Schools' Wartime Activity Volunteer role description

Take Shelter is the volunteer-led charity which runs the only school air raid shelter open to the public in the south. We run a busy schools and community programme which welcomes more than 4000 people each year. Access to the shelter is through guided tours of groups of no more than 10 people at the time.

In addition to the guided shelter tours we run wartime themed activities in our wartime museum space and are fortunate to have a number of veteran volunteers, who were all children during the war, sharing their first-hand experiences. On our community days we also run a gift shop and Tea Room.

As a volunteer led organisation we could not deliver either our schools or community programme without the support, skills and dedication of our volunteers.

What will I be doing?

You will be working as part of a small team of volunteers who welcome school groups to Take Shelter. When a school visits Take Shelter in addition to a tour of the shelter they listen to a presentation about what it was like to live in Brighton during the war and then take part in a series of three wartime activities.

You will be working as part of a team of volunteers to deliver one of these wartime themed activities and present wartime information to groups of primary school children. Each activity last for approximately 15 minutes, so for each class you will lead the activity 3 times. Topics for the activities include rationing, air raids, sending coded messages, evacuees and the role of the ARP wardens.

No prior knowledge is required as we will provide all the information, resources and training that you need. You will also be asked to answer general questions about the shelter and the Second World War.

Key tasks:

- Provide a friendly greeting and introduction to Take Shelter to all tour groups
- Lead an informative activity using the information and resources provided to bring a wartime topic to life for a group of school pupils
- Answer enquiries in a friendly and helpful manner and be approachable to all visitors
- Direct visitors to the other activities available on the day of their visit
- Recognise and respond to the specific needs of all our visitors
- Inform the Chair of Take Shelter or Office Manager of any problems/issues that arise.
- Assist with the evacuation of visitors in an emergency situation

Where will I be based?

You will be based at Downs Junior School on Ditchling Road, Brighton. BN1 6ED. Access to the school during the week is via the entrance on Rugby Road. At the weekends access is via the gate on Ditchling Road. The wartime activities take place in the school canteen and the air raid shelter is located underneath the top playground.

How much time will I be expected to give?

We are looking for volunteers who can give some time each month ideally a morning for the school tours. Each school visit lasts for approximately 2.5 hours. There are opportunities to get involved in our community programme too which consists of monthly open days and several larger event weekends through the year.

What skills, qualities and experience do I need?

No experience or qualifications are necessary as this is a good opportunity to gain new skills. However this role would suit people who:

- Are welcoming, approachable and helpful
- Have good presentation and communication skills, willing to share information with visitors without being asked
- Are comfortable talking and working with children
- Are proactive with a positive nature and an interest in providing an excellent visitor experience
- Are enthusiastic and interested to learn about the project and life in wartime Brighton
- Are reliable, well-presented, friendly and polite
- Are comfortable working as part of a team; supporting other volunteers
- Are able to work with and without supervision

What support and training will I receive?

All volunteers will receive a welcome training session for the activity/ies and also an introductory tour of the shelter. New volunteers will receive training from an experienced member of the team and will have the opportunity to shadow others before being asked to lead on their own. Where possible it is also possible to be 'buddied' with an existing volunteer who can support you when you deliver your first activities. Direct supervision and support will be provided by our Office Manager / member of our management team.

What will Take Shelter expect from me?

- To be the friendly welcome to Take Shelter and deliver excellent customer service
- To be reliable in attendance and dependable; to be on-site at least ten minutes before the start time of your first tour
- Maintain good working relationships with other volunteers and visitors
- Assist with the training of new volunteers
- Undertake appropriate training and attend volunteer meetings

- Represent Take Shelter in a positive manner at all times
- Be fully conversant with fire and emergency evacuation procedures which includes attending evacuation training at least once per year
- Observe the Museum's policy and procedures
- To undertake a Disclosure and Barring Services (DBS) check. **Please note that it is unlikely that you would be left alone with any child(ren) or vulnerable adults but we ensure our whole school team of volunteers is checked best practice*.

What can I expect from Take Shelter?

- A welcoming and enjoyable experience
- The opportunity to learn and develop new skills and experience
- To be treated fairly and with respect
- To become part of a friendly, motivated and dedicated team
- Recognition and appreciation for your contribution
- The opportunity to meet people from all walks of life and make new friends
- Satisfaction of giving back to the community; promoting the work of the Museum
- Gain valuable experience to enhance your CV and job applications

If you have any questions about the role or Take Shelter please contact the Office Manager on takeshelter@downsjun.brighton-hove.sch.uk