

# MAKING A DIFFERENCE

YOUR WINTER VOLUNTEER AND DONATIONS NEWSLETTER



Photo: Volunteers and colleagues at the Christmas party and International Volunteer Day celebration event.

Welcome back to your newsletter. I hope everyone who celebrated enjoyed the festive break and had a good Christmas.

As I reach my first anniversary as Volunteer Services Manager, this is an ideal opportunity for me to reflect back on the last 12 months and the changes and events that have taken place. Gudrun Haskins Carlisle became the new Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Horton Housing in April and the Owt for Nowt shop was relocated to Edmund Street. Thank you to all those volunteers that made this move possible. We have also celebrated many events together, such as: coffee mornings, Volunteers' Week in June, a celebration event in September to celebrate your achievements, and a celebration event for the Owt for Nowt shop in August to mark the shop's second anniversary. We also held our Christmas party and International Volunteer celebration event at the end of the year. It was really nice to see many of you get together and celebrate.

In 2025, we will be renewing our Investing in Volunteers accreditation. This is the UK quality standard for good practice in volunteer management. Achieving the standard aims to show you and any potential volunteers how much you are valued, and recognises that we are able to provide an outstanding volunteer experience.

I have really enjoyed working with you all this year and would like to say a big thank you for your time, dedication and commitment. We are incredibly grateful for all that you do! I would also like to take this opportunity to say thank you to my team, Kristina Batty, our volunteer coordinator and Shabana Shaukat, our administrator for all your hard work and dedication. Your efforts are truly appreciated! I wish you all the best for the New Year and I look forward to working with you all.

Happy New Year!

Thanks, Shaheen, Volunteer Services Manager



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**Our numbers since September 2024:**

**116**

Owt for Nowt  
visits

**44**

Different donations  
received

**107**

Families / people  
supported

## Fenn is Volunteer of the Month!



# VOLUNTEER *of the* MONTH

*Nomination courtesy of Jason Naylor from the Property Services team.*

It has been a pleasure to work with Fenn (pictured in the centre of the photo below). Fenn has settled really quick into his volunteering role with Property Services. Everyone in the team speaks very highly of Fenn. He is always positive, works hard and fits in really well with the team. Jason, Maintenance Operative in Property Services (pictured on the left) also wanted to say thank you to the volunteer service team for their work and for introducing Fenn to the team.

Great work, Fenn!





We successfully recruited four new volunteers this quarter. Meet...

**Stephen - Involvement volunteer at YPASS  
(Young Persons' Prevention and Support Service)**

"I had been working at a care home as a handy man when I started doing wellbeing sessions with the residents. Unfortunately, my health went downhill after that and I had to take some time off. When I returned to work, there was new management and I didn't find it a very enjoyable environment anymore. I felt that it was impacting my health badly, so I decided to call it a day. I decided to change my career and completed my counselling and IAG level 2, and then my employment advisor recommended YPASS."



**Chamini - Admin volunteer for YPASS**

"I am Chamini, and I am from Sri Lanka. I have 10 years of experience in finance and the IT industry. I completed my postgraduate degree in strategic management and leadership level 07, which is recognised by the UK government body. At the moment I am volunteering with West Yorkshire Community Accountancy Services as an accountancy volunteer. I got to know about YPASS volunteering opportunity via St. Augustine's Centre."



We would also like to welcome:

- Leanne - Admin/ Befriender volunteer at YPASS
- Pauline - Activity support volunteer at Craven Homeless Hub.

# MY STORY

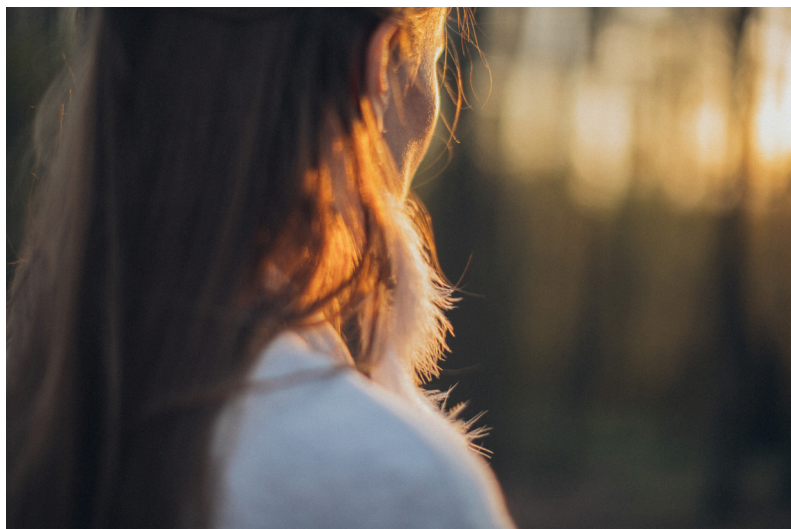
## **A vision for hope: my journey into volunteering**

As someone who has faced the challenges of alcoholism and Bipolar disorder, I understand firsthand the importance of having a vision for a better future. Just three years ago, I was grappling with these issues, but with the help of Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) tools and medication, I found a path to recovery. My journey into volunteering began with a simple yet powerful vision: to help others help themselves.

After completing my CBT studies with distinction 18 months ago, I felt a strong desire to give back. This vision kept me motivated through my studies and led me to engage with various charities and wellbeing groups. One local charity provided me with peer support training, opening doors to numerous opportunities.

Volunteering allowed me to connect with many people who work with disadvantaged individuals, including those with mental health issues and addiction. I now volunteer for Horton Housing, offering CBT group workshops and one-on-one sessions. We are also in the process of setting up peer support and wellbeing groups for 2025 at Pinder House in Skipton. These workshops delve deeper into CBT tools, helping participants manage anxiety and depression by creating short and medium-term plans.

Volunteering has given me a renewed sense of purpose and the opportunity to grow. It has shown me the incredible impact of helping others and has kept me well. If you're reading this and wondering how to start, remember that it all begins with a vision. Decide what you want to achieve, create a plan, and take the first step by volunteering in a sector that interests you. You'll be amazed at how many people will support you on your journey.

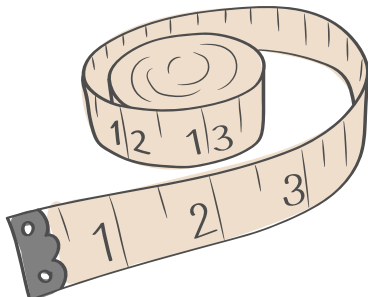


### Shaymaa runs sewing classes at the training centre

We have been running our first ever sewing classes at Horton's Training Centre with the help and support of our brilliant volunteer teacher Shaymaa. The first group of students completed the course in December.

The lessons have proved to be very popular — as well as learning a new and valuable skill, the students have enjoyed helping each other, and sharing lots of ideas.

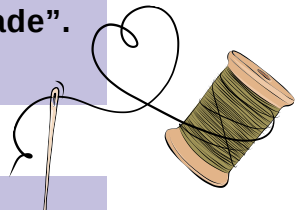
As the current classes come to a close, some of the garments the students have been working on are being finished, including these beautiful dresses.





Below are some of the comments and feedback we have received from the students.

**“I have really enjoyed the classes and have liked wearing the dress I made”.**

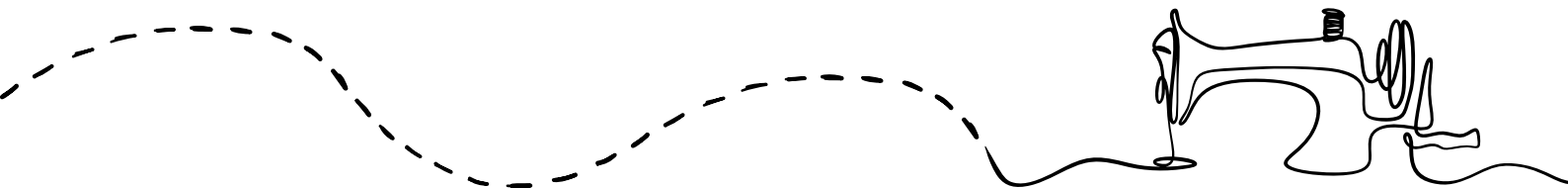


**“I have learnt sewing, scissor work, and sewing clothes. I want to learn more, and find a job for myself in this profession. I would like more classes and courses, and to say thank you to Horton Housing.”**



**“I have learnt a lot from the sewing lessons, such as measuring, cutting and sewing on a machine. I wish the course was longer so that we could sew and experiment more.”**

Shaymaa also said she really enjoyed running the classes and helping the students to learn all about how to sew a garment. Shaymaa attended Horton Housing Training Centre as a student to learn English some years ago, and wanted to give something back. We are hopeful we can run some more sewing classes this year.



## Horton's Warm this Winter donations campaign

Horton's annual donations campaign, 'Warm this Winter' has launched again this year. We are asking the public for donations of warm clothing including coats, jumpers, fleeces, hats, scarves, gloves and socks. We are also asking for donations of unused toiletries. Financial donations are welcome and will be used to buy winter clothing and toiletries for the appeal.

All donations will be collected, sorted and handed out to our services by our amazing team of volunteers.

Gudrun Haskins Carlisle, Horton Housing's Chief Executive Officer, said:

"We were very grateful for the generous amount of donations received for last year's campaign, so we are once again asking the public to kindly donate their unwanted winter clothing. These donations will help keep people in our services warm over the cold winter months and will make a difference to many people, amid the ongoing Cost of Living crisis."





**Trick or treat? Halloween coffee morning**

The volunteer and donations service organised a Halloween / Macmillan coffee morning to raise money for cancer awareness.

The office was decorated with Halloween decorations.

The staff baked some lovely cakes and cupcakes.

We also received some lovely food donations from Café Regal and some scrumptious fresh cream cake from Nafees Bakers for this event.

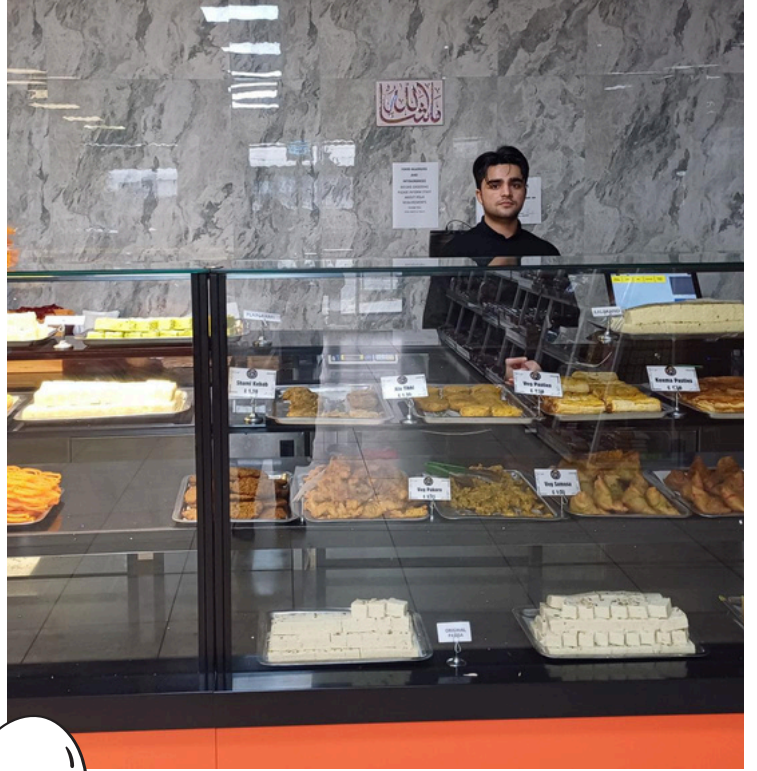
Some of the volunteers also attended the event and one of the volunteers baked a delicious dessert. We were selling raffle tickets for the hamper which Kristina kindly put together. Shaheen and Kristina went around to some of the services to see if they would like to donate for some yummy cake and desserts and if they would like to enter the raffle prize.

One of our volunteers Shaymaa Alasaad won the hamper.

We managed to raise £150! and some staff also donated online.

Thank you to all those for your kind donations and for supporting us with this event.







### Christmas party and International Volunteer Day celebration event

We held a Christmas party and celebrated International Volunteer Day with our volunteers on Wednesday 12 December. It was a great day full of joy and laughter. The office was decorated with Christmas decorations and Kristina put up an amazing balloon arch. Everyone thoroughly enjoyed playing party games, such as pin the Rudolph and bingo. We also had a tombola and everyone won a prize. Some lovely party food was on offer including mince pies which everyone enjoyed. We gave out Christmas cards and thanked volunteers for their hard work, commitment and time. The volunteers were really happy and thanked the team for arranging this event.



## Exciting events and opportunities to get involved in!



*The latest*  
**EXCITING  
 EVENTS**

### Volunteers wanted for Bradford 2025

Bradford 2025 are looking for volunteers to help them deliver the year as UK City of Culture.

Registration is open if you or somebody you know would like to be a volunteer.

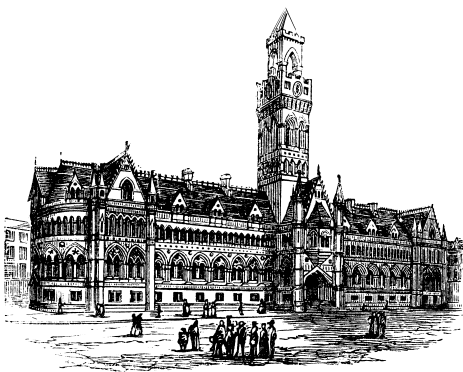
There are several ways you can get involved. This could be serving as an ambassador for one of Bradford's neighbourhoods, helping at events by meeting and greeting the public, or helping out behind the scenes. Travel and food expenses will be covered and full training will be given.

There is the opportunity to undertake training in everything from Sight Assisted Guidance, First Aid Training, to an accredited City and Guilds level 2 qualification in Customer Service.

There are also corporate volunteering opportunities through Participate Projects.

For more information or to sign up as a Bradford 2025 volunteer, visit:

<https://bradford2025.co.uk/take-part/volunteer/>



## Exciting events and opportunities to get involved in!



### Bradford 2025

Lots of events are taking place across Bradford this year to celebrate the city's status as UK City of Culture 2025. This includes local festivals, exhibitions, film screenings, live performances, talks, craft workshops, and family friendly events. A full programme of events can be found on this website:

<https://bradford2025.co.uk/>

### National Science and Media Museum

The museum opens on 8 January 2025 and remains free entry. Explore their revamped galleries and check out the current exhibition on David Hockney's film and photography work. More details can be found on the museum's website: <https://www.scienceandmediamuseum.org.uk/>

### 50 years of Calderdale

An exhibition celebrating Calderdale's 50th year of its founding is a Borough is on at the Bankfield Museum in Halifax. The exhibition explores the history of the region from archaeological discoveries to the use of its industrial buildings over the years. The exhibition is free to attend:

<https://museums.calderdale.gov.uk/whats-on/exhibitions/50-years-calderdale>



## Horton Academy Training Courses



It is really important that you complete your core training in your first six months of volunteering with us. The courses can be accessed remotely online. It is our responsibility to ensure that you are able to carry out the roles you have been recruited to do.

If you are looking for something to keep you occupied and you have access to a PC, tablet or smartphone, then please log in and complete the modules listed below. If you have any questions or need help with logging in, then please contact Shaheen on **07525 667874**.

Mandatory courses for volunteers are:

- **Professional Boundaries**
- **Health and Safety**
- **Data Protection**
- **Basic Personal Safety**
- **Equality and Diversity**

You can log in to Horton Academy at home (if this is your preferred way of completing training) via the link below using your name e.g. josephb and password:

**<https://hortonhousing.learningpool.com/login/index.php>**



## Our latest roles



Please note that the roles require an enhanced DBS Check, of which we will cover the cost.

## Roles in Bradford

### Activities Support

You will assist with the activity support group at our male-only accommodation service. You will engage with group activities including arts and crafts, coffee mornings, community trips, and much more. The role will require you to attend once-a-week.

### Female Befriender

The Befriender role involves giving support and companionship to people who are socially isolated or experiencing mental health challenges. Befrienders are matched with people in our scheme based on your interests and experiences. You will arrange to meet up with the person you are matched with once-a-week. This may include trips to the park, cinema or telephone conversations. As a Befriender you will need to be a good listener and communicator, friendly, approachable, empathetic, and non-judgemental.

Please note that due to the nature of this service, this is a female-only role.

### Activities Support

You will assist staff at our Housing and Community Support (HACS) 4 All based in Keighley with organising activities and taking part in weekly support sessions at the scheme. This role also require you to help staff with administrative tasks including answering the phone, photocopying, and sending letters.

## Our latest roles (continued)



### Roles in Kirklees

#### Work Coach

Work Coaches give advice and support with finding jobs. You will help to improve and develop a person's strengths and weaknesses to help them become job ready. The role involves working one-to-one with the people to find suitable job opportunities based on the person's skills, interests, experience, and qualifications.

#### Befriender

The Befriender role involves giving support and companionship to people who are socially isolated or experiencing mental health challenges. Befrienders are matched with people in our scheme based on your interests and experiences. You will arrange to meet up with the person you are matched with once-a-week. This may include trips to the park, cinema or telephone conversations. As a Befriender you will need to be a good listener and communicator, friendly, approachable, empathetic, and non-judgemental.

#### Activities Support and Administrative Assistant

The role involves providing administration support for Horton's Substance, Tenancy and Resettlement Service (STARS). You will also help staff to facilitate group activities and the occasional day trip out with people in the scheme.

### Roles in Calderdale

#### Early Intervention and Prevention Assistant

You will call people who have been referred to our Young Persons' Prevention and Support Service (YPASS) and offer support to them as they wait to be allocated a support worker. YPASS supports people who are aged between 16 and 25, and are experiencing homelessness or at risk of homelessness.

You will be a listening ear to the young person being referred and encourage the people we support to attend activities held at the scheme. The role also involves uploading referrals to a secure online database, logging notes and completing forms.

For more information or to apply, please contact YPASS Volunteer Coordinator Tanya on **07809 203876**.



Keep up to date on social media!



If you're not already on social media, why not sign up and follow us to keep up to date with the latest volunteering opportunities, news and events and get to know other Horton volunteers?



Like us on Facebook

Horton Housing Association volunteers: [@hortonvolunteer](#)  
 Horton Housing Association: [@hortonhousingassociation](#)



Follow us on X (formerly known as Twitter)

Horton Housing Association volunteers: [@HHAVol](#)  
 Horton Housing Association: [@HortonHousing](#)



Follow us on Instagram

Horton Housing Association: [@hortonhousing](#)

## Get in touch



We would love to know what you think about your volunteer newsletter!

Please get in touch via the details below to give any feedback, or if you have any news stories or suggestions for future issues.

Get in touch!

Email: [volunteer.applications@hortonhousing.co.uk](mailto:volunteer.applications@hortonhousing.co.uk)

Phone: Shaheen Akhtar on **07525 667874** / Kristina Batty on **07525 667902** / or Shabana Shaukat on **07525 667884**.

Write to us:

**Volunteer Services Manager**  
**16 - 20 Edmund Street**  
**Bradford**  
**BD5 0BH**

For the latest volunteering opportunities, please visit our website: <https://hortonhousing.co.uk/>



**Have a story to tell? We'd love to hear from you. Get in touch today.**