

## Care home welcome pack

## The Age Cymru Volunteer Project

We thank you for joining us and welcome you warmly – without you, this Age Cymru Pilot Project couldn't happen, and your home has a vital role to play. You're providing a real opportunity to make a positive difference to the people who live and work in your care home. We look forward to gathering your feedback, which is an essential part of the initiative.

### Pilot project locations and participating care homes

Location	Care Home
Aberdare	<b>Ysguborwen Care Home</b> Ysguborwen Aberdare RCT CF44 0AX
Anglesey	<b>Glan Rhos Nursing Home</b> Glan Rhos Brynsiencyn Llanfairpwllgwyll Isle of Anglesey LL61 6TZ
Cardiff	<b>Llys Cyncoed</b> 127 Cyncoed Road Cardiff CF23 6AF
Cardiff	<b>Penylan House Care Home,</b> Penylan Rd., Cardiff, CF235YG

Neath	<b>Plas Bryn Rhosyn Care Home</b> Heol Illtyd Neath Neath Port Talbot SA10 7SE
Newport	<b>Capel Grange Care Home</b> Capel Crescent Newport Gwent NP20 2FG
Port Talbot	<b>Llys y Seren</b> Moor Road Aberavon Port Talbot SA12 7BJ

## The role of volunteers and what they'll be doing

The volunteer's role will solely be to have conversations with residents and to help in the facilitation of activities which would again generate further conversations. We also hope, with the help of your own Activities Coordinator and the guidance of one of Age Cymru's experienced art practitioners, to initiate a themed project with you, which could again help to create conversation amongst your residents.

**Please note that volunteers will not be helping with resident's personal care.**

## **The profile for the volunteers we have identified and sought**

It's hoped that volunteers will contribute to the life of the home, acquiring and learning new social and communication skills, while developing their empathic skills, for mutual benefit. Some volunteers, who may be on, for example, Health and Social Care or medical courses, may require more specific experience which would need to be negotiated directly with you. Others may have particular expertise which could help you decide on a project activity.

## **What the volunteers will need**

Broadly speaking, volunteers will become a regular, extended part of your team. It's important that your staff at the home know about the care home's involvement in the pilot project, to ensure that they're able to welcome the volunteers and understand their part in it.

## **Volunteers may need a little understanding**

Many volunteers will know little or nothing about care homes or the way they work. They may have had little or no contact with anyone living with dementia. They may have had limited or no knowledge or experience of older people and their needs. The volunteers have been alerted to the fact that they may find some experiences distressing.

Some volunteers may be younger and less confident at first, initially it can help to 'buddy' younger volunteers with others.

Your role in re-assuring volunteers is vital if we're to maintain their interest, commitment, and resilience.

## Dementia

During the pilot, volunteers are likely to encounter people living with dementia. In the induction and guidance, we've highlighted that dementia is a complex health problem – that a person with dementia may display a number of symptoms that have affected their memory, perception, behaviour, language and personality.

We've stressed the importance of relationships in the wellbeing of *any* person and those living with dementia – as well as those caring for them and their families. Volunteers have received preliminary guidance on connecting and communicating well with a person with dementia, including sensory approaches.

However, some volunteers will have little or no experience of the relationships between care staff and residents, nor the sometimes-complex relationships with families. It's likely that few will have ever been inside a care home and none will have been into one during COVID. We want them to enjoy their time with you and it is important to recognise that they may find certain aspects of their volunteering experiences unnerving or troubling. We know well how dementia can affect a person's behaviour, but volunteers, especially those who are younger, might be less aware of it and how it impacts a person. Being sensitive to this intergenerational issue and providing reassurance can only help the success of the project.

Acknowledging the person's reactions, giving them time to process their experience and being sensitive to them can only help to make this project a success.

### **On a practical level, the volunteer will need**

1. An induction- a tour of the public-facing areas of your home. They need to become familiar with and know their way around the home – visiting room/ garden/ as well as cloakrooms / toilets / refreshment areas etc.
2. Somewhere safe to leave their bags and coats
3. Knowledge of any procedures (e.g., safety and fire drill procedures, PPE etc.) and any necessary paperwork you need them to complete. We expect them to take responsibility for keeping themselves well-organised
4. To be made aware of any other things that might be going on at the home that might impact their visit.
5. Know how to report concerns and who will be their main contact at the home

---

Age Cymru is a registered charity 1128436. Company limited by guarantee and registered in Wales and England 6837284. Registered office address Ground Floor, Mariners House, Trident Court, East Moors Road, Cardiff CF24 5TD. © Age Cymru 2023

**Note that, when volunteers are in your home, you'll be responsible for ensuring that all necessary insurances and safety procedures are in place to accommodate their visits.**

**Volunteers should meet with residents in communal places in the presence of staff, unless directed by the care home manager.**

## **Check-ins with the project leads**

We'll check in with the volunteers and you on a regular basis to learn about the progress of the initiative and its impact on the home, staff, visitors and the residents. This will be your opportunity to feedback to us and discuss your experiences. Your feedback is a vital tool to move this project forward.

## **Communicating with volunteers**

We're committed to the success of this project and have spent considerable time recruiting volunteers, so we're keen to retain their engagement and enthusiasm for as long as possible!

We hope to help manage any aspects of volunteers' experiences that might negatively impact them. We'll be monitoring the project through feedback sessions from you and them. If a volunteer does choose to leave, we'll do our best to make changes to address and eliminate any reasons that are within our control.

## Hosting Volunteers:

### At the beginning...

- Create a quality volunteer experience
- Greet new volunteers and make sure they feel welcome
- Be prepared for them when they arrive
- Respect them and recognise their commitment
- Provide training and opportunities for them to learn
- Provide organisational support
- Develop a “true believer” in the cause
- **Ensure the volunteer ‘gets more than they give’.**

## Seven ways to keep volunteers engaged and motivated

1. Make them feel needed and appreciated
2. Ensure that what they’re expected to do is achievable
3. Stay connected – communication channels need to work both ways
4. Communicate your expectations
5. Find out what interests them and make appropriate use of their skills
6. Celebrate their success
7. **Make it enjoyable!**

If you require any further information, please contact: [Age Cymru](#)

Age Cymru is a registered charity 1128436. Company limited by guarantee and registered in Wales and England 6837284. Registered office address Ground Floor, Mariners House, Trident Court, East Moors Road, Cardiff CF24 5TD. © Age Cymru 2023

---

Age Cymru is a registered charity 1128436. Company limited by guarantee and registered in Wales and England 6837284. Registered office address Ground Floor, Mariners House, Trident Court, East Moors Road, Cardiff CF24 5TD. © Age Cymru 2023