



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

REF 200604Volunteers

Council praises its volunteers for supporting most vulnerable residents

As part of Volunteers Week, Gedling Borough Council wants to say thank you to the 500 volunteers who have offered to help residents during the coronavirus.

Volunteers have been working alongside Gedling Borough Council to help vulnerable residents.

In April, the council opened the Giving for Gedling Humanitarian Centre to help those in need throughout the borough. The council asked for volunteers to provide assistance preparing and distributing food parcels as well as carrying out neighbourhood checks and offering assistance to elderly and vulnerable residents.

Over 500 residents contacted the council to offer their help after seeing the request on the council's website and social media pages. To date more than 800 households have received support and 600 food parcels have been delivered to residents in need by volunteers and council officers. Other volunteers have been signposted to, and supported, organisations such as Age Concern and Autistic Nottingham.

As well as the support residents have received directly from the humanitarian centre, £25,000 has also been raised to support foodbanks throughout the borough.

The volunteers who put themselves forward were a mix of first timers and experienced volunteers, with many taking it upon themselves to check in with neighbours and shielding family members to make sure they were ok.

Due to the high number of volunteer responses received, not all of those who registered have been required to help with food parcel deliveries or preparations. The council will remain in contact with these volunteers as new community needs emerge, such as befriending and other support services, should they still wish to offer their help.

Amanda Wheldon, from Carlton, was one of the volunteers who has been supporting her community. After seeing the call out on the council's Facebook page she got in touch and has been delivering food parcels through the local area.

Amanda said;

“This was my first time volunteering but I felt I wanted to help in some way to support those in need and it was an absolute pleasure to help and support the community.

I've been delivering food parcels throughout the local area, as well as speaking to many of the people I visited to make sure they were ok and checking if they need anything else.

It's definitely made me feel more outgoing. I started out feeling a little nervous but the process really helped with my confidence and I'm keen to continue volunteering in the future.”

Melissa Gossington, also from Carlton, is another volunteer who has been helping the community. Melissa has previous experience volunteering for the Alzheimer's Society and helping others is something Melissa was happy to do with the extra spare time she had.

Melissa said;

“Volunteering just makes me feel happy, I can fit it in around working from home and I’ve enjoyed helping out the community, driving around to pick up and deliver food parcels.

It’s made me realise just how vulnerable some of the elderly residents in my community are and I just wish I could do more to help them, but it’s been important to follow the social distancing rules. The parcels have been full of good quality food items and freshly cooked meals, it’s been wonderful for many of the people receiving the parcels. I’m really glad I’ve been able to help”

Portfolio Holder for Communities, Councillor Gary Gregory said;

“The support we have had from residents who want to volunteer at the Giving for Gedling Humanitarian Centre has been nothing short of astonishing. We are very humbled by the response we’ve had from local people who want to help their communities.

Staff from all over the council have been working alongside this fantastic army of volunteers to really make a difference to those who need it. I have no doubt that once things begin to return to normal, many of those who have offered their time and help will continue to look at ways to continue volunteering.

Everyone at Gedling Borough Council would like to offer their sincerest thanks to those involved with this great cause and to all the wonderful volunteers who have given up their time to help our most vulnerable residents, we couldn’t do this without you.”

- ENDS -

NOTE TO EDITORS

For information, please contact:

Rob McCleary

0115 901 3773

Media and Communications Manager

rob.mccleary@gedling.gov.uk

Nathan Greenwood
Communications Officer

0115 901 3666
nathan.greenwood@gedling.gov.uk

For the latest news and events, follow [@GedlingBC on Twitter](https://twitter.com/GedlingBC)

Sign up to receive email alerts at www.gedling.gov.uk/keepmeposted