



# Volunteer Recruitment Guide

A guide for those interested in volunteering with  
Carers Support West Sussex

# Index

- 2. About This Guide
- 2. Message from our CEO
- 3. About Carers Support West Sussex
- 4. Who We Support
- 5. Our Volunteer Roles
- 6. Benefits of Volunteering
- 7. Volunteer Case Study
- 8. Volunteer Reward and Recognition
- 9. Training and Support as a Volunteer
- 10. Who We Are Looking For
- 11. How to Apply
- 14. Frequently Asked Questions



# About This Guide

Welcome to the Volunteer Recruitment Guide for Carers Support West Sussex.

This guide will help you learn about volunteering with us. Inside, you will find:

- Who we are and how we help unpaid carers in our community.
- The volunteer roles we offer and the benefits of volunteering.
- How to apply and what happens during the process.

If you want to give back, learn new skills, or meet people in your local area, this guide will help you decide if volunteering with us is right for you.



## Message from our CEO

Thank you for your interest in volunteering with Carers Support West Sussex (CSWS). By choosing to volunteer with us, you're taking an important step towards making life easier for unpaid carers right here in your local community.

I began my own charity career as a volunteer with a carers' organisation, so I know first-hand how volunteering can positively transform your life.

Being a carer can be both challenging and rewarding. That's why we work hard to build a community that truly understands and supports carers across West Sussex.

Did you know that three in five people will become carers at some point in their lives? Together, we can make that caring journey less isolating and far more positive.

Every month, we register over 300 new carers, many of whom have cared for years without realising help is available. Your time and support as a volunteer will ensure carers receive the support they need, when they need it most.

When you volunteer with us, you're not just giving your time, you're helping people in your own community.

We therefore look forward to you joining our dedicated volunteer team.

Caroline Pope  
Chief Executive

# About Carers Support West Sussex



Carers Support West Sussex is a charity supporting over 30,000 unpaid carers across the county. We work in partnership with the NHS, local authorities, and community organisations to ensure carers are recognised, valued, and supported.



## Our Vision

Our vision is to bring the day forward when unpaid carers are seen, heard, and included.



## Our Purpose

To improve the lives of unpaid carers in West Sussex by providing emotional support, practical advice, and opportunities to connect.



## Our Values

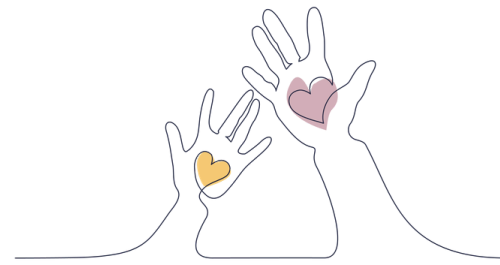
At Carers Support, carers are at the heart of everything we do.

- We focus on what matters – listening to carers and acting on what they need.
- We work together – with carers, communities, and partners to create real change.
- We lead with purpose – identifying opportunities and enabling carers to be seen, heard, and supported.

Our behaviours reflect who we are:

- Quality – striving for the best in all we do.
- Inclusivity – respecting every person and perspective.
- Caring – improving lives with compassion.
- Integrity – acting with honesty and consistency.
- Loyalty – building trusted, lasting relationships.
- Innovation – always learning, always improving.

# Who We Support



A carer is anyone who cares, unpaid, for a friend or family member who due to illness, disability, a mental health problem or an addiction could not cope without their support.

Caring for someone can take up a few hours each week, or a carer may be caring for 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Some carers live with, or near to, the person they are caring for, whereas others provide more remote support. Some look after more than one person.

The support provided by unpaid carers is varied and might include:

- Helping someone wash and dress themselves and with other personal care.
- Housework, food shopping and picking up and administering medication.
- Taking someone to hospital and GP appointments.
- Providing company and emotional support.
- Managing financial matters.



# Our Volunteer Roles

There are many ways you can help:

- Join one of our carer groups, where people meet to share experiences and enjoy a friendly chat over a cup of tea.
- Become a Telephone Befriender to reduce loneliness and offer a caring voice on the phone.
- If you know basic technology, you can help carers learn new skills, like online shopping or using Zoom, as a Digital Champion.
- Prefer working behind the scenes? Join our admin team and help keep records up to date.
- Love meeting people? Support us at events and information stands to share what our charity does.

Whatever your skills or interests, there is a role for you. Every volunteer helps carers feel connected, supported, and valued.

For more details about volunteer roles, visit our website:  
[www.carerssupport.org.uk/volunteer-with-us](http://www.carerssupport.org.uk/volunteer-with-us).

If you have any questions, please contact our volunteer team.



# Benefits of Volunteering



Nicola, our Digital Content volunteer, shares the benefits of volunteering.

## The Well-Being Benefits of Volunteering

### Physical & Mental Health

- Get out more, take on new challenges, and help others.
- Enjoy a break from everyday demands.
- Find a positive way to spend your time.

### Sense of Purpose

- Gain a new identity and responsibilities.
- Feel needed and experience a sense of satisfaction.
- Learn useful skills like listening, using a computer, and organising tasks.
- Build confidence in your abilities and explore new opportunities.
- Gain experience that could help you start a new career, change direction, or simply develop your role as a volunteer.

### Develop and Share Your Existing Skills

- Everyone has skills to share, whether from work experience or everyday life. Volunteering gives you the chance to develop personal skills you may not have used before.

### Meet New People

- You may be entering a new stage of life, such as retirement, finishing education, or coping with bereavement.
- There is no 'typical' volunteer.
- Meet people of different ages, genders, cultures, and backgrounds.

### Connect with Your Local Community

- Gain a deeper understanding of West Sussex and the people who live and work here.

### 'Give Back'

- You may have received help from Carers Support or another charity.
- Volunteering offers the chance to give something back to your local community.

### Work Flexibly Around Your Commitments

- Fits well around family or work.
- Feels less pressurised than paid work – it's your choice.
- Choose hours that suit your circumstances.

Whatever your reasons for volunteering, Carers Support will have a place for you.

# Volunteer Case Study

**Volunteering can open unexpected doors. While Mandy didn't start with employment in mind, her experience demonstrates how volunteering helped to build transferable skills and confidence, which enabled her to consider and apply for a paid role within Carers Support.**

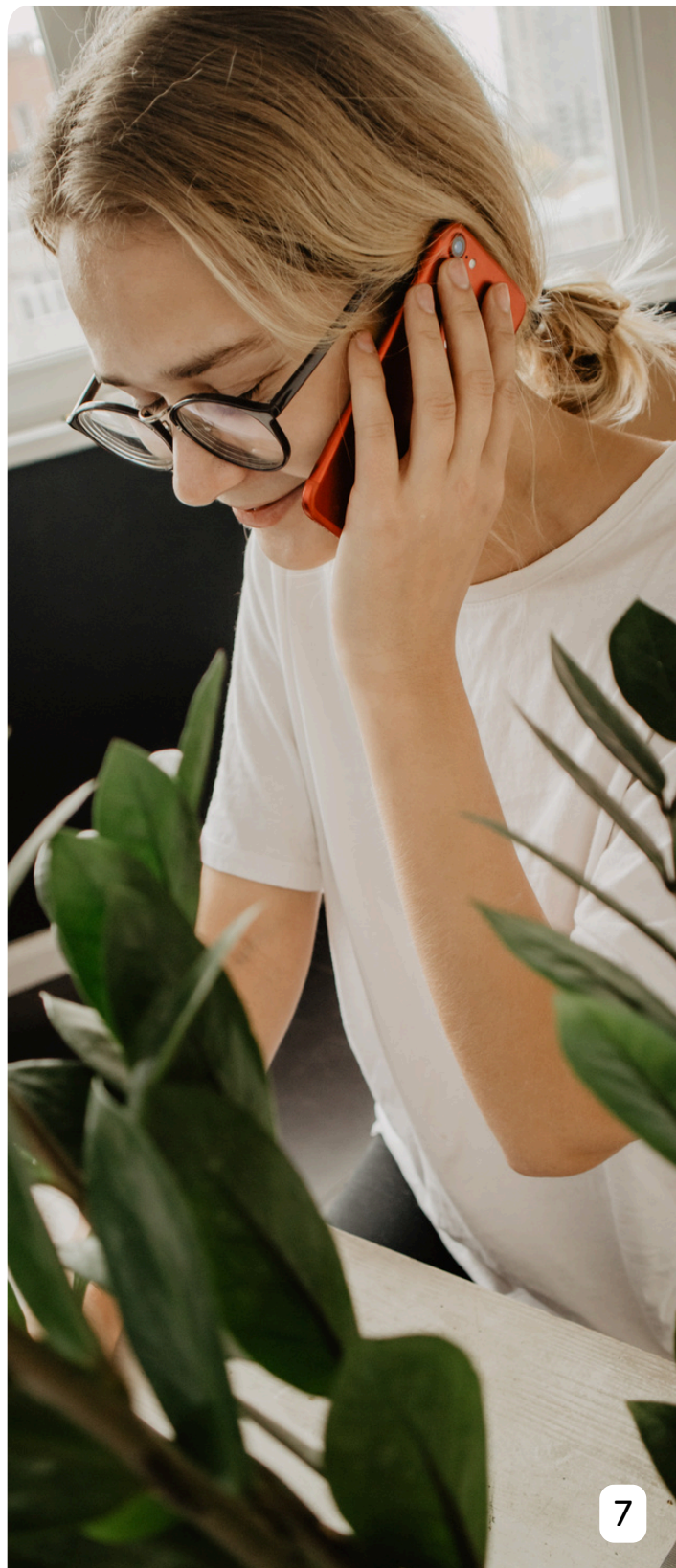
Mandy began volunteering during a challenging period in her life. She was housebound while caring for her mum, who had dementia. Reflecting on that time, Mandy says:

"As a carer receiving support from the charity, I felt a strong desire to 'pay forward' the help I had received. When my circumstances changed and Mum moved into a care home, I found myself with some breathing space and decided it was the right time to give back."

Mandy contacted Carers Support and chose to volunteer for the Telephone Befriending (Check-in and Chat) service.

"This role suited my situation as I could commit while working from home. I had no intention of using volunteering as a stepping stone to paid employment, my motivation was purely to give back and support others as I had been supported."

As life changed, an opportunity arose to join the Carers Support team in a paid capacity. Mandy realised her volunteering experience had equipped her with valuable practical skills, such as engaging and speaking with carers and confidently representing the charity at community hubs. These skills gave her the confidence to apply for the role.



# Volunteer Case Study

"I felt well-prepared and confident in terms of communicating with carers and having that empathic approach, but I must admit I do feel slightly out of my depth with the technical aspects of the job. Looking back, as a volunteer I could have benefited from shadowing other teams and learning about processes such as referrals and service pathways.

It's helpful to understand the bigger picture and know what happens behind the scenes. I would strongly encourage other volunteers to take advantage of induction and training opportunities, even if they seem unrelated to your current role. If you are curious and proactive, this knowledge not only strengthens your ability to represent the charity better but also prepares you for potential career opportunities".

Mandy, Former CSWS Volunteer



## Volunteer Reward and Recognition

**We value the dedication and contributions of our volunteers and are committed to recognising their efforts.**

Volunteers are celebrated in a variety of ways, including awards for long service and hours volunteered and special recognition during national campaigns such as Volunteers' Week.

We also take the opportunity to thank and celebrate our volunteers during the festive season, ensuring their commitment and hard work are acknowledged throughout the year.



# Training & Support as a Volunteer

**We are committed to investing in our volunteers by providing the skills needed for their roles.**

As a volunteer, you will be required to attend certain mandatory training, including:

- Volunteer Induction
- Adult Safeguarding: Basic Awareness
- General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) Training
- LGBTQ+ Carer Awareness
- Role-Specific Induction
- Relevant System Training (e.g. MS Office, CRM Database, Volunteer Management System)

All of which are valuable for personal and professional development.

At Carers Support, our teams greatly appreciate the contribution volunteers make. To ensure you feel supported, you'll be paired with a named member of staff – your Volunteer Mentor. This ensures your experience with us is positive and that you have the guidance and support needed to carry out your role effectively.

“

Having the support of volunteers really helps take the pressure off managing such a large group, and I am so grateful. I know the carers are very appreciative of all the volunteers who have helped – from making a good cuppa, to setting up chairs and tables, welcoming guest speakers and new carers, and even managing difficult conversations with empathy and kindness. – CSWS Volunteer Mentor.

”



# Who We Are Looking For

**Volunteers play a vital role in making life a little easier for carers we support, and we're looking for people who share our commitment to this cause.**

## **What We're Looking For:**

### **Caring and Kind**

We're looking for people who genuinely care about helping others. If you're someone who enjoys supporting people and making a difference.

### **Good Listener and Communicator**

It's important to listen and talk to carers in a kind, respectful way. You don't need to be an expert but being able to offer support and encouragement is key.

### **Reliable and Committed**

It's important to listen and talk to carers in a kind, respectful way. You don't need to be an expert but being able to offer support and encouragement is key.

### **Non-Judgmental and Open-Minded**

Every carer's situation is different, and we're looking for people who are understanding and respectful of all backgrounds and experiences.

### **Respect Boundaries**

It's important to know how to offer support without becoming too involved. Volunteers need to respect the personal space and privacy of the carers they help.

### **Flexible and Adaptable**

The needs of carers can change from day to day. Volunteers need to be flexible and ready to help with whatever is needed, whether that's a friendly chat or helping with small tasks.

### **Team Player with a Positive Attitude**

While you may work one-on-one with carers, it's also important to work well with other volunteers. A positive attitude and willingness to pitch in is helpful.

### **Willing to Learn**

You don't need experience in caring, but you should be willing to learn and receive training to better support unpaid carers.

### **Respectful of Privacy**

Volunteers will be trusted with sensitive information. It's important to keep things private and always be respectful of people's personal details.

### **Passionate About Helping**

Above all, we want volunteers who care about making life a little easier for unpaid carers and who are excited about helping them in any way they can.

# How To Apply



To apply for a volunteer role, please visit our website and browse the current vacancies. Then simply complete the online [Volunteer Enquiry Form](#), and a member of our team will be in touch.

Each vacancy includes details about the role, such as the time commitment, location, and any helpful skills, so you can decide if the role is right for you.

If you have any questions or would like to discuss a role further, please don't hesitate to contact our team for a friendly chat. You can reach us by email at [volunteering@carerssupport.org.uk](mailto:volunteering@carerssupport.org.uk) or call our Helpline on [0300 028 8888](tel:03000288888) and leave your contact details for a member of our team to call you back.



# Application Process

1

## Submit an Initial Enquiry

Submit an enquiry through our website or another volunteer platform where we advertise opportunities, letting us know that you are interested in volunteering with us.

2

## Call Back from the Volunteer Team

A member of our team will contact you to discuss the volunteer role and answer any questions you may have.

3

## Application Submission

If you're happy to proceed, we will invite you to complete an online application form.

4

## Phone Call Arranged

We will arrange a brief chat via phone or Zoom to discuss your application and the role further.

5

## Trial/Shadowing

You will be offered (where relevant) the opportunity to shadow or trial the role, giving you a chance to experience the work and see if it's the right fit for you.

6

## Onboarding

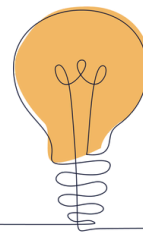
If both you and the team agree the role is a good fit, we'll begin the onboarding process. This includes a DBS check, an induction session, and mandatory training. The full process typically takes up to four weeks, though it may be quicker depending on the DBS check.

# Commitment to Diversity & Inclusion

We are proud to champion a culture of equity, diversity, and inclusion. We actively welcome applications from individuals of all backgrounds, including those from ethnically diverse communities, LGBTQ+ individuals, people with disabilities, neurodivergent candidates, carers, and those with lived experience of mental health challenges.

We understand that some volunteers may need adjustments during the interview process, and we're happy to accommodate these. This could include support for those with sensory sensitivities, learning disabilities, anxiety, or caring responsibilities. We are committed to offering flexible arrangements so that everyone has a fair and equal opportunity throughout the application process.





# Frequently Asked Questions

## **1. What if I need support with my application or require adjustments?**

If you have any accessibility needs, including those related to long-term health conditions, please let us know. We can offer adjustments such as captioning during interviews, extra time for tasks, or providing documents in alternative formats.

## **2. How do I know if the volunteer role is right for me?**

For some roles, we offer a trial period so you can see if the position feels like a good fit before formally committing.

## **3. Is there an age limit for applying for roles at CSWS?**

We currently accept applications from individuals aged 18 or over. In some cases, we may consider applications from those aged 16+, as Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks are available for this age group.

## **4. Can I volunteer if I live outside the area?**

Yes, we offer a variety of volunteer roles, including remote opportunities. For in-person roles, we welcome applicants from outside West Sussex, provided travel is practical and expenses can be reimbursed. Please note that we cannot accept applications from outside the UK.

## **5. I'm registered as a carer with your service, can I still volunteer?**

Absolutely! We're very fortunate to have carers with lived experience who also choose to volunteer their time to support others.

## **6. What expenses are covered?**

We reimburse expenses directly related to your volunteer role, including travel costs. For volunteers based outside West Sussex, travel reimbursements may be considered at our discretion.

## **7. What is the expected time commitment for volunteers, and how are holidays managed?**

Most volunteer roles are flexible and can be scheduled around your availability. We ask volunteers to commit to agreed hours to ensure continuity of support for carers. If you need to take a break or go on holiday, please give us as much notice as possible so we can arrange suitable cover.



**Carers Support West Sussex**  
for family and friend carers



### Contact us:

Website: [www.carerssupport.org.uk/volunteer-with-us/](http://www.carerssupport.org.uk/volunteer-with-us/)

Email: [volunteering@carerssupport.org.uk](mailto:volunteering@carerssupport.org.uk)

Phone: 0300 028 8888

### Connect with us on social media:

 @CarersWSussex

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 @carerswsussex

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our website!

