

Volunteering delivers a new dawn for Kim

For **36** year old Kim Day from Ely Cardiff, throwing herself wholeheartedly into volunteering for her community has proved the perfect antidote for the anxieties caused by a troubled childhood.

When she realised her unsettled upbringing was starting to cause problems in her adult life, she resolved to do something to bring about a marked change in her lifestyle.

Starting as a volunteer with Communities First West Cardiff Cluster in the Ely and Caerau area at the Mill Park Community Project, where she would: attend planning meetings; shop for resources; support the running of the holiday provision by making food and running activities for children and young people.



Kim has steadily expanded her activities over a nine month period and is now an active member of at least five community groups, in some cases sitting on the board or steering committee.

Projects such as:

Feel Good Families - which she attends most weeks helping the volunteers with healthy living planning and attending healthy lifestyle training

The Less is More energy saving group and PoP Up community outreach – making soup, hot chocolate and offering energy saving advice

Get Ely Growing - attending planning meetings, training sessions, conferences, putting home growing packs together and handing them out to other community members.

Escape - (support group for families with children with learning difficulties and disabilities) she attends their events helping with the food and arts and crafts activities.

Whenever there is a community event on, Kim will be there supporting the running: Community Pride, where she came, litter picked and made the children hot chocolate. Timeplace events, she comes takes pictures and signs people in, PoP up kitchens she helps prep the food speaks to community members and serves the

meals up. All of which have benefitted from Kim's outstanding contribution and positive outlook. This has helped to engage hundreds of people in her community.

Always willing to attend training courses to improve her skills Kim has now completed her Level 1 & 2 Food and Nutrition course, using these skills to support the 'Feel Good Family' group.

From litter picking to arts and crafts, Kim has never shied away from opportunities to support her community, and this was recognised when she won 'Volunteer of the Year' earlier 2014.

Kim has attended a number of different events and conferences where she has stood up and spoken of her experiences of volunteering with ace / Community 1st and Timeplace, she was also filmed recently for a tackling poverty event (which she also attended).

Kim then became an ACE board director attending the monthly meetings, making decisions on the development of ace, Community Ambassador: sharing key information with fellow community members about ace and community events and she is a key member of the Timeplace Steering Committee, ensuring a co-productive running of the time banking scheme used in the Ely / Caerau and Fairwater area.

Her commitment eventually landed her a permanent paid position on the health team of Communities First West Cardiff Cluster where she's now applying her skills full time to help a community facing high unemployment, life expectancy 10 years below the average and mental health issues more prevalent than anywhere else in Cardiff.

Cardiff West Cluster Manager John Hallett said of Kim's success

"Kim is valued member of the team who through hard work and an unbelievable commitment has seen real transition in her life. Involved initially in the back ground of a successful community group she has grown considerably in confidence to support and take a leading role in a number of community run activities and groups. She leads by example and is always happy."