

Tales from the TSI Network

Supporting Volunteering For All

All across Scotland

supporting people into employment – Fife Voluntary Action



Marion, now 50, hadn't worked for 15 years. Once a pâtissier working in the stressful environment of an industrial kitchen, she had become unwell, had been in and out of hospital and was severely withdrawn. Unable to do anything on her own, this gentle, quiet lady still lived with her parents.

Marion was first referred to Fife Voluntary Action from Fife Employment Action Trust (FEAT), which supports people with mental health problems back into employment.

Although she had completed its Set Targets & Reach Success (STARS) course, setting goals to help her move forward, she was still significantly lacking in confidence and didn't know what to do with her life. ***Could volunteering be the answer?***

How Fife Voluntary Action supported Marion

When Volunteer Development Officer Jacquie Mellon first met Marion, she was faced with someone who couldn't even make eye contact with her, could barely speak and was profoundly shy with no self-worth. Her answer was always, "I can't do that".

Jacquie could never imagine this unassuming lady working in a large kitchen environment and understood how she had become so ill with stress. She began by building Marion's trust, tapping into her former love of baking to look for a suitable volunteering avenue. Having highlighted several opportunities and taking her to meet people, Jacquie was continually faced with "this is not for me".



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Despite these seemingly constant setbacks, Jacquie maintained a link, kept looking and when a new community café set up just two miles from where Marion lived, she accepted a volunteer post.

Jacquie was on hand to provide the stable influence that Marion had grown to know but was able to gradually extract herself over time. Popping in once a month, she saw a huge difference in Marion, who was now smiling and actually talking with customers.

Marion in employment

Marion loves working her 12 hours a week in the kitchen, laughing with customers – regulars and even strangers. She continues her voluntary work in the community café and has taken on a second voluntary role in the local hospital with the RVS.

One major breakthrough has been her move into independent living – Marion now has her own flat.



FVA is the place for
volunteering in Fife
fifevoluntaryaction.org.uk

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Volunteer's Week
volunteersweek.org



Voluntary Action Scotland is the national
network of Third Sector Interfaces
www.vascotland.org