

Medway Libraries & Archives Volunteer Role Description

Role description	Conversation café host – Gillingham library at Gillingham Hub
Location	Gillingham Community Hub. Phone: 01634 337799
Duties	<p>The café is an informal group, to enable people to practice and improve their spoken English language skills. The café provides an opportunity to practise speaking and listening skills in a relaxed and friendly environment. Fluency and literacy grow with confidence, so the primary goal is to get everyone talking. As people get to know one another their comfort in speaking grows. The group is aimed primarily at people whose first language is not English, and who are aged 18 plus. The café is not a class. The volunteer is responsible for</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welcoming people to the group • Encouraging conversation between participants. If appropriate by suggesting a “theme” for each session. For example, talking about Christmas and midwinter celebration around December. • Correcting participants spoken English, but in a way that encourages them to continue to practice. It may be that some mistakes may need to be left uncorrected to encourage a learner’s confidence. Your role is to facilitate and encourage people to practice, not to “teach” • Monitoring group size, recording numbers attending. If the number exceeds 10-15 on a regular basis a second group may be needed. • Ensuring that health and safety is maintained. Reporting any concerns to library staff.
Desirable skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good with people • Patience • Good with English, especially spoken English • Able to use own initiative • Awareness of needs / cultures of people whose first language is not English
Timetable	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Every Wednesday afternoon during Medway Adult Education term-time only. Dates will be available from staff. • We ask volunteers to be available on site for each meeting 15 minutes before it starts, and for 30 minutes afterwards. • The library staff will record the number of hours volunteered • Rochester community hub hosts a café every Wednesday morning during Medway Adult Education term times.
Reporting/supervision	Branch Manager, Gillingham Community Hub
Library link person	Local staff working at Gillingham Community Hub
Training & induction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Branch Manager or a designated member of staff will carry out an induction to the library including health & safety, fire procedures, attendance, punctuality, absences and staff facilities. • An additional induction will cover the guidance needed to host the group.
Induction pack	The volunteer will receive an induction pack which includes the volunteer policy, expenses payable, problem-solving policy, expenses set up form and expenses claim form.
Benefits	Adults who volunteer regularly are entitled to a volunteer borrower card. This provides concessions on book fines and a 20% discount on hire charges for audio-visual stock.
Review date	September 2025