

Overseas Volunteers at Leonard Cheshire Disability The Orchard - Woolton - Liverpool

Leonard
Cheshire
Disability



What is my role as an Overseas Volunteer

At Leonard Cheshire Disability, we value the role our Overseas Volunteers have in our services throughout the United Kingdom. Due to the length of the placements for overseas volunteers (12 months) volunteers have the opportunity to acquire a range of skills, improve their English, enjoy the best of British culture and life, and develop fulfilling working relationships with our residents, staff and local volunteers which often develop into long-term friendships.

Overseas volunteers are an integral part of the volunteer team here at the Orchard, and they are directly involved in supporting our clients in the social aspects of their lives. Volunteers support residents to access their local communities and other social opportunities further afield, thus promoting independence and helping to improve a person's quality of life.

This means that the role of an overseas volunteer will see them engaging in a wide range of activities both inside and outside of the Orchard.

As a service we openly encourage and promote social activities outside of the home, experience has shown that this social interaction with others builds confidence and promotes a feeling of wellbeing. There is no typical day for volunteers as our services users' individual needs and interests determine what volunteers will be doing on a daily basis.

While supporting people in this way can be a lot of fun, it can also be very challenging as volunteers experience first-hand the everyday issues faced by people with disabilities.

Overseas volunteers will be expected to volunteer no more than 35 hours within a week. They will be entitled to 2 days off per week although these may not necessarily be at the weekend or consecutive. There can be a greater requirement for volunteering at the weekends throughout the summer months.

What opportunities can I expect for training & skills development?

Thorough training on working with vulnerable adults is provided to all our volunteers, including specific information about each person receiving direct support. This information is likely to include the resident's needs, interests, likes and dislikes, etc. Risk assessments ensure that volunteers are not asked to contribute outside of their capability or boundaries.

Volunteers acquire a range of knowledge, skills and experience including a greater understanding of the issues affecting disabled people. They gain improved interpersonal skills and the ability to interact with a wide range of people. There will also be an opportunity to learn about the wider activities of the charity, for example our campaigning/lobbying activities and fundraising events.

About The Orchard

The Orchard is a residential home to 27 disabled adults. It is a purpose built building set within its own grounds, situated in a leafy suburb of Liverpool called Woolton, it is approximately 5 miles outside of the city centre, transport links to and from the city centre and other surrounding areas, both rail and bus, are excellent. The City centre itself has great heritage and boasts many magnificent buildings, museums, art galleries etc, a lively night life scene and a large student community.

Local facilities: Woolton village is a ten minute walk away.

There is also easy access to shopping malls, cinema's, bars and restaurants.

Liverpool waterfront is home to the world famous Albert Dock and annually attracts millions of tourists to the city.

Liverpool Services

Other than the Orchard, Leonard Cheshire Disability has a supported living service in Liverpool City centre.

There is also Freshfields in Formby, a nursing and residential service; it is easily reached via a 30 minute train journey. They also host overseas volunteers, who more often than not become friends with those at the Orchard.

Expectations & Accommodation

Volunteers are expected to comply with Leonard Cheshire policy & procedures & codes of conduct. Failure to comply with this could result in the programme being terminated.

Volunteers are expected to behave in a socially responsible way, and in consideration to fellow staff, residents and volunteers.

The accommodation provided is within the service and includes a lounge area with a kitchenette, a shared bathroom/shower and two single bedrooms for the overseas volunteers. There is a third bedroom and this is used by the team leader who is on sleepover duty. Overnight guests can be permitted on a temporary basis, and always with the prior permission of the service manager. Visitors staying for longer than three nights are encouraged to use one of the local Guest houses or hotels.

This is a year-long placement and volunteers are expected to commit to the service for the whole duration of their project.

Volunteer Profile

It is important that the volunteers are eager to learn the role and have an interest in working with people with disability. It can be demanding and emotionally difficult to support people and will require patience, empathy, understanding and confidence. It is therefore an advantage if the volunteers have some experience with and/or exposure to disability prior to their placement so they have better idea of what to expect.

It is essential that the volunteers have a sufficient grasp of English to carry out a conversation, read and understand policies & procedures and follow basic instructions. It is particularly important that from a health and safety perspective, we can ensure that volunteers follow all procedures in place for their own and service users' safety.

It is helpful if volunteers have interests they are willing to share with the residents and staff through activities and one-to-one conversations. Furthermore, we are looking for volunteers with a proactive attitude, and willingness to try new activities and encourage residents to do the same.

Service Users and Volunteers' tasks

The people who use our services can have either complex needs or physical disabilities or a combination of both. Training is provided including specific training in manual handling and communication. Leonard Cheshire Disability does not provide support to anyone under the age of 18. Each service operates on a Person Centred Planning (PCP) basis and therefore the input of service users is essential when arranging the EVS timetable.

Volunteers will support the activities team in planning and delivering their programme providing new ideas and energy to it. The participant will also be able to support residents and day care users on a one-to-one basis, which will allow for more independent and individual living for the residents. Volunteers are not to take part in activities that are staff tasks, they therefore will not be assisting with eating and drinking or taking part in personal care.

In order to achieve the overall aim, the following tasks will be at the core of the project:

- To introduce new activities to the activities programme (with some limitations according to health and safety regulations)
- To support residents with the activities they wish to do inside and outside the care home
- To support residents in fulfilling personal long-term goals
- To support fundraising efforts to raise funds that will support the above mentioned aim
- To raise disability awareness for the participants and in the local community.

John Jones

Volunteer Coordinator

john.jones@leonardcheshire.org