

Thurrock Council volunteer role description

Reading Friends volunteer

Supported by	Thurrock Library Service
Role summary	Meet with Reading Friends participants, either one-to-one or in a group, to use reading – books, magazines, websites or any other reading activity – as a way to start conversations.
Location	You can choose to meet with participants as a phone befriender from a library or community hub, or as the facilitator of a group meeting in person within a library or community hub. Mileage expenses to a library or community hub are paid at the current rate.
How to apply	Complete the application form at www.thurrock.gov.uk/volunteering-vacancies

Tasks and responsibilities

For reading groups, you will be expected to:

- lead group reading activities and facilitate conversation using reading materials as a basis for discussion
- make practical arrangements to identify and select suitable materials – books, newspapers, and so on – that focus on the groups' interests
- liaise with library or community hub staff regarding preparation of chairs, tea, and so on in advance of each session, and tidy-up after the session has ended
- be aware of – and sensitive to – the needs of those in the group, making sure everyone is able to contribute to the session, feels welcome and involved, maintaining awareness of appropriate boundaries
- lead on various themed activities where appropriate – for example, memory boxes
- contribute to the evaluation of the project as required and feedback any issues or concerns to your Reading Friends Co-ordinator
- make sure reasonable care is taken at all times for the health, safety and welfare of yourself and other persons, comply with policies and procedures relating to health and safety within the council

Skills and experience

You must:

- have good communication and listening skills
- have the ability to build rapport through conversation
- have a patient and sensitive approach
- be able to empathise with people
- be reliable and trustworthy, with a friendly and approachable manner
- have a love of reading and desire to share this with others
- be able to maintain meaningful conversation for prolonged periods
- understand the need for confidentiality
- be able to follow guidelines and instructions, and work without supervision
- be willing to learn new knowledge and skills

Time commitment

1 hour a week for the session.

You will; also need to be able to attend the initial training session and regular supervision meetings.

Support you will get

We will:

- provide induction training
- provide on-going support during the times allocated

This role may require a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check.