

# Southend Borough Libraries Media Release 12th May 2011

## Volunteering Made Easy

**Photo call:** A newly recruited Southend volunteer talks about the benefits of voluntary work.

**Event:** Promotion of a successful volunteer marketing initiative between Volunteer Centre & Southend Libraries

**Date:** Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> May, 14.00pm

**Venue:** Southend Central Library Foyer Excellent photo opportunities are expected and welcomed

An information leaflet produced by **Volunteer Centre Southend (SAVS)** and **Southend Libraries** is proving a real success story with residents. Since September 2009, over 100 people have used this freepost leaflet to sign up for a wide range of community volunteering projects in the Borough.

The leaflet was designed to make it easy for anyone to register with the Volunteer Centre Southend. It also enables anyone to quickly make an appointment to meet Centre staff for an informal chat about volunteering as well as to look at all the different opportunities available.

Libraries now display monthly lists of "Volunteering Opportunities" which highlight local projects needing further volunteers. Leaflets can be picked up from all branches and viewed online at [www.do-it.org.uk](http://www.do-it.org.uk) Free internet access is available at Southend Libraries.

### **Volunteering Made Easy - Vanessa's Story**

Vanessa worked with nursery aged children and when an opportunity arose for her to take a career break and explore new avenues, she thought about volunteering with adults. Whilst in Southend Library she picked up a leaflet about the Volunteer Centre. After looking on their website, she decided to phone and make an appointment with the Volunteer Centre Manager for an informal interview to see how her aspirations could be matched to a position.

Vanessa said *"It was a friendly interview and I felt pleased at the end of it, that perhaps I would be able to use my skills and interests in a quite different setting"*.

Following on from her interview, Vanessa was contacted by her chosen voluntary placement and again attended an interview to discuss what their requirements were and what she was hoping to gain from her time with them.

Vanessa said, *"So my new job was set up as simply as that – not at all a scary experience and I have loved meeting all the new people I have come into contact with. A warm welcome always awaits me and I have really enjoyed the laughter we have shared together each week"*.

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[www.southend.gov.uk/libraries](http://www.southend.gov.uk/libraries)



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She added "Volunteering is a fabulous way of gaining new and rewarding experiences with the added bonus of being able to contribute to our community in a positive and valued way. The volunteering opportunities are vast and we all have a talent to share, companionship and a listening ear being one of the most precious of all. So if you have a little spare time, I would highly recommend getting in touch with SAVS and discovering how you could become involved!"

**Volunteer Centre Southend Manager, Emily Middlemast, said:** "It's great to have this information service available in Southend Libraries. The Volunteer Information leaflet and free internet access has made it even easier for people to see what's on offer and discover the wide range of volunteering work available in their area" adding "volunteering is a great way to meet new friends, gain valuable work experience, boost your CV and make a real contribution to your neighbourhood or local community".

**Notes for editors:**

**Volunteer Centre Southend** offers assistance to those wishing to volunteer and to local groups who are seeking volunteers. The Centre is based at the Southend Association of Voluntary Services (SAVS) Centre at 29-31 Alexandra Street, Southend-on-Sea, SS1 1BW. The service is completely free and our offices can offer a fully accessible and confidential space to discuss your needs.

Not for profit organisations seeking volunteers can also register their volunteering opportunities with the Volunteer Centre Southend. There is no charge for this service. For further details visit [www.savs-southend.org](http://www.savs-southend.org) or call 01702 356060.

**Southend-on-Sea Borough Libraries** is one of the busiest public library services in the UK. Catering for all ages, abilities, interests and needs, the service works together with 100 volunteers from across the Borough to deliver a range of highly valued services to local residents. For more details visit [www.southend.gov.uk/libraries](http://www.southend.gov.uk/libraries)

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