

# Voluntary Action Leeds

for the voluntary and community sector in Leeds



## 2010 Leeds Year of Volunteering

This VA-L service is part-funded by Leeds City Council through the Infrastructure Support Fund





## 2010 Leeds Year of Volunteering



Welcome to our new-look newsletter. You'll see that it's changed in many ways.

The theme of this newsletter is Volunteering. We've been actively involved in the support and development of volunteers for many years and it will continue to be one of our key service delivery areas. As many will know we're working with key partners across Leeds, including Leeds City Council in the 2010 Leeds Year of Volunteering, visit [www.leedsyearofvolunteering.org.uk](http://www.leedsyearofvolunteering.org.uk). This is the first year of a three-year programme soon to be followed with the European Year of volunteering in 2011 and the Olympics in 2012.

Results from the first half of the 2010 Leeds Year of Volunteering have shown a significant increase in both the numbers of people registering as volunteers with Leeds Volunteer Centre and the numbers of organisations registering who need volunteers, all of which is having a very positive impact on Leeds and its communities. Finally, if you haven't yet had the chance please sign up to our E-News for the latest in jobs, news and training. You can sign up at [www.val.org.uk](http://www.val.org.uk).

"Results from the first half of the 2010 Leeds Year of Volunteering have shown a significant increase in both the numbers of people registering as volunteers... and the number of organisations registering who need volunteers."

### VA-L News

#### Leeds Volunteer Centre now open Fridays

Leeds Volunteer Centre based in Leeds City Centre is now open Monday to Friday 10am-3pm. If you're looking to volunteer visit Volunteer Centre Leeds, Enterprise House, 12 St Paul's Street, Leeds LS1 2LE.



Would your organisation like more volunteers? Register your interest at [www.val.org.uk](http://www.val.org.uk).

#### Au Revoir Linda

Linda Boadle, PSI Development Worker at VA-L retired at the end of August. Linda said, "I really have had a great time over the last five years. The Network is up and running with 54 member groups, we have a regular Newsletter and an excellent website. I have met people I would not otherwise have met and have enjoyed their success. I am responsible for organising a

first half of the 2010 Leeds Year of Volunteering have shown a significant increase in both the numbers of people registering as volunteers with Leeds Volunteer Centre and the numbers of organisations registering who need volunteers, all of which is having a very positive impact on Leeds and its communities. Finally, if you haven't yet had the chance please sign up to our E-News for the latest in jobs, news and training. You can sign up at [www.val.org.uk](http://www.val.org.uk).

**E-News**  
To receive our free E-News bulletin visit [www.val.org.uk](http://www.val.org.uk)

world record - for the largest number of wheelchair users on ice! Not many people get to do that in their work. The Network is now well established and there is plenty still to do - and I shall enjoy being part of it rather than being responsible for it. Thank you to everyone who has made the last five years the best possible work." VA-L will miss Linda and we wish her well for a relaxing retirement.

#### Training Programme

Our new hard copy training programme is out now. For

**Richard Jackson**  
Chief Officer  
[richard.jackson@val.org.uk](mailto:richard.jackson@val.org.uk)  
0113 297 7920

your copy contact [tina.ashby@val.org.uk](mailto:tina.ashby@val.org.uk) or call 0113 297 7944. For full training course details, online booking and availability visit [www.val.org.uk](http://www.val.org.uk).

#### Room Hire

At VA-L we have two meeting rooms available for hire at very competitive rates. There is free parking available and we are 1.5 miles from Leeds City Centre, with easy access from the motorway network. Visit [www.val.org.uk](http://www.val.org.uk), call 0113 297 7920 or email [maxine.woods@val.org.uk](mailto:maxine.woods@val.org.uk).



## Update

## Vetting and Barring Scheme for volunteers

Tom Holden, Leeds City Council's Safeguarding Officer writes about the current situation on the Vetting and Barring Scheme.

The Vetting and Barring Scheme was established as part of the previous government's response to the murders of two schoolgirls by school caretaker Ian Huntley in Soham, Cambridgeshire, in 2002. It is designed to close loopholes that allowed inappropriate people to work with children, and as such is designed to be much more robust than only undertaking Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) checks.

The new system is also designed to replace the current barring lists in England and Wales (Protection of Children Act (PoCA) List, List 99 - the list of those prohibited from working with children in education - and the Protection of Vulnerable Adults (PoVA) List).

The Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA) was created as part of the new scheme in order to work with the CRB to help ensure that there "is no known reason why individuals who work or wish to work or volunteer with children or vulnerable adults shouldn't do so." The ISA's role will be to make independent barring decisions and place or remove individuals on either their Children's Barred List or Vulnerable Adults' Barred List, or both.

The new scheme was to have been phased in, but the new coalition Government has put a halt to the scheme at the moment. It states in its document "The Coalition: Our Programme for Government" that its aim is to "review the criminal records and vetting and barring regime and scale it back to common sense levels."

"At the moment there is no indication as to when the Government will have concluded its review, but watch this space!"

In order to deliver this promise and carry out the remodelling, the Vetting and Barring Scheme will be halted. The first phase of registration was due to commence on 26 July 2010, but will not now go ahead.

Although the Scheme is halted whilst the Government undertakes its review, new safeguarding regulations introduced in October 2009 continue to apply. These include:

- A person who is barred from working with children or vulnerable adults will be break-

ing the law if they work or volunteer, or try to work or volunteer with those groups.

- An organisation which knowingly employs someone who is barred to work with those groups will also be breaking the law.

- If your organisation works with children or vulnerable adults and you dismiss a member of staff or a volunteer

because they have harmed a child or vulnerable adult, or you would have done so if they had not left, you must tell the Independent Safeguarding Authority.

- In October 2009, the right to ask for an enhanced CRB disclosure was extended to all those who employ or use volunteers in types of activity called 'Regulated Activity'. (Defined as any activity of a specified nature which involves contact with children or vulnerable adults within certain periods, or any activity allowing contact with children or vulnerable adults that is in a specified place frequently or intensively.)

- This right remains, and you should continue to carry out appropriate pre-recruitment checks, including CRB checks where appropriate or required by law.

The Independent Safeguarding Authority will continue to carry out its work as an independent decision making body as well as continuing to maintain the barred lists. They will also continue to accept referrals.

At the moment there is no indication as to when the Government will have concluded its review, but watch this space! For further information contact the Vetting and Barring Scheme on 0300 123 1111 or visit [www.isa.gov.org.uk](http://www.isa.gov.org.uk). More specifically you can download a booklet about the scheme from [www.isa.gov.org.uk/PDF/VBS\\_guidance\\_ed1\\_2010.pdf](http://www.isa.gov.org.uk/PDF/VBS_guidance_ed1_2010.pdf) which gives full and specific details about the scheme, but remember this is likely to be amended once the review has been concluded.



[tom.holden@leeds.gov.uk](mailto:tom.holden@leeds.gov.uk)  
0113 395 1334

## Ask Kathy

### Advice and Guidance from VA-L's Small Groups Development Worker



The next edition in Kathy's popular series of stories about five chums...

#### KIRREN ISLE BOARD MEETING

##### Agenda Item: Complaint from a Volunteer

DICK [Vice Chair]: It's beyond me why somebody would complain when we have given them the opportunity to do something useful.

JULIAN [Chair]: Why don't we find out what the complaint is about and then discuss. Anne, could you please read out the relevant part of the letter.

ANNE [Secretary]: I am glad that you asked for the relevant part because the letter is eight pages long!

DICK: I say.

JULIAN: We would rather you didn't Dick.

ANNE: I have taken it upon myself to sum up the volunteer's complaints.

GEORGE [Treasurer]: Well, get on with it old thing; I can't wait for a ginger beer.

ANNE: There is too much for the volunteers to do and there aren't enough of them to do it. Nobody knows what they are supposed to do anyway. The volunteers are not getting any expenses whatsoever.

DICK: That's a cheek.

JULIAN: I think this is serious.

ANNE: There is no support for our volunteers. A volunteer turned up and couldn't get in because there was a fierce dog stood in front of the door.

GEORGE: How could anyone describe Timmy as "fierce"?

JULIAN: This is not good. Any more please?

ANNE: Well, the volunteer sums up the situation as "total chaos".

JULIAN: We really need to sort this out as a matter of priority. One of us needs to take responsibility.

ANNE: I would like to take this on.

JULIAN: Very well, what I suggest is that you get in touch with Natasha Mort at Leeds Volunteer Centre for advice and support.

ANNE: First of all I will check out the VA-L website and see what I can find out about volunteering procedures there.

JULIAN: I'll write to the volunteer to express our concern and to reassure her that the issues will be addressed as a matter of urgency.

GEORGE: Time for a ginger beer!

## Rural Leeds

The Metropolitan District of Leeds covers a far greater area than just the city of Leeds and so does VA-L. We understand and respect the individual identity of towns such as Otley and Wetherby and the villages of Arthington, Harewood, East Keswick, Scarcroft, Bardsey, Linton,

group and social enterprise in the District. We want to work closely with parish councils to ensure that rural issues are being addressed. As rural communities know only too well their issues are different. Obvious examples are: access to public transport, fuel costs, availability of broadband, flood and drainage issues and so it goes on. We don't expect you to travel miles to see us. VA-L's Small Groups Development Worker can arrange to meet you in your area. We don't expect you to travel miles to carry



"We don't expect you to travel miles to see us."

Clifford, Thorp Arch, Thorner, Aberford, Micklefield, Ledsham, Allerton Bywater and Methley to name just a few!

Our services are available to every church hall, parish centre, community centre, community group, voluntary organisation, charity, faith

out a funding search - we can do that on your behalf. We don't expect you to travel miles for training - we can arrange bespoke training in your area. We are here to serve you! So why not get in touch.

Kathy Faulks  
Small Groups Development Worker  
kathy.faulks@val.org.uk  
Tel: 0113 297 7920



### Spotlight on the Funder

#### Leeds Community Foundation

**What type of projects do you fund?** All of our grants are open to locally based community and voluntary groups who seek to improve the circumstances of people, particularly when the beneficiaries are living in economically or socially excluded areas. Projects must be based in Leeds or be for the benefit of residents in Leeds. We encourage applications to support grass-root community activities of small, community-based and locally run groups that manage themselves, have an active participation from volunteers and usually have minimal cash reserves.

**What advice would you give people who want to apply?** Make sure you read and understand the eligibility criteria and conditions of the grant you are applying to. If you're unsure if you qualify to apply please contact us. Make use of the free advice and guidance for your project that local agencies can provide (e.g. Voluntary Action-Leeds, West Yorkshire Community Accounting Service). Prepare your applications with plenty of time - try not to leave them to the last minute!

**Are there any funds that are undersubscribed?** We currently would like to encourage

applications for the Grassroots Grants programme (grants up to £5,000, deadline 1 October) and the 2010 Leeds Year of Volunteering Community Activity Grants (£250 for community groups and individuals and Hesco Bastion Fund (grants up to £10,000 for projects based in particular postcodes from East and South Leeds).

**What funds are currently available?** As well as the grants mentioned above, we have the International Personal Finance Fund (up to £2,500) and the Keepmoat Fund (up to £1,500).

**How do people apply to you for grants?** Grant application guidelines and application forms are available from our website. Applicants may choose to apply using our online application form or contact us to request an application pack to be sent by email or post.



[www.leedscommunityfoundation.org.uk](http://www.leedscommunityfoundation.org.uk)  
 Carlos Chavez - Grants Manager  
 Tel: 0113 242 2426  
[carlos@leedscommunityfoundation.org.uk](mailto:carlos@leedscommunityfoundation.org.uk)

### Funding News

#### Peoples Postcode Trust

The next round for the People's Postcode Trust in England will open on Monday 11 October.  
[www.postcode-trust.org.uk](http://www.postcode-trust.org.uk)

#### Parks for People

Parks for People is a Heritage Lottery Fund programme. Grants from £250,000 to £5 million for projects involving urban or rural green spaces designed for informal recreation and enjoyment are available. Capital work and projects may be funded.  
<http://bit.ly/parksforpeople>

#### Foyle Foundation

The Foyle Foundation Small Grants Scheme supports smaller, grass-roots and local charities in the UK with projects that have the potential to make a significant difference to their work.  
[www.foylefoundation.org.uk/small-grants-scheme](http://www.foylefoundation.org.uk/small-grants-scheme)

#### Golsoncott Foundation

Grants of up to £5,000 for Third Sector organisations carrying out projects in the fields of fine arts and music. Deadline: 31 October  
 For more details write to the Golsoncott Foundation, 53 St Leonards Road, Exeter EX2 4LS or call 01392 252855.

#### Sainsbury Family Trusts

Grants are available from a number of Sainsbury Family Charitable Trusts each Trust has a different focus from environmental education to palliative care.  
[www.sfct.org.uk/trusts.html](http://www.sfct.org.uk/trusts.html)

#### Leeds City Council Grants

The 'Small Grants to Voluntary, Community and Faith Organisations' guide produced by Leeds City Council was updated in July 2010.  
<http://bit.ly/leedsgrants>

For more funding information visit the Funding Support section of our website  
[www.val.org.uk](http://www.val.org.uk)

**Ask Kathy**  
 Advice for groups in Leeds  
[www.val.org.uk/askkathy.php](http://www.val.org.uk/askkathy.php)



## Mediation Leeds

Julia Edmunds, Director of Services

Jane Robinson talks to Julia Edmunds (pictured), Director of Services at Mediation Leeds based in the City Centre.

**Can you tell me a little of the history of Mediation Leeds?**

Mediation Leeds was set up as volunteer based organisation in 1988 by a group of concerned residents in Burley who wanted to set up a community mediation service. We've expanded since then but remain a volunteer based organisation. Our focus remains on neighbour mediation - community mediation - although Mediation Leeds now conducts workplace mediation and homelessness prevention mediation.

"We're looking for volunteers who are interested in helping people to find ways of resolving their own problems."

**How many staff and volunteers do you have?**

We have seven part-time paid workers and around 35 volunteers. Mediation Leeds trains local people in

conflict resolution skills, primarily to deliver our service as trained mediators. However, skills gained are transferable to other areas of life.

**How do you recruit volunteers?**

Once a year we run a training course where we train anywhere between eight and sixteen participants. The training is accredited to OCN level 3, which is an equivalent standard to an A-Level. The training generally runs one day a week over seven weeks. The training is very participatory, it starts

with people's own experience of conflict and how they deal with it. Because it's accredited there is

also some written work. Once the volunteers have completed their training they start mediating. Our volunteers work in pairs so a newly trained volunteer would be teamed with an experienced volunteer.

**What kind of volunteers do you need?**

We're looking for volunteers who are interested in people resolving their own problems rather than giving advice or suggesting solutions. We need a level of commitment for at least one year and volunteers need to be willing to complete our accredited training. Our next training takes place this Autumn.

**What kind of mediation work do you provide?**

The vast majority of

our work is neighbour mediation and takes place out in the community in people's homes. Our mediators take responsibility to contact the parties involved, arrange to initially meet each neighbour individually and then aim to get the neighbours to a joint meeting at a later date. This meeting is informal but facilitated by our volunteers. For us a positive outcome is for the dispute to be resolved in some way.

**How many cases do you deal with each year?**

Last year we had 250 cases altogether. The neighbour cases make up about 75 per cent of our total cases. The remaining cases are either workplace mediation or homelessness prevention mediation.

**What is your success rate?**

Last year in neighbour cases the success rate was around 75 per cent. In homeless prevention cases 78 per cent and in workplace mediation 100 per cent.

**Why is workplace mediation so successful?**

In the workplace people have a vested interest in staying in work and keeping their job. Problems at work are often due to misunderstandings and a breakdown in communication. Mediation works best the earlier the intervention, before the problem has become entrenched. Mediation takes place over one day in a neutral location and generally people are keen to resolve the problem.

**Can you tell me a little more about homeless prevention mediation?**

In homeless prevention media-

## project profile



Mediation Leeds has been providing mediation since 1988 and is one of the longest established mediation services in the UK.

Mediation Leeds can be contacted in the following ways:

Write to: **Oxford Chambers  
Oxford Place  
Leeds  
LS1 3AX**

Call: 0113 242 4110

Email: [info@mediationleeds.org.uk](mailto:info@mediationleeds.org.uk)

[www.mediationleeds.org.uk](http://www.mediationleeds.org.uk)



Mediation Leeds volunteer training

tion we work with Leeds City Council. The vast majority of the cases are disputes between tenants and landlords. We work with those parties to try to resolve whatever the dispute is. The idea being to try and keep the tenant within the tenancy.

**Do you offer other services?**

We are an accredited OCN centre. We provide the accredited mediation skills training which is generally provided for our own volunteers but we can also provide that training for external agencies. We can provide bespoke conflict resolution skills training for other organisations as well.

**Do you work in partnership with other organisations?**

We worked closely last year with another community mediation service that works in a different part of the region. Last year we worked together to jointly offer our volunteer training programme.

We also offer a more proactive service in partnership with organisation like Stop Hate UK and Together for Peace to work around community cohesion. We're currently working around breaking down

barriers, neighbourhood management and communication in

Gipton. We're piloting a particular approach and it's proving to be successful.

**What do you enjoy most about the work you do?**

I am very fortunate to have an excellent staff and volunteer team who have a very high level of commitment to the organisation. Staff and volunteers have a real passion here for mediation and conflict resolution.

**What do you find most challenging?**

Funding. We've been through a big change in the last five years or so. In 2004 the Board decided to develop a more sustainable approach to funding and successfully secured a loan and grant

"In the workplace people have a vested interest in staying in work and keeping their job... Mediation works best the earlier the intervention, before the problem has become entrenched."

support from FutureBuilders England to help with this transition. As a result, we now have agreements with many of the key providers of social housing in Leeds and the surrounding area. We have a Big Lottery grant from Reaching Communities for three years to support our core work in the most deprived communities in Leeds. Despite the challenges - all our contracts are renewed annually - Mediation Leeds continues to develop, and continues to support people in conflict in Leeds.

## Volunteers and the law

Supplied by Chris Billington and Joanna Sanderson at Wrigleys Solicitors LLP. Chris is Chair of the VA-L Trustee Board and advises on all matters of governance, contracts and employment.



Volunteering can bring many advantages to the volunteer, to the organisation the volunteer works with, to work colleagues and to the beneficiary of the services assisted through the additional skills, experience or time given freely. It is easy to assume that there are no downsides, but no relationship

general duty of care and a statutory duty under Health & Safety rules which requires reasonable steps to be taken to keep volunteers safe, including making risk assessments. Breach of Health & Safety legislation is a criminal offence.

Whilst volunteers aren't protected by discrimination rules in the same way as employees,

it is open for volunteers to claim that they have been discriminated against as a service user.

Discrimination

rules are being applied to the provision of goods or services. A volunteer can claim that an Employer provides a volunteering service which would be subject to protection against discrimination.

Bullying and harassment are not limited to discrimination. Volunteers can claim assault (for threats of physical harm), battery (for actual physical harm) and under the Protection from Harassment Act for other unwanted conduct, with sanctions including fines and imprisonment.

Volunteers also have protection under data protection legislation. A volunteer's personal data should not be stored without legitimate reason or for longer than necessary and a volunteer has the right to know what information is held and why. Breaches can lead to a fine of up to £500,000.

Whilst Employers are liable for the actions of their employees, the

position for volunteers is not so clear. However, a court can hold a volunteer to be acting as agent on behalf of the Employer, making an Employer liable. Whilst this may be of only indirect benefit to the volunteer it reinforces the need to ensure that volunteers are properly trained, supervised and supported in their work.

Some unions will now accept volunteers as members and can bring pressure to bear on Employers. The unions' first role was to protect employees at a time when there was limited protection for them.

Ultimately, a volunteer who has been poorly treated is more likely to raise concerns about the way in which an

**"Volunteers add a great deal of value to any organisation and it is to everyone's benefit that they are properly managed and value their work."**

Employer is managed and services provided to the Charity Commission, to principal funders or to key stakeholders. Whilst none of these can help the volunteer, they can bring pressure to bear on an Employer if the complaint identifies any governance or contractual issue.

Volunteers add a great deal of value to any organisation and it is to everyone's benefit that they are properly managed and their work is valued. It is wrong to assume that a disgruntled volunteer has to take it or leave.

**"A volunteer's personal data should not be stored without legitimate reason or for longer than necessary and a volunteer has the right to know what information is held and why."**

is risk free and relationships that don't work out or worse, which are abused, can do more harm than good.

Many articles on the subject of volunteers will warn employers of the potential risks volunteers pose and of the need to ensure that volunteers are kept in their place using volunteer agreements and by not treating them as equal to employees, particularly through payments or other benefits or by being strict about working hours.

Volunteers do have a different legal status and different rights than employees or workers. Workers have basic legal rights such as holiday pay, limits on working time and protection against discrimination. Employees have additional protection against unfair dismissal and a right to redundancy pay.

This doesn't mean that Employers can get away with poor treatment of volunteers, but it is more difficult for volunteers to hold poor Employers to account.

Employers do have both a

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 0113 244 6100.  
[www.wrigleys.co.uk](http://www.wrigleys.co.uk)

A series focusing on people working in Third Sector organisations in Leeds.

**Leeds BME Network at Leeds Voice**

Annette Morris (AM) & David Odunukwe (DO) who jointly manage the Leeds BME Network tell us about themselves and their work.



1. Give a brief outline of your experience and career path?

**AM** I have been a singer/song-writer for over 30 years and have performed with many famous artists. I have worked for People in Action UK for 13 years and now work with them part-time. Last year I was appointed BME Network Co-ordinator, at Leeds Voice.

**DO** I've worked in the Third Sector since 2005, but have been involved on a voluntary basis since 1985. Prior to this role I ran a specialist infrastructure support organisation in Bradford.

2. Which areas/client groups does your organisation support? We support emerging and grassroot Black Minority Ethnic groups in Leeds and help organisations with capacity building.

3. What are the most common issues that you work with? Language barriers and understanding how the city works for BME communities. Access to useful information and services is a problem. We help groups understand funding, governance, project management, strategic advocacy and regional liaison.

4. What do you enjoy most about your job?

**AM** I enjoy the challenges it brings working with different groups of people and supporting them individually. I really like my work as I am able to make a difference to the people I work with through the support the Network is able to provide.

**DO** People progressing.

5. What do you most dislike about your job?

**AM** Seeing BME groups and organisations fail because they didn't get the support or information they needed to develop themselves.

**DO** People still struggling.

BME Network, Stringer House, 34 Lupton Street, Leeds, LS10 2QW • 0113 297 7949 • annette.morris@leedsvoice.org.uk • david.odunukwe@leedsvoice.org.uk



**Leeds Learning Disabilities Forum**

Kath Lindley Manager of Leeds Learning Disabilities Forum (LLDF) tells us about herself and her job.



1. Give a brief outline of your experience and career path? Most of my working life has been in the public sector. I started at Wakefield Council, I then worked for Government Office in Leeds, and Local Government Yorkshire & the Humber. When the opportunity to work for LLDF came up I jumped at the chance to work for a charity. In and amongst all this I took some time off to have four children, all of whom keep me extremely busy and are the reason I now work part-time!

2. Which areas/client groups does your organisation support? Our members are organisations supporting people with learning disabilities. Most of these are based in and around Leeds, but we do have members as far afield as Manchester.

"When opportunity to work for LLDF came up I jumped at the chance to work for a charity"

3. What are the most common issues that you work with? The Forum provides support in a number of ways - we run events and networking opportunities; we provide information via our news bulletins and we give a voice to people with learning disabilities via the Partnership Board.

4. What do you enjoy most about your job? Everything! Some of the people with learning disabilities I meet are truly inspirational and a real joy to work with.

5. What do you most dislike about your job? I suppose it's not being able to deliver everything I'd like to do, but I am trying to pack in as much as possible!

LLDF, 26 St. Michael's Road, Headingley, Leeds, LS6 3AW • 07576 952 527  
kath.lindley@ldforum.org.uk • www.ldforum.org.uk





September : Volunteering for a Safer Leeds

## Why volunteer?

**Natasha Mort,**  
Volunteering  
Development Manager



The 2010 Leeds Year of Volunteering is all about raising the profile of volunteering in Leeds and showing not only what volunteering can give to the city but what it can also do for the volunteer themselves. We have recently 'lost' four volunteers at the volunteer centre - all of whom have improved their skills, employability and knowledge of the workplace by volunteering with us and all of whom have now gone onto paid positions.

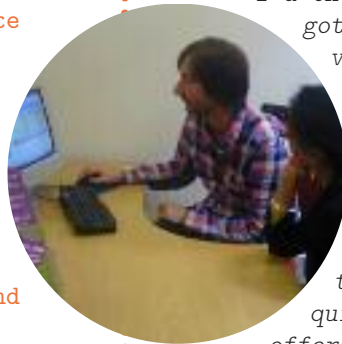
One of these is William Gray who now has a paid position at the Volunteer Centre.

Since graduating I'd spent much of my adult life working for a very well known company.

After my contract was terminated I felt it was time for a change so I rejected their offer of a new role. With unemployment rising I worried I'd made a foolish rather than a brave decision especially when I realised I'd spent the best part of a year unemployed. When my Job Centre advisor suggested I try volunteer work I was happy to give it a go.

"I know mine is not the only experience proving what volunteering can do to bolster your employment credentials and make the future seem much, much brighter."

I'd thought about volunteering many times but never got round to it, something I now hear new volunteers say all the time! Thankfully my advisor took the first step for me and referred me to Leeds Volunteer Centre. When an enthusiastic Natasha Mort asked whether I could help out in the centre itself I agreed to three hours a week.



However it wasn't long before I was willing to work whenever I was needed. I had very quickly become enthused by what the Centre offers and impressed with what a positive difference the work we do makes to people's lives. When the position for a new Volunteer Centre Co-ordinator was advertised I was determined to give it my best shot and was ecstatic to be chosen. We cannot say to prospective volunteers taking up a voluntary placement guarantees a job but I know mine is not the only experience proving what volunteering can do to bolster your employment credentials and make the future seem much, much brighter.

**William Gray** (pictured above at Leeds Volunteer Centre)

**Leeds Volunteer Centre**  
Enterprise House  
12 St Paul's Street  
Leeds LS1 2LE  
0113 395 0405  
volunteering@val.org.uk  
Open Mon-Fri 10am-3pm



### September

#### Volunteering for a Safer Leeds

16 September: Marketplace event - Briggate, with Street Chaplains, Stop Hate, Victim Support, Neighbourhood Watch, Police Specials and police volunteers.

### October

#### Volunteering for All

7 October: St. Chad's, Headingley 10am-4.30pm. Launch of 'Making Volunteering Inclusive' DVD and leaflet.

### November

#### Children and Young People's Volunteering

9 November: West North West Area Management Awards, 5pm- 9pm, Civic Hall.

For more information about upcoming events for 2010 Leeds Year of Volunteering visit [www.leedsyearofvolunteering.org.uk](http://www.leedsyearofvolunteering.org.uk)



## Oblong Trustees

Oblong is based in Woodhouse and is looking for Trustees with the following skills:

- Budgeting and financial management
- Community centre management
- Mental health
- Managing environmental projects
- Running further education courses

E: [info@oblongleeds.org.uk](mailto:info@oblongleeds.org.uk)

T: 0113 245 9610

Registered Charity No. 1120379

## VA-L Facilitation

provided by Kathy Faulks

**Experienced Facilitator**

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**VA-L Facilitation - the hassle-free way to run your away-day. Available to all.**

**For more information email**

**[kathy.faulks@val.org.uk](mailto:kathy.faulks@val.org.uk)**

**or call 0113 297 7920**

## Sector Jobs

**For current vacancies**

**[www.val.org.uk/jobs.php](http://www.val.org.uk/jobs.php)**

**To advertise a job**

**[www.val.org.uk/advertisejob.php](http://www.val.org.uk/advertisejob.php)**

**Advertising is free  
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Adverts and articles: Thursday 18 November

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Posting Date: Friday 3 December

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