car for volunteering purposes to deliver library stock to housebound readers. Driving in a voluntary capacity is then usually covered under your existing policy without any additional charge.

Support and Training

Our library staff are there to support you in your voluntary work and help you solve any queries or difficulties you may have. Training sessions are provided where necessary, including induction and health & safety. Volunteer meetings are held if appropriate and Home Library Service volunteers have a couple of get-togethers a year organised by each library's Home Library Service representative.

Expenses

Travel expenses from home to a volunteer's normal place of work are not normally paid but travel expenses from the library are paid to those delivering the Home Library Service.

Other volunteering opportunities

Individual libraries may also have other volunteering opportunities such as supporting coffee mornings; please enquire locally.