

Full edition

Volunteering guide



Your guide to
getting started as an
Alzheimer's Society
volunteer

Alzheimer's
Society

It will take a society to beat dementia

Contents

Welcome to the team	3
About us	5
Who we are	6
Our values	8
Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging	10
What you can expect from us	11
What we expect from you	14
Settling in and more	18
Your wellbeing	19
Important to remember	23
Learning	28
Staying connected	29
We value everything you do	32
What else can I do?	35
Dementia knowledge	40
Who else can support you with your volunteering	41
Safeguarding for volunteers	43

Welcome to the team



Thank you so much for choosing to volunteer with Alzheimer's Society. We are delighted you are here. Whatever you're doing – from raising money or awareness of dementia, to helping with our services – your time, skills and energy will change lives. Whether you're volunteering once a week, month or year, it all makes a massive difference.

Our volunteers come from all walks of life and have a wide range of experience and perspectives. Collectively, you bring a rich diversity to Alzheimer's Society, and we place enormous value on the individuality which makes you unique. We want to hear your thoughts, so there'll be plenty of opportunity to get involved, have your say and for us to learn from your ideas and opinions.

You offer us the incredible opportunity of reaching out to more people affected by dementia regardless of their background or circumstances. Whatever your reason for volunteering, we want to make sure you enjoy your time with us, to feel that what you do makes a genuine difference and to know just how much we value your wonderful support.

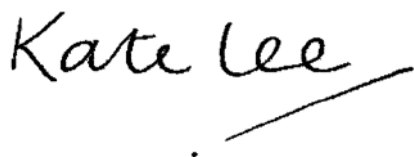
This guide is just one of the ways in which we prepare you to start volunteering. What's included in it has been informed by volunteers like you, so hopefully you'll find it relevant and helpful. Take your time to read through it carefully as it contains lots of important information and remember, it is a useful document for future reference too.

Your volunteer manager is the person who will support you throughout your time with us. As your 'go to' person, they will be on hand as you volunteer to ensure you have everything from training and preparation before you start, to support, information and events once you're underway. They will be able to answer any immediate questions you may have once you've read this guide.

Our aim is to be the charity of choice for people wanting to volunteer to support those affected by dementia. We were founded by volunteers in 1979 and throughout our history volunteers have played, and continue to play, a vital role in all aspects of our work.

We hope your journey with us is enjoyable and fulfilling as we work together to make a difference.

Thank you for volunteering and making a huge difference to people affected by dementia.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kate Lee". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, sweeping underline that extends to the right.

Kate Lee

CEO of Alzheimer's Society

About us

Dementia devastates lives and is the UK's biggest killer. It is the biggest health and social care challenge of our time and currently has no cure.

By 2040, the number of people aged over 65 with dementia in the UK will increase from 1 in 14 to 1 in 12. That means well over 1 million people from every sector of our society will be living with the condition.

At Alzheimer's Society, we're the UK's leading dementia charity and the only one to tackle all aspects of dementia by giving help and hope to people living with dementia today and in the future. We give vital support to people, while also funding groundbreaking research and campaigning to make dementia the priority it should be. Together with our volunteers, we're working towards a world where dementia no longer devastates lives.

We provide expert information, training and support services to all those who need our help – whoever they are, whatever they're going through. We work tirelessly to create a more dementia-friendly society in which people with dementia can live without fear and prejudice.

In all we do, we are informed and inspired by people affected by dementia.

We recognise and value the diversity, uniqueness and individuality that employees and volunteers bring to the Society and will make reasonable adjustments where possible to enable anyone who wants to volunteer with us to do so. Look out for our Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging (EDIB) examples as you read through this guide.

You are supporting an amazing cause and whether you have been touched first-hand by dementia or not, we look forward to engaging your passion, enthusiasm and energy for the work that we do and the difference that we make.

Who we are

We're here for everyone living with dementia.

Our vision

Our vision is a world where dementia no longer devastates lives.

At Alzheimer's Society, we're the UK's leading dementia charity and the only one to tackle all aspects of dementia by giving help and hope to people living with dementia today and in the future. We give vital support to people, while also funding groundbreaking research and campaigning to make dementia the priority it should be. Together with our supporters, we're working towards a world where dementia no longer devastates lives.

As a Society, we are made up of people with dementia, carers, trusted experts, campaigners, researchers and clinicians. We are the UK's largest collective force of people with unparalleled knowledge and over 40 years of experience addressing the biggest challenges facing people living with dementia.

We are proud of what we are trying to achieve and hope that whatever your volunteering role, you will share our passion and enthusiasm.

Our values

Our values tell everyone who we are as an organisation. They make sure our focus is clear for the challenges and opportunities ahead and remind us what we all stand for. Ultimately, the way we all work together has an impact on the people at the heart of our charity – people living with dementia. Our values are evident in what we do, how we do it and how we work together. Volunteers played a vital role in helping us determine and shape our values. They will shape your experience with Alzheimer's Society too.



**Committed to
creating a world
where dementia
no longer
devastates lives.**

Our values



Determined to make a difference

We're passionate, we're focused and we make a lasting impact for everyone living with dementia.



Trusted expert

We're listening, we're learning and we use experience and evidence.



Better together

We're open, we combine our strengths, and we achieve more together.



Compassionate

We're kind, we're honest and we don't shy away from challenges.

Our volunteers

Through your involvement we are able to make a difference for greater numbers of people affected by dementia. We can reach further and achieve more. We can learn from the skills and knowledge that you bring and use your experiences of volunteering with us to get better. We are one team united in a mission and within that team our volunteers are trusted experts, key influencers and valued decision makers. You are vital to all that we aspire to do, and we quite simply couldn't do it without you.

A large group of approximately 25 volunteers of various ages and ethnicities are posed in a grassy park area with many trees in the background. Most of the volunteers are wearing bright yellow high-visibility safety vests over their casual clothing. Some vests have logos, including one that says 'Alzheimer's Society'. In the foreground, a man is kneeling and making a peace sign, while a woman next to him is also kneeling. A light-colored dog is sitting on the grass to the right. Above the group, a long blue banner with the word 'START' in large white capital letters is stretched across the frame.

START

**You're one
of thousands
helping to beat
dementia.**

Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging

We believe everyone should be able to make a full contribution to society in a world which celebrates diversity and values inclusion. We all have the right to be the person we are, to live without fear or prejudice regardless of race, age, gender, sexual orientation, faith and belief, or a disability, like dementia.

To drive this inclusion, we want to be a place where everyone feels confident in engaging and involving the widest range of perspectives, ideas, and opinions to make an even bigger impact for people living with dementia.

We believe we can achieve this best through looking at inclusion in the widest sense – where new and different voices are being heard and responded to with a desire to speak up and out to make us a better place to work, volunteer, support and be supported by – ultimately changing the lives and futures of people living with dementia.

We need volunteers from all backgrounds to join with us to help spread the word that dementia is culture blind so can, and does, affect anyone. Those same volunteers also enable us to better support people from all parts of the community who are affected by the disease. You can find out more about our approach to Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging by speaking with your volunteer manager.

We aim to treat everyone with respect and dignity. Please let us know immediately if you experience anything different.

What you can expect from us

Our aim is that you have an enjoyable and meaningful time with us as a volunteer. To support and enable this we will:

- Assign you a dedicated volunteer manager who will be there with you throughout the time you volunteer with us. They'll check in with you regularly to find out how your volunteering is going and will be your first port of call if there's anything you want to know more about, have any questions or issues, or wish to discuss any aspect of your volunteering, including feedback, ideas or suggestions. They will work with you to ensure you feel well supported and happy with your volunteering. Please note that if you take on more than one volunteer role with us you may well have more than one volunteer manager.
- Agree with you what support you feel you might need and how best to provide it. This might be via a regular meeting or phone call, or via group meetings or peer support from other volunteers. What's important is that it works for you.
- Give you clear details of your role, how it relates to 'who we are' and how it (and you!) will make a difference to people living with dementia.
- We recognise that our volunteers like to communicate with us in a variety of ways and although most of our methods will be primarily email and online based, we will make every endeavour to ensure that volunteers gain the information they need in the appropriate format.
- Make sure you're volunteering in a safe and professional environment and have what you need to carry out your role effectively.
- Listen to things which are important to you – what motivated you to volunteer, what you'd like to achieve, and ensure that you feel part of a fantastic team where everyone receives respect and is treated with dignity.

- Support you effectively, so that you feel able to raise any issues that come up. We will find ways to resolve these quickly and fairly.

We recognise there may be occasions when you do not feel comfortable raising something with your volunteer manager. In this case, please contact volunteeringsupport@alzheimers.org.uk for advice.

- Make sure you feel in touch with what's happening by sharing any information that's relevant, letting you know what events and activities are planned, and by providing opportunities for you to stay connected with other volunteers and the wider Society.
- Provide an induction to your role which will introduce you to Alzheimer's Society's wider work so that you get a flavour of everything we do, and all of the areas you can become involved with.
- Let you know about the huge range of learning and development opportunities available to you.
- We want to offer you fair, honest and timely feedback. If there are any concerns about what you're doing, or how you're doing it, we can schedule in time to discuss these and come up with ways to resolve them.
- Demonstrate our values in everything we do and support you to do the same.
They're at our core and we want them to be meaningful for everyone.
- Show you how your contributions are valued, recognise the huge difference your time makes to people living with dementia and celebrate your achievements.
- Provide lots of opportunities to hear your voice – via suggestions, opportunities to be included, and ways to have your say.





What we expect from you

To help us provide you with a safe, enjoyable and meaningful experience as a volunteer, please:

- Have a chat with your volunteer manager so they can answer any immediate questions or concerns you may have. Look at the description for your role as this will help to demonstrate the impact and difference you'll be making to people affected by dementia. It will also guide you towards what's expected of you.
- Please keep us in the loop if you can't volunteer at the day or time you have committed to. For our group services, it's vital we have enough volunteers present, so if we know you won't be able to make it, we can act on it. If you're in an individual role, we'll let the service user know so they're not left wondering.
- If you're struggling to find the time for your volunteering at any point or need to take a short break, please have a chat about it with your volunteer manager. They will be happy to arrange for you to take a temporary break and/or maybe explore with you whether a different volunteering role might suit you better.
- Let us know what you think. Our aim is to make sure you, and all of our volunteers, have the best possible experience and it's really helpful if you give us feedback. It tells us how you feel and helps shape things for the future.
- Please follow all our health and safety advice and guidance relevant to you and your role. It's so important that you and those who may be affected by what you're doing are kept safe.
- Please keep in mind, whenever you volunteer, the role you have signed up for. Doing something different, however well-intentioned, can sometimes cause issues or confusion. If you are interested in taking on another role or think there is a gap in your present role, check in with your volunteer manager.
- Let us know if you have concerns about any aspect of your volunteering or you feel you need additional support to carry out your role. We're here to help and your volunteer manager will always be happy to listen.



- Always complete promptly any learning that's needed for you to be able to carry out your role to a high standard and that keeps you, and those you volunteer with, and support, safe and well.
- If you decide you no longer want or are able to volunteer with us, please let us know with as much notice as possible, ideally by speaking with your volunteer manager so they can understand and learn from your experience as a volunteer. If this isn't possible, you can always let them know by email or text.
- We embrace and value everyone for who they are so please always treat others fairly, with respect and dignity.
- Let us know if any of your personal details change so we can keep your data up to date, particularly your emergency contact details.
- Our values tell everyone who we are as an organisation so please join with us in celebrating and demonstrating those values at all times.
- Finally, please read and follow our policies and procedures relevant to you and your role, including those regarding health and safety, data protection and safeguarding. Speak to your volunteer manager if you have any questions about this.
- **Volunteer Portal.** To make it as easy as possible for you to find the policies, documents and information you need as you volunteer, we have stored them on our Volunteer Portal. Visit alzheimers.org.uk/get-involved/volunteering/already-volunteer to find out more. We regularly add more information to the Portal so it's worth popping in occasionally to see what's new.

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Offering my time to volunteer with Alzheimer's Society is so rewarding. The people we see trust us and know that we really are determined to make a difference. I feel as though I'm part of the team and every single time I do my volunteering, my volunteer manager says 'thank you' which is just so nice to feel appreciated.”

Your volunteering journey

Over the next few pages, you'll find key information that will help you in your role.

Please read each section thoroughly and make sure you understand how it relates to the role you will be doing.

Any topics that relate directly to your role should be covered in more detail at your induction. If you have any questions, please contact your volunteer manager.



Settling in and more

All of the information contained in this Handbook is designed to help you to settle easily into your role and feel well informed, prepared and ready to get started. Together with your volunteer manager, it's there to support you not only as you begin your volunteer journey but so that, as you continue, you've both got it on-hand for future reference too.

Your volunteer manager will let you know how and where to find the policies and guidance documents that are relevant for your role. If you'd prefer paper copies of anything, just let them know.

● Induction

There can be a lot to get your head around when you start something new, and volunteering is no different. But don't worry, your volunteer manager will talk you through all of the important things you need to know to get prepared. They will help you understand how your role fits into our wider work and how what you will be doing will help change the lives of people living with dementia.

● Learning and development

To ensure that you're all prepared and ready for the role you're going to be doing, we ask that you complete any learning that's required. Your volunteer manager will be able to tell you what you need to cover. Go to the 'Learning' section in the guide to find out more about our e-learning platform and how to log on.

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For me the very best thing is to have been made to feel welcome, understood and accepted. I have a number of health conditions and my volunteer manager has always talked with me about these and still enabled me to volunteer. I feel valued and it's great to be able to use my skills and to be appreciated for doing so.

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● Your wellbeing

Your wellbeing is important to us and we have a range of resources available if you ever need some extra support, whatever the reason. Go to the volunteer portal at alzheimers.org.uk/get-involved/volunteering/already-volunteer where you'll find everything you need. If going on-line isn't for you, speak with your volunteer manager or the Volunteering Experience team (volunteeringsupport@alzheimers.org.uk or **0300 222 5706**) and they can let you have the information instead.

Through our health and wellbeing provider Bupa, you can access a broad range of support. Call **0800 269 616** for a free and entirely confidential chat, day or night, 24/7. You can call about anything that's affecting your wellbeing or worrying you, whether it links to volunteering with us or not. You can also visit bupa.com/eaponline for free, unlimited access to helpful factsheets and practical tools that can help you prevent or manage future issues or catch problems before they get worse.

● Taking a break from volunteering

We hope your volunteering will be fulfilling and enjoyable, and to achieve this it needs to be the right role, at the right time. If other commitments and priorities mean you need to take a step back for a while, talk to your volunteer manager – we can find someone to cover while you're away and make sure we've got a plan in place for when you want to return.

● Information about you

As a volunteer, we store information about you on paper and electronically. You can rightly expect high standards in how we look after your personal information. We will keep your information secure, not sell it to third parties and only use it in connection with your agreed volunteer role and to keep in contact with you. You'll only be sent information about activities other than volunteering if you agreed to receive it.

You have a legal right to ask for access to the data we hold about you. If you'd like to do this, please have a word with your volunteer manager.



● Leaving

We are so thankful for whatever time you give to volunteering with us and appreciate the moment may come when you decide or need to stop. When this happens, it's really helpful if you can give us as much notice as you can. We appreciate this isn't always possible, but where it is, it does really help us to put plans in place and also allows us to let those you support know that you're stopping. People often tell us they feel bad when they stop volunteering or that they find it difficult to tell us. Don't ever worry. You will have made a huge difference, and who knows, in the future, maybe the opportunity will rise again.

As a valued volunteer, we want to learn from you about your volunteering experience. For example, what did you enjoy, what could we improve? We love to hear your thoughts to shape our approach for volunteers in the future so please take part in the informal exit interview your volunteer manager will arrange.

Provided you have actively volunteered with us for at least three months, your volunteer manager can provide a reference should you require one. Ask the organisation you are joining to get in touch with them.

We are always looking for more volunteers, so our door is always open if you're ever looking to return. Our current volunteering vacancies (and how to apply) are listed on our website or you can always email volunteering@alzheimers.org.uk for more information or support with making your application.



Important to remember

To ensure the highest standard of volunteering, we ask you to keep the following in mind at all times:

- **Boundaries**

To help make sure that we provide fair support and a professional service to everyone affected by dementia, we need all volunteers, employees and people using our services to understand and keep to appropriate boundaries. One important aspect to this is making sure that all relationships you develop, which can be key to successfully engaging with our service users and supporters, are always professional. Among other things, this means you should never give out your own personal details or the personal details of other employees, service users or volunteers (including telephone number or home address). Your volunteer manager will go through more of what maintaining professional boundaries means in practice as part of your induction.

Sometimes you may already know the people you come into contact with as you volunteer. We ask that despite this you treat everyone the same and let us know as soon as possible if you feel uncomfortable or a conflict of interest arises.

- **What to wear**

If you are a routine volunteer with the Society, you are welcome to order 1 x branded polo t-shirt and 1 x branded zip-up sweater jacket if you would like to – speak with your volunteer manager and they can place your order. Whatever you wear, branded or not, please ensure it's comfortable and appropriate for the role you will be doing. If in doubt, check with your volunteer manager for their guidance.

- **Gifts and hospitality**

Under normal circumstances, volunteers should not accept gifts or hospitality. In any instance of a gift or hospitality being offered, for example, by someone living with dementia as a thank you, you must raise it with your volunteer manager. Full details of the Society's approach to gifts and hospitality are contained in the Alzheimer's Society Anti-bribery, Corruption, Gifts and Hospitality Policy.

● Confidentiality

Through your volunteering, you may become aware of information about other people that you otherwise would not have known. Some of this may be sensitive information or simply information that the person doesn't want to go any further. Please, always, keep this information confidential – both when you are with us as a volunteer and when you leave too.

Never share it with anyone else unless you are legally required to do so because of a safeguarding concern. If you inadvertently let sensitive information slip, let your volunteer manager know as soon as possible.

● Safeguarding

An important aspect to your volunteering (whatever your role), concerns safeguarding. Safeguarding means protecting a person's right to live in safety, free from abuse and free from neglect. It is about people and organisations working together to prevent and stop both the risks and experience of abuse or neglect, while at the same time making sure that the adult's wellbeing is promoted including, where appropriate, having regard to their views, wishes, feelings and beliefs in deciding on any action.

Make sure you know what to do, whatever your role, if you are ever concerned about the welfare of someone you work with, a person with dementia, their family member or carer. This includes children as well as adults. The Safeguarding for Volunteers Factsheet at the end of this guide outlines what you should do. Please read it now before continuing with the rest of the guide.

Remember, if you are ever concerned or worried about someone, even if you're not certain it's a safeguarding matter, please contact our Safeguarding team immediately on **020 8049 9290** and they will be happy to help.

If you help to deliver our services or work with people affected by dementia directly, make sure you have read and are familiar with our Safeguarding Adults Policy and Procedure and Safeguarding Children Policy and Procedure too. Please complete any safeguarding learning as soon as possible – your volunteer manager will be able to tell you what's required.

- **Data protection**

Alzheimer's Society is committed to meeting and exceeding its legal obligations concerning data protection, because the safety and security of personal information is for everyone's benefit. If we fail to do this, we could lose our supporter's trust which in turn would have a negative impact on our reputation, fundraising and, ultimately, our ability to support people living with dementia.

Please make sure you understand and comply with our data protection policy and keep all personal information confidential, safe and secure, whether stored on computer or paper.

As part of your induction, your volunteer manager will discuss any parts of your role that involve you processing personal information and will talk with you about the policies you have read as part of your onboarding and any other learning you might need to complete.

- **Volunteering online**

If you carry out your volunteering online or on the phone rather than face to face, please be aware others may be able to see or hear what's going on. Always try to use a private space where you won't be disturbed or overheard. If you need to take notes, make sure they don't contain personal information which would allow anyone to be identified. Ensure any notes are stored and subsequently destroyed safely afterwards. If you are ever concerned about others having overheard personal information, let your volunteer manager know at the earliest opportunity.

- **Driving**

If you need to use your own vehicle to carry out your volunteering role, your volunteer manager will talk you through what you need to do.

- **Name badges**

Your volunteer manager will let you know if your role requires you to wear a photographic ID badge and if so, will arrange this for you. If not, they may well give you a branded name badge to wear instead. In either case, please look after your badge carefully and only wear it when representing the Society.

● Health and safety

We take our responsibility for the health, safety and welfare of everyone we come into contact with very seriously. High standards are vital. As a volunteer, you have a responsibility to understand and accept your role in promoting and maintaining these standards too.

Please carry out your work in line with our policies and procedures and inform your volunteer manager if you have any personal health and safety requirements and to report any accidents or near misses.

Speak with your volunteer manager to make sure you are clear what to do in the event of an emergency while you are volunteering. This is particularly important if you volunteer in a standalone role.



● IT access

Depending on your role, you may require access to our IT systems. There are two types of IT account that can be set up for volunteer – full or light – which provide different levels of access. Your volunteer manager will know what IT account, if any, is required for your role and will arrange it for you.

● Volunteering at a Society office

If you carry out your volunteering at one of the Society's offices, please speak with your volunteer manager about how to book a desk and any equipment you need. We also ask that you read our Lone Working and Personal Safety guidance and complete the 'Working in offices safely' elearning module too.

● Expenses

We actively encourage you to claim back agreed 'out of pocket' expenses that relate to your volunteering, such as travel or phone costs. Speak with your volunteer manager for details of how to do so.



Learning

Much of the learning we will ask you to complete is in the form of e-learning, where we have created dedicated learning pathways for our different volunteering roles. The benefit of e-learning is that it's flexible, allowing you to complete it at a time and pace that suits you.

My V-Learning' is the Society's e-learning platform. Once you have completed your onboarding you will receive an email with the details of your My V-Learning account. Go to the Volunteer Portal (alzheimers.org.uk/get-involved/volunteering/already-volunteer) where you will be able to log-on to My V-Learning from your own computer or laptop. You'll also find the My V-Learning Guide which will help you to log-on, and which can also be used at any time should you encounter any problems with the e-learning platform. If you find you can't solve your issue using the MyV-Learning Guide, please don't hesitate to contact us via volunteeringsupport@alzheimers.org.uk.

We have a variety of learning for volunteers, split into 3 categories:

- **Core learning**

This is learning that all new volunteers complete as part of the process of joining us and you'll have completed yours as you went through your onboarding.

- **Role specific learning**

This learning focuses on the skills and information that you'll require for the particular volunteering role you'll be doing. You need to complete it within twelve weeks of starting with us. You'll find the role specific modules that you need to do in your My V-Learning account. Please speak with your volunteer manager if you're not sure what needs completing or you'd like additional support.

- **Development learning**

This learning is entirely optional and is for your own personal development. There is no requirement for you to do this learning, it's just there if you want to take a look!

Please talk to your volunteer manager or the Volunteering Experience team (volunteeringsupport@alzheimers.org.uk) if you are unsure about what learning you need to complete.

Depending on your volunteering role we may require you to complete regular refresher learning on topics such as Data Protection and Safeguarding. Your volunteer manager will let you know what's needed and by when it must be completed.

Staying connected

There are many ways in which we aim to keep you informed and connected with the Society.

- **Alzheimer's Society website**

This is the go-to place for all you need to know about dementia and the work that we do. Our website address is [alzheimers.org.uk](https://www.alzheimers.org.uk)

- **Volunteer bulletin**

This newsletter provides volunteers with news about what's happening across the Society and is emailed to you on a monthly basis. It's often the place where we share successes and celebrate achievements, so please let us have any suggestions for inclusion! If you don't have access to email, please chat to your volunteer manager about other ways in which you can hear about what's happening at the Society.

- **Emails**

Details of important invites and events will be sent to you by email as and when they're happening so keep an eye on your inbox to make sure you don't miss out. Speak with your volunteer manager if you'd prefer they keep you informed instead.

- **Volunteer events**

These events are a great opportunity and easy way for volunteers to share their experiences and opinions and to connect with one another. They are also an ideal means by which we can share news and important updates from the Society. Your volunteer manager will keep you informed of any events (virtual or face to face) that are happening in your area. Please come along if you can.

- **Hearing from our Senior Leadership team**

Throughout the year there are some great ways to hear from, and to interact with, members of the Society's Senior Leadership team. The majority are held virtually but face to face events can also take place. Details about what's coming up will be included in the Volunteer Bulletin.

- **Society Briefings**

Delivered via Zoom on a regular basis by our CEO and other members of the Senior or Executive Leadership teams or staff, these briefings keep employees and volunteers alike up to date with the latest news and insight from across the Society. Ask your volunteer manager for the Zoom log-in details if you'd like to attend at any time.

- **Volunteer Manager**

At a local level, your volunteer manager will stay in touch with you and keep you up to date about anything you need to know. And of course, if there's something in particular you would like to know – just ask!

- **Team meetings**

The area/team in which you volunteer may hold meetings you would benefit from attending and will invite you along as the need arises. They may also arrange informal local meetings, specifically for volunteers, to listen to their opinions and ideas, share updates and simply provide the chance for volunteers to get together.

- **Social media**

You can follow us via our social media platforms (Facebook, Twitter/X, Instagram and YouTube) and will find links to all four on our website.

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I wanted to do something, and to give something back, but confidence wasn't good for me at the time. I decided fundraising might be achievable, but what I didn't know was just how many different things I could get involved with. I connected with volunteers in my local area who were organising a Charity Ball and putting the finishing touches to a Fashion Show! It was such a thrill to work as part of a team doing something worthwhile and making a huge difference. The boost to my confidence was very welcome too!

”



We value everything you do – so thank you

Every moment you spend volunteering for us, in whatever your role, will take us a step closer to creating a world where dementia no longer devastates lives and we want you to know just how much we value that.

Of course, feeling valued means different things to different people, so we use a variety of ways to show our appreciation and acknowledgment for what you do. Here are just a few of them:

- **Alzheimer's Society People Awards**

Every year we ask people across the Society to nominate employees and volunteers whose contribution towards changing the lives of people affected by dementia has been exceptional. We have a number of different award categories and each links directly to our four values.

All nominees for a People Award are advised who nominated them and the reasons why. Those who are shortlisted as finalists are invited to an awards ceremony but whether a winner or not, being nominated demonstrates just what an amazing difference someone has made. And don't forget, you can make a nomination too!

- **External volunteering awards**

A wide range of local and national organisations, including many local councils and volunteer centres offer awards for volunteering. We actively encourage employees, and volunteer managers in particular, to nominate their volunteers.

- **Sharing your story**

Being able to tell people about what you do and the impact you have as a volunteer can be incredibly powerful and rewarding. If you would like to share your story email volunteeringssupport@alzheimers.org.uk or speak to your volunteer manager.

- **Everyday thanks**

Public recognition isn't everyone's cup of tea. We welcome and seize every opportunity to offer our sincere thanks, so you know just how much we value the time and energy you contribute.

- **Volunteer Engagement Survey**

Our regular Volunteer Engagement Survey is just one way in which you can let us know about your experiences as a volunteer. We place huge value on what the results tell us and use your feedback wherever possible to improve what we do. Many of the ways in which we currently support, engage and communicate with you have been directly influenced by what volunteers have told us.

- **Volunteer Advisory Panel (VAP)**

Volunteers are at the heart of everything we do at Alzheimer's Society and what they do throughout the organisation gives them unique opinions, expertise and insights. We want to make sure that we're listening to our volunteers as effectively as possible and involving them in discussions about improving the volunteering journey.

The VAP is a strategic group of volunteers who are able to aid our thinking around volunteer engagement and the volunteering experience. They meet once a quarter to discuss topics from across the Society which aim to improve volunteers' experiences. VAP members don't bring local issues to the meetings, instead the agenda is set around key themes from across the Society. Panel members generally stand for two years. Ask your volunteer manager if you'd like to find out more about the VAP.

“

Unlike lots of other volunteers with the Society I don't have any personal connection with dementia. Back at the end of 2017 however, I was in a very vulnerable place. I had been homeless and was trying to get back on my feet but finding all sorts of challenges in doing so. I was looking for office-based administration work so I could rebuild my life and it was one of my Support Workers who spotted the ad for a volunteer for Alzheimer's Society's Aylesbury office. From my first very contact with the charity, I was made to feel more welcome than I can recall ever feeling before.”



What else can I do?

Volunteering is a fantastic way to make a difference to people affected by dementia but there are lots of other ways in which you, or your friends and family, might also like to support us.

Here are just a few ideas:

- **Help us to fundraise**

We are always in need of funds to be able to provide services to those who need us and there are loads of different ways you can help us raise that money. From taking part in one of our events, like Forget Me Not Appeal, or a Memory Walk, to organising your own fundraising activities at work or home or playing our weekly lottery. We also have a wide range of runs, treks, walks and cycle rides on offer if that's more up your street. You'll find everything you need about how to fundraise, and how we will support you, on our website alzheimers.org.uk/fundraising.

- **Micro-volunteer with us**

In addition to your regular volunteering, you could help us with all sorts of one-off events and opportunities too. For example, you could help us at an information stall, ask your local library to publicise an event, or pop a volunteer recruitment poster up on your community notice board at a local supermarket. Let us know if you have specialist knowledge or particular experience too and if something crops up that might suit, we'll get in touch.

- **Take on another role**

We are often looking for more volunteers and invariably have a wealth of exciting opportunities on offer, so keep an eye on our website or speak to your volunteer manager about other volunteering roles, particularly at local services. Feel free to do the same if your usual role becomes temporarily unavailable or ends.

- **Use our online shop**

Help us raise money by buying branded products, gifts, daily living aids, cards, books and much more from our online shop. Visit our website where you'll find easy access to the online shop

- **Become a Dementia Friend**

Alzheimer's Society Dementia Friends programme is the biggest ever initiative to change people's perceptions of dementia. It aims to transform the way the nation thinks, acts and talks about the condition and is open to absolutely everyone. Whether you attend a face-to-face or virtual information session or watch the online video, Dementia Friends is about learning more about dementia and the small ways you can help. Every action counts – however large or small – from telling friends and colleagues about Dementia Friends, to visiting someone you know living with the condition. Visit dementiafriends.org.uk or email dementiafriends@alzheimers.org.uk for more information.

- **Add your voice to ours as we campaign for change**

The more voices we have demanding positive change for people affected by dementia, the more likely we are to get that change to happen. Join our campaigns and help us to fix the broken dementia care system. You can do this by signing up to receive the Society's campaign emails. You will get regular updates about our campaigning work and be asked to take small actions, such as signing petitions or writing (using our suggested template) to your local MP. Visit alzheimers.org.uk/campaign or email change@alzheimers.org.uk.

- **Join Involvement**

If you have first-hand experience of dementia, help to shape our work by joining Involvement. Involvement ensures that people living with a diagnosis of dementia and carers or former carers can share their lived experience, knowledge and skills to help plan, shape and influence the work of the Society. Take a look at our website to find out more about how to get involved.

- **Spread the word**

Whenever the opportunity arises, help us to tell more people about who we are and what we do. Simply pointing someone in the direction of our website so they can find out more might make a life changing difference. Follow us on social media too and share our posts.

For more ideas and information about how you can support our work, take a look at our website: alzheimers.org.uk.



● **Support us during Dementia Action Week**

Led by the Society, Dementia Action Week is a national event where the public come together each May to take action to improve the lives of people living with dementia. Speak with your volunteer manager to find out what's happening in your local area and how you can get involved.

● **Support Services**

In addition to local services and support for people living with dementia, the Society also offers two national services. As a volunteer, you may well get asked how the Society can help those living with dementia so it can be useful to signpost people to:

– **Dementia Support Line**

Open for anyone who needs to get answers to questions, would like some advice or just needs someone to talk to, our Dementia Support Line is available on **0333 150 3456**.

– **Dementia Support Forum**

Our Dementia Support Forum is an online community where anyone who is living with dementia can receive valuable support. It's free, open day and night and can be accessed online. All the necessary details about this online forum can be found on our website alzheimers.org.uk.

“

Moving to a new area and knowing very few people was tough and I've always been very conscious of my speech impediment as well. I volunteered with Alzheimer's Society and straight away felt accepted. People know the things I find difficult, but there's a very individual approach and I can do the things I'm comfortable with. I'm coming up to my 6th year, and now get involved in so many more things than I did originally – all on my terms!

”



Dementia knowledge

One of our values is trusted expert, and many volunteers who have gone before you have told us how important it is for them to have access to information. There are several ways to find out more about dementia and it's great to have a basic knowledge for your role but also, so you can help to dispel some of the myths and misconceptions that exist within society.

- **Alzheimer's Society website**

Whether you want to learn more just for your own general interest or to be able to signpost other people such as friends and family, our website is a great place to start. It has lots of practical information about the condition, including symptoms, diagnosis, living with dementia and caring for a person with dementia. It's also the place to go if you're interested in learning about dementia for your volunteering role. Your volunteer manager will be able to help you to understand the level of knowledge that you need, so do speak with them about it.

- **Dementia Knowledge Centre**

This is an information library service for people who want to find out more about dementia. Visit alzheimers.org.uk/dementiaknowledgecentre.

- **E-learning**

Our e-learning system has several learning modules you can take to learn more about dementia so feel free to take a look at what's on offer.

“

My gender reassignment journey brought so many challenges, but I knew how important it was for me to keep in touch with my local community. When I expressed an interest in volunteering at Alzheimer's Society, I was nervous about getting the same reactions as I had elsewhere. I needn't have been! I have received so much support whenever I've needed it, and together with the other volunteers, we just work together to make our local group so full of vibrancy and energy. Making a difference to the lives of people affected by dementia, while being me, is just fantastic.”



Who else can support you with your volunteering

The Volunteering Team can support you.

While your volunteer manager is your first point of contact, they may not always be immediately available. So that's where we come in. We can help with any questions you have about your volunteering; like IT accounts, help with your eLearning (MyV-Learning) platform and signposting to wellbeing support, to name a few.

Don't hesitate to contact us if you have a question at volunteeringssupport@alzheimers.org.uk and we will help sort it.



Safeguarding for volunteers

Alzheimer's Society has a safeguarding policy in place that protects adults at risk from abuse and neglect. We also have a policy on safeguarding children. To make sure we are safeguarding our people, we need to make sure we report any concerns when they arise.

Sometimes, it can be hard to know what you can do if you are concerned about the welfare of someone you work with, a person with dementia, their family member or carer. The information below outlines how to report concerns you may have.

Recognise

If you have concerns that an adult or a child might be at risk of harm, let us know. If something does not feel right, even if you're not sure what may be wrong and it's just a feeling, let our Quality Safeguarding team know.



Respond

If you believe that a child or an adult is at **immediate** risk of harm, or in need of medical attention, please call 999 and then let the Quality Safeguarding Team know on 0208 0499290.

If you believe that the risk of harm is not immediate, or if you are not sure, please contact the Quality Safeguarding Team on 0208 0499290. Even if you think the matter is not urgent, please share the information with the Quality Safeguarding Team immediately.

During working hours ONLY you may also email the quality safeguarding team at safeguarding@alzheimers.org.uk.



Examples of what might cause concern:

- Someone who is usually friendly, sounding very unhappy and withdrawn.
 - Someone cancelling a number of calls in succession.
 - Someone displaying injuries they cannot explain.
 - Someone discloses that are unable to buy food or pay for heating.
 - Someone mentions they feel controlled by family.
 - However, it is always best to share any concerns with the Quality Safeguarding Team.
-

Things to remember:

- Don't investigate the situation yourself.
- Don't tell anyone else apart from your Role Manager and the Quality Safeguarding Team.
- Don't assume someone else has said something or is doing something about it.
- Do say something if it doesn't feel right, even if it is just a "gut feeling".
- Do telephone or email your initial concern to the Quality Safeguarding Team.
- Do keep personal details of the person/s in question anonymised when writing information down or when contacting your Role Manager or the Quality Safeguarding Team by email.
- Do destroy any details written on paper (if there are any) after the information has been passed on. Shredding is the best way if possible.
- Do dial 999 if the person is in immediate danger (and alert the Quality Safeguarding Team that you have done so).

Quality Safeguarding Team:

0208 0499290

Monday to Friday: **9am-5pm**

On call hours:

Monday to Wednesday: **5pm-8pm**

Saturday and Sunday: **10am-5pm**

safeguarding@alzheimers.org.uk

Dementia is the UK's biggest killer, and one in three people born in the UK today will develop the disease in their lifetime. Your support gives people living with dementia help and hope, for today and the future. It is only because of you that we can continue to give vital support to those living with dementia, fund groundbreaking research and campaign to make dementia the priority it should be. Together, we can ensure dementia no longer devastates lives.



Alzheimer's Society

It will take a society to beat dementia

Visit alzheimers.org.uk

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