



Community Links

Statement of Purpose

Gateshead Council Day Opportunities

Mission Statement

"Our focus is to work with individuals and support them to achieve their aspirations and a life in their communities."

"Our aim is to provide flexible, person-centred support that will enable people to access a range of opportunities and live the life of their choice."

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Contacts

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Different Formats

If you would prefer this leaflet in large print, Braille or on audiotape, CD or in a different language please contact the base co-ordinator on 0191 433 6075

1 About Community Links

Community Links is a Volunteer Service which provides support to enable adults with learning disabilities to access a wide range of activities and opportunities in their local community, develop social networks and lead a safe and fulfilling life. Volunteer support is also provided in a range of settings including Day Opportunities, Social Enterprises and Independent Supported Living.

Community Links recruit and support volunteers to offer a personalised service to people and works in productive partnerships with a range of professionals and agencies.

The philosophy of the service is to support people by using a person centred approach, in accordance with the White Paper, Valuing People Now and the Councils Quality Framework for Learning Disabilities.

2 Organisational Structure

Staffing

Team Manager

Responsible for overall management of Community Bases, Birtley Day Centre and Community Links

Co-ordinator

Responsible for the daily management of the service

Links Assistant

Responsible for supporting service users and volunteers in a range of community settings

Training

Staff are trained to a minimum NVQ Level 2 in Health and Social Care and managers to Level 4 in management or equivalent, and attend mandatory and other training relevant to their job role and needs of the customer. This includes:

- Moving and Handling
- Health & Safety
- Protection of Vulnerable Adults
- Food Safety
- Person Centred Awareness
- First Aid
- Epilepsy awareness
- Cultural Awareness
- Deaf/Blind Awareness
- Mental Capacity Act
- Deprivation of Liberty
- Community Bridge Building
- Total communication
- Team Teach
- Advocacy Awareness
- Equality and Diversity
- Fire Safety
- Customer Care
- Data Protection
- Volunteer Recruitment
- Volunteers and the Law

Volunteers

All Volunteers have CRB clearance, participate in a range of training and are well supported and supervised.

3 Aims of the service and Quality Standards

Community Links aims to offer a personalised service to volunteers and people with learning disabilities and works in productive partnerships with a range of professionals and agencies.

We are fully aware of the 10 outcomes and quality standards we need to promote:

Outcome and Quality Standards	
I make everyday choices	I am part of my chosen community
I make important decisions about my life	I have the chance to work for money
People treat me with respect	People listen to my family
I take part in everyday activities	I am safe
I have friendships and relationships	I get help to stay healthy

4 Eligibility Criteria

People with learning disabilities should:

- Have Community Care Assessment of need which positively demonstrates that participation in the Community Links Service would assist in meeting the needs of the user.
- Be aged 18 or over.
- Have a "Learning Disability" as defined by the Governments White Paper "Valuing People" March 2001.
- People who require the use of personal needs equipment are unable to access the service.
- Dependant upon support needs of the user, agreement will be reached as to support needed within the groups.

Volunteers should:

- Provide 2 suitable references.
- Apply for Criminal Records Bureau Enhanced Disclosure, with support from Community Links.
- Arrange own travel to and from volunteering venues (agreed travel expenses reimbursed).
- Be able to attend and understand basic training.
- Be committed to keeping Community Links informed of availability.
- Need minimal support to carry out volunteering role.

5 Operation of the Service

Community Links works with a range of partners and takes referrals for 1:1 opportunities to work in a person centred way to offer flexible support to people wishing to extend their social networks and access their local community.

Volunteers

Following necessary clearances volunteers will agree, with support from Co-ordinator, which volunteering opportunities they choose to pursue, which could include:

- Social Enterprises
- Day Opportunities
- Drop In Sessions
- 1:1 Volunteering
- Social, Leisure and Sporting Events
- Education

When 1:1 volunteering, when and where this takes place will be agreed between Links Co-ordinator, the volunteer and the person with learning disabilities and could happen during the day, evenings or weekends

6 Dealing with Concerns/Complaints/Compliments

People who use the service and their carers have the right to raise concerns, make complaints and compliments about the service they receive. They can do this in person, or through an advocate, by talking to staff at the service or by contacting the Social Care Complaints Officer, Gateshead Civic Centre on Tel No 0191 433 3000.

7 Adult Care Services Service Plan 2008 - 2011

1 Improved Health and Emotional Wellbeing

Provide support and opportunities for individuals, groups and communities to have more control and influence over their health and emotional wellbeing.

2 Improved Quality of Life

More people, including family carers, participate in their communities; have work, leisure, and the opportunity to feel fulfilled and valued.

3 Making a Positive Contribution

Enable people, including our most vulnerable adults, to contribute to their community, family and friendships.

4 Increased Choice and Control

Accessible information and support is available to help people to make informed decisions about how their care can best be delivered.

5 Freedom from Discrimination and Harassment

Promote equality through showing respect for all, providing personalised services and promoting the equalities agenda for everybody.

6 Maintaining Personal Dignity and Respect

Individuals, family carers and communities, experience standards of care that respect them and allow them to make choices and take decisions.

7 Economic Wellbeing

Increase the opportunities for people to improve their financial circumstances.



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