Know Your Neighbourhood

Halton Libraries’ current volunteering programme has been developed as part of the *Know Your Neighbourhood* project.

Halton Libraries has secured government funding through the *Know Your Neighbourhood* (KYN) initiative to deliver activities that will tackle chronic loneliness and social isolation across the borough. The project consists of two strands:

* Life Stories - a programme of engagement focused on life story work and local/family history
* Together - the delivery of new activities within Halton’s four public libraries

aimed at key target audiences.

# Life Stories

Life story work will take place with older people across the borough – in libraries, community spaces, care settings and in peoples’ homes. The project will encourage people to share their stories, whether through conversation or creative activities. This may lead to the creation of a life story book which could be shared with family, and we hope that it can also be used to support person-centred care for the individual in the future, for example if they develop dementia or move to a care home.

A selection of the life stories collected will be shared with a wider audience through a temporary exhibition which will be linked thematically to the Halton 50th Anniversary celebrations. Volunteers will be recruited to support the delivery of the life story activities and to research and digitise elements of the Local Studies Collection to make it more accessible. Online resources will be created as a legacy for the project and to support ongoing life story work in the community.

# Together - Library Activities

New activities in libraries will be developed, encouraging a greater sense of community connection, making use of libraries as safe and inclusive spaces. The target audiences for these activities include: people aged 16-34, newcomers to the borough, new parents and people who are widowed. It is hoped that the new groups and sessions will continue through volunteer support beyond the period of the project. Initial groups include *Midweek Meet Ups* at Widnes and Halton Lea, *Men’s Shed Talks* and disability support group *Together Unlimited*.

The KYN project is due to finish in March 2025.

**For further information please contact:**

Life Stories Co-ordinator – Ruth Darling ruth.darling@halton.gov.uk

# Volunteer Role Descriptions

We have three roles currently available within Halton Libraries, full role descriptions are included below.

* Local Studies and History Volunteer
* Library Activities Volunteer
* Life Stories Volunteer

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| **Local Studies and History Volunteer -** *Volunteers will digitise and catalogue photographs, negatives and documents from the Local Studies collection to make them more accessible for people across Halton borough.* |
| *Skills & requirements* | *Tasks* | *Training* | *Time commitment* |
| * Interest in local history, heritage and the local area
* Interest in sharing heritage and local knowledge with others
* Enthusiasm and a positive attitude
* Good reading and writing skills
* Good IT skills and/or willingness to develop skills
* Ability in organising and recording information
* Ability to work as part of a team
* Patience and attention to detail
 | * Handling documents C photographs
* Ensuring documents C photographs are described, listed C stored correctly
* Updating C creating catalogue records
* Researching the content of images to enable them to be described in an accurate and engaging way
* Adding items to a collections database
 | * Introduction to Libraries and KYN project
* Equality training
* Safeguarding training
* Handling C storing photographic and archive material
* How to digitise photos, negatives C documents
* Researching the negative collection
* Cataloguing skills
 | ½ day per week |

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| **Library Activities Volunteer -** *Volunteers will support the running of a wide range of public activities within the four Libraries in Halton as part of**the Know Your Neighbourhood project.* |
| *Skills & requirements* | *Tasks* | *Training* | *Time commitment* |
| * Friendly and approachable manner
* Good communication skills
* Ability to work as part of a team
* Adaptable to different tasks at different events
* Independent thinking when required
* Ability to move and assemble equipment
* Good listening skills
* Interest in helping people explore their life story
 | * Preparing materials, equipment and spaces for activities
* Welcoming participants
* Helping participants take part in activities
* Tidying up after sessions
* Chatting to participants and answering questions
* Helping to deliver life story group sessions in the library C out in the community
 | * Introduction to Libraries and KYN project
* Equality training
* Safeguarding training
 | 3 hours a week |
| **Life Stories Volunteer -** *Life Stories volunteers will help with the development of Life Story Books for participants, collating life story information, carrying out research within the local studies collection and creating the life story books*. |
| *Skills & requirements* | *Tasks* | *Training* | *Time commitment* |
| * Good communication skills
* Patience and methodical approach
* Willingness to work as part of a team
* Enjoying helping other people and passing on knowledge or skills
* Local Knowledge of Halton (not essential)
* Interest in heritage and the local area
* Good IT skills and/or willingness to develop skills
 | * Typing up handwritten notes to create life story books
* Scanning photographs and documents to add to the life story books
* Research to supplement life stories – include image research, local history and family research where appropriate
* Creation of Life Story packs – information packs to support and encourage people creating their own books
 | * Introduction to Libraries and KYN project
* Equality training
* Safeguarding training
* Using word and Publisher to create Life Story books
* Researching local and family history
* Image research
* How to create life story packs
 | ½ day a week |