The Crossroads Centre Project/Meltham Foodbank

Kirklees Employment Service Staff Member Volunteer Journey

"During the covid pandemic and in Lockdown I worked from home for 14 months. After some discussion with my manager about my wellbeing, I saw an opportunity at The Crossroads Centre Foodbank, where they were looking for volunteers. I started to volunteer in the warehouse, making food parcels and helping rotate stock. This was great as my day job at the time involves a lot of sitting and staring at a screen. Also meeting (socially distanced) new people and being productive was good for my soul. It was agreed with my manager that I could spend 2 hours a fortnight at the foodbank.

After lockdown finished, so did my time at the warehouse but not the food bank. I continued to volunteer as the cleaner of the warehouse.

Another opportunity arose at the foodbank and through the social value part of our work contract with Kirklees council I was back in the foodbank 2 hours every 2 weeks, being the first point of contact when someone received a food parcel. My role was to ring people up, check- in on their welfare, provide information about other services at the Crossroads Project and signpost to other local support services.

The social value contract for Kirklees Employment Service has now finished but my manager could see the value I was getting from this work and the benefit to the project. I was able to continue and still attend the foodbank every 2 weeks for 2 hours part of my working week.

On reflection this supported me to maintain my wellbeing through covid, as I am part of a community and made good friends. Do good, feel good, as the saying goes.

It was with great delight and pride that the Crossroads Project received the Kings Award for Voluntary Service earlier this year. All volunteers were invited to attend the presentation and the party to celebrate all the people past and present who have and continue to contribute to the Crossroads project.

It brought all volunteers from all walks of life together to celebrate. The king's representative, HM Lord Lieutenant of West Yorkshire presented The Crossroads Project with the award and the Mayor of Kirklees also attended the celebration".