



May 2015

## **Volunteer and potentially end up with a job!**

In November 2014, Tania Rush was attending a training course which was being held at Amber Valley CVS' offices in Ripley. Whilst here, she enquired about what volunteering opportunities we had available that matched her interests and experience.

Tania previously worked in social care and gave it up to bring up her two sons. She wanted to volunteer to update her skills and broaden her horizons, hopefully having the experience to get a new job. Her main interests were around drug rehabilitation, domestic violence, helping families, the legal system, prisoners and ex offenders and mental health.

Our Volunteer Development Worker, Hannah Curzon met with Tania to discuss her interests and to look at what volunteer opportunities were available that she might be interested in. Hannah suggested an opportunity that was available with the Derbyshire Appropriate Adult Service (DAAS).

The DAAS is a voluntary service which provides support for vulnerable juveniles and adults who have a learning disability or mental health problem, whilst in police custody. The aim of the service is to ensure equal opportunities for people of different ages, gender, ethnic groups and degrees of ability in its work. An Appropriate Adult must be present in such circumstances to explain to the suspect what is going on, help with any communication problems and ensure that the interviewing is carried out fairly.

Tania was instantly interested in finding out more information about DAAS so Hannah referred her contact details to the schemes Coordinator and asked him to contact Tania directly to discuss this opportunity. Tania attended an intensive training course in February 2015 which took six weeks. During the second and third week, Tania shadowed another Appropriate Adult and two weeks after her training was completed, she was asked to attend a police interview, on her own, acting as an Appropriate Adult for a vulnerable adult. Tania volunteers on an on-call basis, providing cover from 8am to midnight each day, 365 days per year. She only volunteers when she is able to, to work around her personal life.

*Tania said, 'I completed the Volunteer Passport with Amber Valley CVS and Hannah supported me to find a volunteer position. As an Appropriate Adult, I have been able to support people from all walks of life with lots of vulnerabilities. I really enjoy going into the police station, prisons and doing this role. It has enabled me to continue my professional development without the pressure of full time work. I do however hope the prospect of employment will be something that I am able to do with relative ease, now I have completed the training and have been successfully placed on the Appropriate Adult register. If nothing else, I have gained skills and knowledge of an area I knew nothing about and I am doing something valuable with my spare time. I couldn't have done this without the support of Hannah, Collette and the team. Thank you so much'.*

It's been almost three months since Tania started volunteering as an Appropriate Adult. She has recently been asked if would be interested in applying for a paid job with the service as they have seen her in action, helping vulnerable adults and think that she does a really good job and would be an asset to their team.

Through Tania's commitment as a volunteer, Tania showed DAAS her strengths in terms of being confident, having great communication skills, being assertive, calm and enthusiastic. This will hopefully result in her gaining employment with the service.

If you are interested in becoming a volunteer Appropriate Adult, please contact our Volunteer Development Worker, Hannah Curzon on 01773 512076 or email [hannahcurzon@avcvs.org](mailto:hannahcurzon@avcvs.org)