

Archives and Local History Support Volunteer

WHERE

This opportunity is available in Archives and Local History, Explore York Library Learning Centre, Museum Street, York.

WHAT WILL I BE DOING?

Our Archives and Local History service at York Explore includes an archives reading room (open four days a week) and local history and family history rooms (open seven days a week). The local history room also doubles as the library's quiet study zone. Our ethos is that the service is for everyone with an interest in archives, family history and local history, regardless of their current level of expertise or end goal, so it is more important than ever that our customers receive the right support to find the information they require.

The Archives and Local History collections are broad and varied, ranging from medieval manuscripts to 21st century digital files, from the records of local government to those of community groups and small businesses.

We are looking for passionate volunteers to support customers using the Archives and Local History service, primarily through orientation and answering simple enquiries.

HOW WILL I BE HELPING YOU?

You will be supporting our Reading and Learning Advisors with simple customer queries, such as how to find a newspaper article or locate a map. You will also support staff in monitoring the local and family history spaces and in maintaining the security and preservation of the collections when they are in use. You will not be expected to monitor the space alone and there will always be a member of library staff on duty.

TASKS

- Welcoming customers as they arrive in the local history and family history spaces.
- Orientating customers using the spaces so that they can find the information they require easily.
- Answering simple enquiries from customers about our core collections, such as how to find a newspaper article or locate a map.
- Ensuring the 'house rules' of the spaces are followed, including the 'no food or drink' policy and the quiet study zone.
- Ensuring that the Archives and Local History spaces are kept tidy, with books in the correct locations.
- Re-shelve any books left out.
- Creating book displays to highlight particular topics or collections.
- Supporting library staff in any other Archives and Local History activities as they arise. There may be opportunities to work directly with our archive collections, but this will depend on archivist availability and service priorities.

WHAT SKILLS DO I NEED?

- This role would suit someone who enjoys working with the public, or who would like to develop their skills by gaining experience in customer service.
- You should be friendly and helpful, with a positive attitude and good team-working skills.
- Good reading and comprehension skills are essential.
- A good standard of literacy, numeracy and IT skills.
- A calm and methodical approach.
- An interest in archives, research or York history.

WHAT WILL I LEARN?

- You will have the opportunity to learn more about the different types of resources held by the Archives and Local History service, and develop your team-working and customer service skills.
- You will also develop the skills to empower and enable customers who may be new to archives to understand how they can view and use our collections.

HOW MUCH TIME DO I NEED TO COMMIT?

Minimum commitment is one hour per week, up to a maximum of 2 hours on one day per week, to be mutually-agreed with the York Explore volunteer team. Opportunities are available seven days a week, including evenings and weekends, subject to availability.

You will be invited to one of our Explore induction sessions which happen twice a year.