

ST MATTHEWS WORK CLUB 2022

Call out for volunteers - January 2022

St Matthews Work Club wants to find at least two or three reliable, committed and skilled volunteers to help re-establish our service after the pandemic.

We are looking for people who can offer 3 hours each week (12.30 to 3.30 on Mondays) and have at least some of the following

- a friendly and caring way of dealing with people
- competence in using computers and other electronic devices to access online resources, manage emails, and word documents (ideally with familiarity with google accounts, gmail, google drive etc.)
- an ability to guide and pass on these skills to our work club members
- some familiarity with the processes of job seeking, developing CVs and improving employability, and dealing with benefits claims.

We meet each Monday afternoon in St Matthew's Mission, on Acregate Lane in Preston and serve a multicultural community where there are high levels of deprivation and poverty and many people facing long term unemployment.

We offer free access to computers and broadband, support in job seeking and other issues around finance and wellbeing. We always offer free brews and usually some food.

We may be able to offer some expenses to volunteers for travel if required. We would ask for a reference from someone who has known you for some time as an employer, a teacher, faith or community group leader etc.

If you are interested and available please get in touch

by email Greg Smith @ pcaninfo@gmail.com

by Phone Rev. Alistair McHaffie 0789 6787878

Background

The work club has running weekly on Mondays for around 7 years. Pre pandemic we regularly had a team of half a dozen volunteers plus support from outside organisations running “clinics” on benefits and smoking etc. We had a regular attendance of around 10 clients about half of whom would be long term members and took referrals of new clients from Job Centre +. We were valued for the informal support, friendly welcome and being treated as a valuable whole person.

From the first Lockdown in March 2020 we closed for 18 months We reopened October 2021 with new set of laptops, and a reduced team of four volunteers. Since then attendance has never gone above 5 members all of whom we have known for a long time though parish and community work. Because of the Omicron wave of Covid we decided not to open in January 2022... As rates are going down fast we anticipate we could get going again by the middle of February.

The work club is managed by and has strong links with St Matthews Church and has a Christian ethos. We serve the whole community and offer our services and an inclusive welcome to working age people of any faith or none. We work in partnership with other agencies such as Preston City Council, local residents association, the wider local network of work clubs, and the NHS.