

## VOLUNTEER INFORMATION PACK



Find out more about how you can help with your communities' health, wellbeing and social support needs

# Volunteering can provide a healthy boost to your self-confidence, self-esteem, and life satisfaction.

Volunteering is an important role in the work that iCan Wellbeing group do.

As an organisation we have a proud history spanning nearly 20 years, in which volunteering has spearheaded our organisational response to community need. From members sitting on our steering group and deciding on our mission, aims and objectives and values, to helping deliver sessions and classes and operational support. We couldn't do what we do without our team of volunteers.

The volunteer information that you are about to read covers some of the values and vision that we have for ensuring effective, respectful and impactful volunteering with iCan Wellbeing group CIO and our projects

We recognise that volunteers can play an active part in many aspects of our organisation, from supporting people through our cancer telephone support, maintaining our garden and even sitting on our board of trustees. We have always been a person centred organisation and we simply couldn't do it without our 20+ volunteers, alongside our dedicated team of staff. Many of our volunteers began their volunteering role as service users but have stayed to support others on their journey and find their own new or existing purpose.

We would like to thank each and every one of you who goes on to volunteer with iCan as, without your gift of time and commitment, we would not be able to provide the range of support to people across Cumbria.

With thanks and best wishes

The iCan Wellbeing group CIO team

## What we do

*Breaking down barriers from  
I can't to iCAN!*

iCan Wellbeing group CIO is a charity with the aim of improving Cumbria's health and wellbeing through a dedicated focus on prevention before recovery. We are a friendly community providing safe environments for exercise, health, wellbeing and social support encouraging interaction with likeminded peers and lived experience mentors.

iCan has four main areas of operation iCan Fitness, WeCan Wellbeing Centre, Wheels of Wellness mobile activity/ neighbourliness and outreach programmes including school provisions.

For more information please view our website at [www.icanfitnesscumbria.co.uk](http://www.icanfitnesscumbria.co.uk)

iCan has a social return on investment value of £6:19: 1 in 2023 . With a passion to innovate, challenge and improve the support the third sector can offer community members.



# What you can do as a volunteer?

*Make someone's day!*

At iCan, volunteers help us make a difference to our communities' lives on a daily basis. Volunteers share their lived experiences to help improve and support others lives.

There are many different types of volunteering roles, some of these include:

- Working on a specific project such as Living with and Beyond Cancer or Social Activities for Dementia
- Gardening or helping to maintain our community space
- Teach an exercise class
- Support or lead a peer to peer support session
- Administration assistance

Most of our work occurs in our city centre location however we also cover Mid Copeland, West Cumbria, Eden and South Cumbria

We have volunteers who have specific skills or knowledge, some who have vital lived experience and others who just want to chip in and learn a new skill, we try and make volunteering fun and rewarding for all.

Volunteer opportunities can take place on one of our sites or at a community location or even from the comfort of your home, such as our admin assistance and Living with and beyond cancer telephone supporters.

Over the last year, our volunteers donated over 7000 hours of support to their community.



# Types of volunteer roles

*Explained*

## **Living With and Beyond Cancer- Cafe club volunteer**

*Current volunteer number= 3*

Kind people who offer a local friendly access point of support to people living with cancer, their family members, friends and carers.

The Cancer Café Club volunteers provide a listening ear and encourage informal conversations, helping to reduce the feelings of isolation.

Current cancer cafes are located in Workington, Penrith and Carlisle, but we are open to further locations. Cafe tables are identifiable by a blue windmill so people can easily sit down with their volunteer and peers without needing to ask how or where.

## **Living With and Beyond Cancer- Telephone Support volunteer**

*Current volunteer number= 10*

Compassionate individuals who support people affected by cancer with telephone calls. Helping people identify what help and support they need and offering signposting support where appropriate.

This role is most often worked remotely and IT resources are provided.

## **Lived experience mentors**

*Current volunteer number= 5*

A vital role in our organisation is sharing lived experience and listening to those who have been there, done it and got the t-shirt! Sometimes circumstances can be hard to bear but our volunteers share their experiences to help support others and it does make a real difference.

Volunteering in this role is varied and can include multiple tasks from being a friendly face at one of our support groups or sharing their knowledge in a bid writing planning meeting. Specific areas of interest often include Dementia, Stroke, Invisible illness, Mental health or Weight loss.

## **Class or session leader/ specialist**

*Current volunteer number= 4*

Passionate people who have a skill in teaching or leading a class. We can provide training in specific areas if you are keen but don't know where to start, or if you are already skilled and want to run your own class we are open to ideas.

Our current volunteers teach chair based exercise, rebounding, Qi-gong and mindfulness sessions.



## Centre or ground maintenance helper

*Current volunteer number= 4*

From green fingered individuals maintaining our beautiful community garden to cleaning whizzes. We rely on our volunteers to help us keep our spaces clean, tidy, fresh and looking their best. We love including our community in the look, feel and practicality of the space they use every day. There's always something to chip in with every day of the week.

## Admin assistance

*Current volunteer number= 2*

People who love organisation and have an hour or two free each week. Tasks can include filing, phone calls, organisation, inputting data and emailing. Our current volunteers either work remotely or in our centre depending on their need and circumstance. Full training is provided including IT skills.

**Service user** → **volunteer** → **team member**

## Meet Natasha



Natasha started coming to the iCan gym 4 years ago to work out, improve her fitness and make friends.

It was obvious Natasha had a skill in helping people and often wanted to support members in learning how the machines worked, chatting to members after a workout over a cuppa and engaging in many social activities.

In 2022 Natasha started volunteering for iCan using her skills in design to create a merchandise website for iCan, complete with hoodies, t-shirts and bags for members to wear, advertising our brand.

Only a few months later Natasha expressed an interest in working part time, after seeing an opening for a team member, after completing some training she is now a fully fledged circuit coach and admin assistance and thriving in her role.

Suzie has been part of the iCan family for 8 years. Starting as a member to fill some of her spare time and be healthy for her young children. Shortly after starting Suzie approached the team to see if there was anything she could do to help iCan as she "loved how it made her feel." After a while Suzie found the exercise class of rebounding and fell in love with the activity, she wanted to make her own class and taught 3 times a week in iCan after completing a training course. She later started hosting walking football sessions with iCan and Age UK for men and women once a week. Suzie is now our chair of the board of Trustees. She co-ordinates the boards quarterly meetings and has an influential opinion on the mission, aims, objectives and values of how iCan operates.

## Meet Suzie



# How much time do you need?

Each role is different and we can be as flexible as possible around your lifestyle. You can donate a few hours a month or a regular commitment of scheduled sessions. For each role, we do ask that you make your commitment clear so we know how much you wish to help and when we can ask you to volunteer. We also ask that you attend a minimum number of group sessions and one to one supervisions on top of any time undertaking activities so you fully embrace the iCan experience . You will also have to commit to the training and any safety checks that are relevant for that role.

*Volunteering is good for you*

Our volunteers often tell us how rewarding their time with us is.

You'll be part of a compassionate community and feel a real sense of pride for what you do alongside finding a new or existing purpose. You'll meet new people, gain valuable experience, and develop your skill set.

We're passionate about helping people to reach their full potential, so we'll offer you full training suitable for the role, supervision from a named member of staff, including help setting personal development goals if appropriate , and opportunities to increase skills and input into our culture and vision for the future.

As well as formal training, volunteers can benefit from:

- Increased experience in listening and supporting people
- Working as part of a passionate team
- Experience in the voluntary/social care sector
- Increased confidence
- Increased skills and experience for future employment
- Motivation
- Sense of achievement
- New experiences
- Working with a diverse range of people and sense of fulfilment from helping people



# How do we support our volunteers?

**We are delighted that we have gained our charity excellence quality mark.**



## Training and support

All volunteers receive substantial training before going on to support people in the community or specific tasks.

This is followed up with ongoing professional development and supervision if required or requested. Training courses are sometimes offered in house from iCan staff or mentors or outsourced to other professional organisations. Some are holistic and some training is official registered and certified. This is negotiated, advised or agreed depending on the volunteering role.

Our volunteers often benefit just as much as the people they support, going on to higher education, find employment, or fulfil a need to help or find new purpose in retirement.

Areas covered in our training programme include:

- The iCan mission and values
- Listening skills
- Health and safety at work
- Communication skills
- Child and vulnerable adult protection and safeguarding
- Dealing with difficult situations
- Dementia friends training or learning from living with Dementia (optional)

Please note we ask all volunteers to undertake a DBS check by the government. This is a free check to identify any past or current criminal activity. Professional judgement and sensitivity is always used when assessing a DBS check. You may be declined a role of volunteer if your DBS check is returned and there is cause for concern. This will be handled confidentially and sensitively.

## Volunteer expenses and benefits

Volunteers bring their time, commitment and enthusiasm to the community and in return we are committed to making sure that volunteers are never out of pocket. We pay expenses against receipts for the use of public transport, fuel, parking, training or technical expense. Where appropriate we may also provide expenses for food/ drink.

For those claiming benefits, volunteering will not affect the money you get, and you can volunteer for as many hours as you like. You should, however, tell your benefits advisor that you are volunteering.

# I want to volunteer, what's next?

## There are 4 simple steps to volunteering

- 1) Choose a role you would like to volunteer for.
- 2) Speak to the correct team member about getting started:
  - For most opportunities contact Lisa Bridgewater (COO) at [Lisa@icanfitnesscumbria.co.uk](mailto:Lisa@icanfitnesscumbria.co.uk) or call 01228 819101
  - For Living With And Beyond Cancer volunteering contact Jenna Sutherland (WeCan Manager) at [Jenna@icanfitnesscumbria.co.uk](mailto:Jenna@icanfitnesscumbria.co.uk) or call 0800 038 6018
- 3) Request our role specific volunteer pack

4) *Get involved, have fun, learn and train.... and support your community.*



Thank you for taking the time to think about volunteering with  
iCan Wellbeing Group CIO



[WWW.ICANFITNESSCUMBRIA.CO.UK](http://WWW.ICANFITNESSCUMBRIA.CO.UK)

