Nicola Vella

Community Voluntary Services Tendring

CVS Tendring's Volunteer Co-ordinator, Nicky Vella, has recruited, inducted and supported almost 1,000 volunteers from diverse backgrounds over the past 8 years. During this time these volunteers have contributed an estimated 120,000 hours which equates to a monetary value of almost £1.5 million based on the current national minimum wage. Nicky is a tireless advocate for the value of volunteering, both within the organisation and beyond. She is respected not only as a manager, but as a mentor, leader, and friend to many. With an approach rooted in empathy and equity, she ensures all volunteers are provided with meaningful roles and ensures that they have appropriate training and the ongoing support, recognition and encouragement that they need to continue with their roles to reach their potential. She ensures that volunteers' voices are heard as services are co-produced, designed and delivered. Her leadership has fostered a culture where volunteers feel valued, empowered, and proud to be part of something meaningful. Her commitment to inclusive volunteering, strategic leadership, and above all, human connection and fun leaves a lasting mark not only on our organisation, but on every individual she supports.

Volunteers have said: "She always has time for volunteers, if you tell her anything she will sort it out" "Nicky is so supporting and understanding, nothing is too much trouble". Volunteers report increased self-esteem and wellbeing from knowing they're making a positive difference. Volunteering also encourages routine, physical activity, and engagement outside the home, which can benefit those struggling with unemployment or long-term health conditions. Last year 11 CVS Tendring volunteers went on to secure employment.