

VOLUNTEER NEWS

SWAN's Quarterly Volunteer Update Spring Edition 2023

Welcome to the ninth edition Volunteer Newsletter



The Big Help Out

8th May 2023

To mark His Majesty The King's Coronation thousands of organisations across the country are getting together to give everyone the chance to help out in their own local communities.

This Issue

The Big Help Out
In Brief: Highlights of
2022-23
EbE's & Co-Production

Although SWAN are not organising an event on the 8th May we will be using the day as an opportunity to promote our volunteer roles and encourage people to look at what we have to offer and sign up.

Our new **Volunteer Pack** will be available for people to download and here they can read all about SWAN's fantastic Volunteer Programme and all it has to offer to prospective volunteers.



To download a copy of our Volunteer Pack head to www.swanadvocacy.org.uk/volunteer

You can also catch up with all the latest news on our socials:



In Brief: Highlights of 2022-23

Whilst not wanting to give too much away now, as all the information will be available for **Volunteers Week** in our **Annual Volunteer Impact Report**, we are excited that 2022-23 has been another successful year for volunteering at SWAN with 10 volunteers joining our service and 3 students volunteering their time as part of their studies.



Two of our highlights last year were that 3 of our volunteers have progressed to paid employment with SWAN giving them the chance to progress their careers in advocacy. We have also been successful in recruiting our first Volunteer who was also an attendee at our Be Heard in Somerset Self-Advocacy Workshop. They are now helping to facilitate the project and bring their own lived experience and perspective to the programme.

Read about this in more detail in our **Volunteers Week Special** in June and our other successes of 2022-23.



Experts by Experience (EbE) and Co-Production

Many people have worked, volunteered, and used SWAN's services over the past 24 years, and they have all helped shape us to be the organisation that we are today. SWAN are looking to harness the voices of people who have real 'lived experience' of vulnerability, disability, or exclusion and support them to speak openly, so that we can improve not only the service we provide but help to influence other services in the community. We refer to people with 'lived experience' as **Experts by Experience (EbE)**.

EbE's are important to SWAN. They not only bring their unique perspectives which will help us shape our organisation but they ensure that we are talking and thinking about the right things that really matter to people. Our **Co-Production Groups** provide a platform for us to gather this information and engage with EbE's. Our Co-Production Group, run by **Hannah Slatford, Social Value & Projects Manager**, is built on the idea that those who use our service are best placed to help design it.

SWAN are seeking people who are using, or who have used our services, to join our Co-Production Groups, volunteering your time and expertise so that we can gain this valuable insight and make sure our services are inclusive for all. You would attend a quarterly meeting at SWAN and Hannah can provide all the information you need if you'd like to be involved.

I'm **Hannah Slatford, Social Value and Projects Manager for SWAN**. If you decide to join our Co-production Group, or get involved with the Be Heard projects then you will be working with me. As an advocate I always tried to think like my clients, and how they would feel using our documents and forms. Often I felt things could be amended to make the process more effective.



Co-production gives us that space to make those changes and, hopefully, improve the experience for future clients. We need EbE's for our Be Heard projects, as you are the ones who have gone through the difficult times, you are the one's who know what needs to be done to make things better.

The main reason our projects have succeeded is because nothing beats a supportive, safe environment, where people know they are understood by others, and have shared similar journeys. That sort of power cannot be generated by someone who hasn't been through what you have.

If you'd like to volunteer with our **Co-Production Group** or hear more about this project contact: Hannah via email at coproduction@swanadvocacy.org.uk or call **03333 44 7928**

For more information about our voluntary roles go to;

www.swanadvocacy.org.uk/volunteer Or contact our Volunteer Manager, Anna Temblett Tel: **03333 44 7928** Email: volunteer@swanadvocacy.org.uk



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