

MEET THE CLB TEAM

A LOOK INTO THE TEAM'S WORK

Meet...
Diane Diamond,
Volunteering
Services
Co-ordinator



The Role

Q Hi Diane, please tell us about your role at Community Links Bromley.

A I've worked at Community Links Bromley for almost 23 years, in various different roles and over that time I've gained a great deal of knowledge about Bromley's voluntary and community sector.

For around 15 years I have been leading the work CLB does in relation to volunteering. This involves offering services to organisations who need volunteers and to local residents wanting to volunteer.

As you can imagine, volunteering has changed over those years but there are two important things that remain the same:

- volunteer involving organisations need volunteers
- local residents want to give their time as volunteers

The challenge is getting the needs and wants of both parties to match.

CLB recently completed a volunteering strategy for the London Borough of Bromley, which reflects those wants and needs and sets out ideas on how these can be met. Over the next few years we hope to put many of the ideas into practice.

The Role (continued)

Q What part of your role do you enjoy the most?

A I particularly enjoy working with individuals who are responsible for the recruitment and management of volunteers. Volunteer Managers/Co-ordinators come with a very wide range of skills and knowledge around managing a volunteer programme and to see someone develop and grow a programme of recruiting, training and assigning volunteers is extremely satisfying.

It's one reason why I enjoy running the Volunteer Manager/Co-ordinator's Forum. It's great to see a group of people with the aim of improving their volunteer programme get together and share their own good practice and advice with one another.

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Volunteer opportunities

Q What are the most popular opportunities Bromley residents look for?

A Everyone is looking for something different and for different reasons. An individual's motivation to volunteer can vary enormously from someone wanting to meet new people to someone looking to gain experience for their c.v.

There are, however, some roles that fill more quickly than others. This is not because they are more popular but because there are fewer of them.

For example, if an organisation is looking for befrienders for the elderly they may need many different volunteers with different interests and knowledge to match with many different socially isolated local residents. This then becomes an 'on-going' search for suitable volunteers.

On the other hand, an organisation may be looking for an administrator with very specific skills. This role often only needs 3 or 4 volunteers and can be filled very quickly.

Q Are there opportunities for people with learning difficulties?

A The sad fact is that there are many people with life experiences that mean they face barriers to volunteering. This may be because of a learning difficulty, mental health difficulty, cultural difficulty or physical difficulty. These factors are looked at in the Bromley Volunteering Strategy CLB produced and we are working towards addressing many of those barriers through engaging with volunteer involving organisations and looking at different ways of encouraging organisations to engage with everyone in the local community.

Volunteer opportunities (continued)

If a local person is facing a barrier to volunteering I am happy to work with them on a one-to-one basis.

How to find support

Q Where can members of the public or organisations request support for volunteering?

A If you are interested in volunteering, you can search our volunteering database online for available roles in Bromley. If you would like an appointment to discuss which volunteer role might be most suitable for you, visit our Volunteer Centre online for support. [Volunteer – Community Links Bromley](#).

We provide an online volunteer recruitment tool, appointments for volunteer management advice and regular events and workshops to discuss volunteer management. Details of our upcoming workshops are routinely published on our Events page. [Events & Training – Community Links Bromley](#).

To find out how we can support your volunteer-involving organisation, visit us online. [Volunteer-involving organisations – Community Links Bromley](#).

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Life outside work

Q What do you do outside of CLB

A With my 7th grandchild on the way and very elderly parents there isn't a huge amount of time to spare. I do love looking after my garden and watching things grow, although not always very successfully.

Mostly I enjoy the south Kent coast where I have a caravan. There's nothing like letting the wind blow you along a huge sandy beach or the rain thundering down on a caravan roof (provided you're inside with a hot chocolate). Sometimes it's even warm and sunny.

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