

Volunteers helping out at a HLF project

Volunteers at National Lottery-funded projects have given over 150 million hours of their time, which is the equivalent of over 17,000 years.

This Volunteers' Week, HLF has relaunched the Changing Lives campaign with the story of Victoria - who volunteered with RNIB Scotland on the HLF-supported Seeing Our History project.

Around the country hundreds of volunteers support National Lottery projects providing help, guidance and often skilled labour. Coming from many different walks of life, volunteers assist projects to learn new skills, improve their health and wellbeing, and help preserve a heritage site that is close to their heart. Each volunteer has a different reason to join.

Digging for change

Volunteers such as Richard Bennett. He was in the army when he was hit by an improvised explosive device (IED) while in Afghanistan. The device caused a spinal injury and he was medically discharged.

[Quote=Richard Bennett] “Heritage is not just there to look at but to really get involved with. To use our past to help build our future.”[/quote]

After returning home he moved from job to job while suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder. Trying to turn around his life he looked to Wessex Archaeology who were working with injured service men and women excavating a Bronze Age site on Salisbury Plain.

This proved to be a turning point for Richard who used the dig as a springboard to getting his life back on track and reconnect with his family.

Spreading your wings

Tracy Norris was another person whose life is dramatically different thanks to a heritage project.

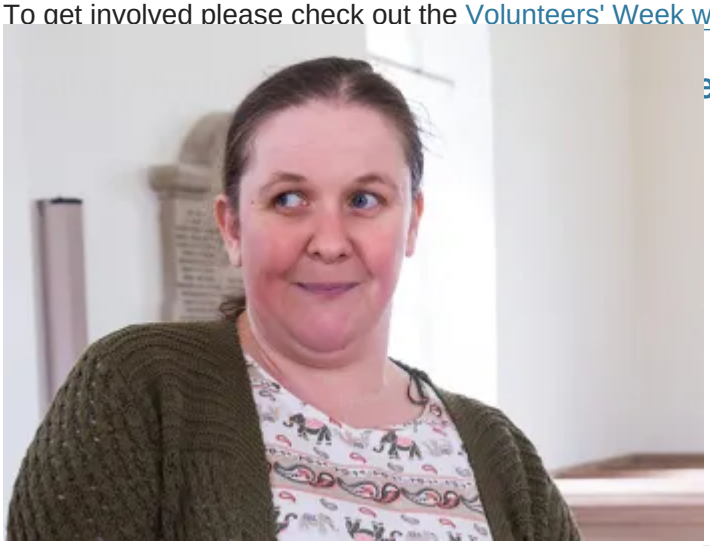
[quote=Tracy Norris]“I feel so very at peace when I am at the project and, as my family are from South Wales, I feel as if I have come home.”[/quote]

Having always had an interest in raptors and osprey's she worked as a GP in Hampshire. After visiting a project in North Wales she decided to move her house and medical practice nearby in order to allow her to become a regular volunteer at a HLF-supported osprey project. This was a volunteering first for 51 year old Tracy and one she has not looked back on.

#Volunteersweek

To celebrate the fantastic help and contributions that volunteers make to the community, there are a number of events taking place between 1-7 June. Ranging from taster sessions to coffee mornings, there are close to 250 different events happening over the UK.

To get involved please check out the Volunteers' Week website.



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ped Victoria’s future





life for GP

Changing lives: ex-marine discovers therapeutic value of archaeology