

Overseas Volunteers at Leonard Cheshire

Gloucestershire House



## What is my role?

**At Leonard Cheshire**, we value the role our Overseas Volunteers have in our services throughout the United Kingdom. Due to the length of the placements for overseas volunteers (12 months) volunteers have the opportunity to acquire a range of skills, improve their English, enjoy the best of British culture and life, and develop fulfilling working relationships with our residents, staff and local volunteers which often develop into long-term friendships.

**Overseas volunteers** help support our staff teams in providing an active, involving and stimulating environment for our residents. Through our overseas volunteers, disabled people in our care homes are able to access their local community services and social opportunities more easily and regularly, thus improving their independence and quality of life. This means that in their roles overseas volunteers are engaging in a wide range of activities both inside and outside the home.

**Volunteers** may be required to accompany residents providing support to those service users who have regular work, education or volunteering commitments. Volunteers will support groups of people with art and craft, gardening, cooking, exercise and social clubs and outings. While it is a lot of fun going out with residents, it is also very challenging as volunteers experience first hand the issues faced by people with disabilities everyday.

**Overseas volunteers** will be expected to volunteer 35 hours within a week. They will be entitled to 2 days off. These may not necessarily be at the weekend or consecutive. There can be a greater requirement for volunteering at the weekends to attend sporting events and other activities.

## What opportunities can I expect for training & skills development?

**Thorough training** on working with vulnerable adults is provided to all our volunteers, and Leonard Cheshire staff helps volunteers during the induction process to understand each individual. Risk assessments ensure that volunteers are not asked to contribute outside of their capability or boundaries.

**Volunteers acquire** a range of knowledge, skills and experience including a greater understanding of the issues affecting disabled people. They gain improved interpersonal skills and the ability to interact with a wide range of people. There will also be an opportunity to learn about the wider activities of the charity, for example our campaigning/lobbying activities and fundraising events.



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## About Gloucestershire House

**Here at Gloucestershire House** we have successfully hosted Overseas Volunteers for more than 8 years. We have vast experience with integrating the volunteers into the daily life at the home. Choice is an important part of the service provided at Gloucestershire House, and it is the role of the volunteers to encourage and support the residents to make choices in regards to what activities they wish to fill their time with and assist them in carrying

out these choices. The Overseas Volunteers empower and enable residents to access social, leisure and employment activities in Cheltenham. The volunteers support the staff teams in providing an active and stimulating environment for our residents. Through EVS Volunteers people with disability at Gloucestershire House are able to access their local services and social opportunities more easily and regularly, thus improving their confidence, independence and quality of life.

**Residents:** Gloucestershire House supports 30 adults with physical disabilities and is registered as a Care Home with Nursing. The home has five lodges, each lodge having its own lounge, kitchen, bathroom and shower. All bedrooms in the home are single rooms all with large patio doors with their own patio garden area. They have en-suite facilities and communal areas available for residents which include a dining room, activities room, large lounge, aquatic therapy pool and a beautiful maintained garden.



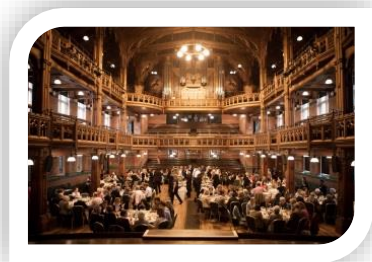
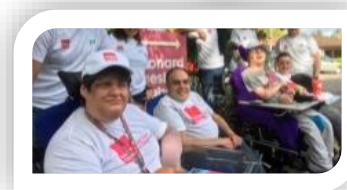
**Location:** The Home is situated on the outskirts of Cheltenham Spa, which is an attractive Georgian town providing excellent access to

cultural and retail opportunities. The home is situated within 2 miles of the town centre and is on a main bus route.

Cheltenham is also 'nestled' in the beautiful Cotswold's which are famous throughout the world.

There is easy access via local train services to major cities like London, Birmingham, and Bath. It also has the famous 'Gold Cup' horse race course at Prestbury.

Cheltenham has excellent shopping facilities with many well-known shops, cinema and theatre facilities.



The town centre is a pedestrian friendly, traffic-free zone, with wheelchair access to most facilities. There are also facilities for swimming, horse riding and tenpin bowling as well as local sports teams and clubs. The town centre of Cheltenham is known for many festivals, including 'The Jazz Festival', 'The Science festival', 'The Festival of Literature', and 'Festival of Music'. It is also close to Gloucester cathedral, where some of the filming for Harry Potter took place.

## Expectations & Accommodation

**Volunteers are expected** to comply with Leonard Cheshire policy & procedures & codes of conduct. Failure to comply with this could result in the programme being terminated. Volunteers are not to take part in activities that are staff tasks, they therefore will not be assisting with eating and drinking or taking part in personal care.

Behavior that causes concern as a result of excessive alcohol is not tolerated. The misuse of illegal substances will not be tolerated and will result in instant dismissal. Volunteers are expected to behave in a socially responsible way, and in consideration to fellow volunteers and residents.

**This is a year-long placement** and volunteers are expected to commit to the service for the whole duration of their project.



**Accommodation:** The volunteers will be accommodated in a 3 bed-roomed apartment each with their own lockable bedroom and a spare bedroom for friend and family to stay. They will share a communal lounge, fully fitted kitchen with laundry facilities and bathroom with the other overseas volunteers.

Volunteers can have 3 meals a day from our catering team or they can make their own arrangements using a weekly food allowance. All bedding and towels are supplied. Pocket money will be provided weekly into a newly opened local bank account. We provide each volunteer with a Bike to make it easier to explore the local community and engage in social and leisure activities.



## Volunteer Profile

**Volunteers have a genuine interest** and passion for working with people with disabilities. As the work is with vulnerable adults, it is essential that the volunteers that are kind, patient and compassionate. Additionally, we endeavour to select volunteers who have a variety of different skills and abilities to bring to our services and encourage them to share those skills and passions with our residents such as music, sports, gardening.

**The volunteers will gain experience** in planning and delivering activities, events and outings including dealing with logistics and administrative tasks involved in this process. They will also learn to develop activity plans and programmes considering the needs of individuals. Working as a team with the staff means that the volunteer gain insight into what it requires to work in a professional environment in the care sector as well as hand-on knowledge of teamwork. The volunteers will also gain insight into the challenges people with disabilities face on a daily basis and how they overcome these through various means. It is also an opportunity for the volunteers to talk about how people with disabilities are perceived in their home country versus in the UK.

## Activities

**The volunteers are actively involved** in shaping their experiences and the activities plan for residents. We encourage volunteers to bring their own ideas, skills and passions to share with residents. As a result, the role is varied depending on the needs of clients and the activities our clients like to engage in. Our residents make sure their home has a lively atmosphere. At their request we offer lots of activities, including art classes, quizzes, and computer classes and cooking. We also hold events in the



home where we are joined by people from the local community. Volunteers also assist on social outings, day trips, LC meetings and events. Hence the delivery of activities is heavily influenced by the skills and motivation of our volunteers to design a creative and fun activity programme. The residents ensure their home has a lively atmosphere. At their request, we offer a wide range of daily activities which include creative art sessions, music appreciation, archery, and cookery.

**The residents at Gloucestershire House love parties!** The EVS volunteers at Gloucestershire House often organize themed parties such as Halloween, birthdays, Christmas and karaoke parties. This involves making costumes and decorations, supporting service users to cook and present party food and generally helping everyone to get together and have a great time. Also the planning of 'themed' evenings and cultural activity

exchange days falls under the responsibilities of the volunteers for example, where volunteers can share their culture, through sharing recipes, stories, forms of dance etc. are enjoyed by staff, residents and other overseas volunteers.

This introduces residents, staff and volunteers from other cultures to experience intercultural understanding and brings the volunteers' culture to life. Whilst out in the community with service users the volunteer offers support and encouragement to enable them to enjoy as many facilities as possible. The role of the volunteers is to support the staff team in providing an active, involving and stimulating environment for our service users. Having volunteers will enable our service users to access their local communities and social opportunities more easily and regularly.



**Examples of daily routine activities:**

- Accompany residents to shops and local amenities using accessible public transport
- Assisting Physiotherapist in aquatic therapy pool, working 1:1 with residents under instruction of the Physiotherapist team.
- Accompany and assist a resident on college course.
- Assist and support residents painting, or other craft activities felt making, printing, gardening etc

**Contact details**

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