

Volunteering opportunities with South Gloucestershire Library Service

The library service has several fulfilling volunteering opportunities:

Digital Champions
Summer Reading Challenge Volunteers
Home Library Service Volunteers

Digital Champions (ongoing position)

South Gloucestershire's libraries provide free access to computers, the internet, email and online resources and free Wi-Fi access for all members of the public. Library staff assist the public in using our facilities and when requested can signpost 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 Digital Champions. 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 knowledge and experience using portable devices (eg iPad, tablets, iPhones).
- 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 www.learnmyway.com.
- Supporting those who are applying for jobs, composing CVs, contacting the Council or using sites such as www.gov.uk/jobsearch.

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

Interested in this opportunity? Visit your local library or email libraryvolunteers@southglos.gov.uk for an application form or more information.

Summer Reading Challenge Volunteers (summer each year)

Each year we recruit enthusiastic, friendly volunteers to work as part of the team running the Summer Reading Challenge for primary school aged children. Volunteers will spend their time helping children to complete the Challenge, talking with them about the books they've been reading and helping at a range of fun activities in the library.

This is a great opportunity to develop skills in communication, team working and creative projects, whilst having fun and making new friends or working towards a volunteering award.

We are seeking volunteers in all libraries. Training will be given. Suitable for age 14+.

Interested in this opportunity? Visit your local library or email libraryvolunteers@southglos.gov.uk for an application form or more information.

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. Our housebound customers really value the service, and for some people reading is an essential part of their daily life, particularly for those without digital access.

- Volunteers work with 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.
- Generally, volunteers make monthly visits and use their own cars. A mileage allowance is paid by South Gloucestershire Libraries.
- Volunteers first visit a library to collect a bag of books and other libraries materials which have either been selected by staff or by volunteers themselves.
- They deliver the bag to our housebound member's doorstep; collect a bag of library material they have finished reading and return it to the library for staff to process. (If the reader is unable to pick up the books and bring them into their house, then volunteers put the bag just inside the door (and picks up items to be returned).
- All Home Library Service volunteers are DBS checked.
- All Home Library Service volunteers are issued with South Gloucestershire Council photographic ID.
- All volunteers are given some training and advice before they start visiting readers.
- Volunteers are advised to not enter the homes of housebound customers because this could put volunteers at risk of COVID19 infection, or risk spreading it to others.
- Our housebound members really look forward to their volunteer visits. We expect our volunteers to demonstrate excellent interpersonal and customer care skills; to be comfortable talking to people of all ages and backgrounds; to enjoy helping others and to have patience.

Visit your local library or email libraryvolunteers@southglos.gov.uk for an application form or more information.

General information on volunteering

How to apply

As a potential volunteer you will be asked to complete an application form and provide references. References must be supplied by individuals who know you well – but cannot be provided by members of your own family. Proof of Right to Work documentation will be required for anyone aged 16+, and you may also be required to have an enhanced check by the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) for certain roles (there is no cost for applicants for DBS checks). You will also be invited for an informal interview at the library which is an ideal opportunity to discuss the type of work involved and any ask questions you may have. If successful we will then take up references and start the DBS process where applicable.

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 here to support you in your voluntary work and help you solve any queries or difficulties you may have. Training sessions or volunteer meetings are run where necessary, including inductions, safeguarding and health & safety.

Safeguarding

South Gloucestershire Library Service will provide you with supervision, training, and support to make sure that you are safe when volunteering with us. It is important that you understand and follow any information and training you are given. You may be asked to stop being a volunteer if you do not follow this information and training.

Expenses

Travel expenses from home to a volunteer's normal place of work (this could be one or a number of libraries) are not normally paid but travel expenses from the library are paid to those delivering the Home Library Service.