



3RD April 2020

Dear All,

As you know we have had to close our services during this unprecedented time. We are very aware that this period of isolation will affect all families in a variety of ways. As volunteers of Grove Cottage your support has meant that we have been able to support children and adults in the community with learning difficulties enjoy social activities and give families much needed respite for over fifty years. Grove Cottage could not run without you.

Currently we do not need your support to help our operations, but we would like to make you aware of a fantastic local initiative called Operation CommUNITY.

This has been set up to support vulnerable people in the local area and clearly this will include our members. With your skills and experience you may wish to continue volunteering and this is a fantastic cause which Grove Cottage wholeheartedly supports. This is a tangible way in which Grove Cottage can support the community.

Please see information from Operation CommUNITY below. You will note that there are a number of roles, including home-based ones. If you would like to volunteer for this wonderful cause please email me on ; om@mencapgrovecottage.org so that I can collate a list of volunteers and confirm; how you currently support Grove Cottage and that you have already been through our selection and training process. For further details on this initiative please click [HERE](#).

Please do hesitate to contact me if you would like further information.

Please take care keep in touch.

Very Best Wishes

Joelin





Considering Volunteering?

For those of you who are considering volunteering, we thank you for offering to support our older, frail, disabled, and vulnerable people and families in Bishop's Stortford and surrounding Villages. Your support will help us to ensure we can prioritise the help that is needed and respond to needs accordingly. Yet, we want to minimise any risks by ensuring we are first and foremost, safeguarding those we are looking to protect and the volunteers. As such, we will only be able to accept support from volunteers who do not fall into any of the following categories:

1. You are experiencing any symptoms of Covid-19 and are therefore required to self-isolate.
2. You are required to social distance yourself.
3. You have an underlying health condition.

If you are not sure if this applies to you, please check the details on the link provided:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-on-social-distancing-and-for-vulnerable-people/guidance-on-social-distancing-for-everyone-in-the-uk-and-protecting-older-people-and-vulnerable-adults>

Yet, before we can register you as a volunteer, it would be helpful for us to know what sort of experience, skills and resources you may have, your availability and whether you have recent DBS checks and/or are 'known and trusted' by a council, health and social care service, voluntary sector organisation, or faith group.

For example, do you have any current or previous experience of working in nursing or social care? Can you drive and or have access to a car? Have you any experience of providing informal care to a friend or family member, and what sort of help you think you could provide, with further training if necessary. If you don't have any experience as above, what help could you offer if we provide training if necessary?

The roles we have available are:

- 1: Shopping for goods, collection of prescriptions and general daily tasks.

2: Drivers, to deliver good, meals and make collections and deliveries as required

(For this level of volunteer support, it is expected that no specialist training would be needed, but we would need to obtain DBS checks. We will also be looking to clarify your availability and ask you to be prepared to coordinate your response).

3: Providing a telephone befriending service to reassure people who may be living alone and whose relatives and friends aren't visiting as normal, to have a chat and provide reassurance and company.

4: To man the telephone system for enquiries regarding shopping needs, daily tasks required and coordinate volunteers to complete these tasks.

(For this level of volunteer support, we will be asking volunteers to complete a short session covering basic safeguarding and telephone befriending training. We would also need to obtain DBS checks, and prioritise those with experience in providing care, guidance or advice or used to working within customer services.)

5: Coordinating volunteering efforts and helping with the logistics of running the services.