

**Community Champions**

**The type of support available**

Community Champions are people from across Rochdale Borough who make a positive difference by helping others. They are real people, men and women of all ages and backgrounds who have the time, commitment and skills to offer support. Some have professional backgrounds and use those skills as a volunteer. Others are "expert by experience" or have developed their skills through training. Community Champions are available to help you with lots of different issues.

Community Champions can help you:

* Develop your skills, including literacy (reading and writing) and digital (I.T) support.
* Get the most out of life if you're isolated or feeling lonely.
* Complete a benefit check to see what kind of benefits you may be entitled to.
* Apply for financial support such as energy and/or shopping vouchers via the Household support/hardship fund, Pension Credit, Carer’s Allowance, Attendance Allowance, PIP.
* Apply for forms such as a bus pass or blue badge application.
* Feel welcome at a number of groups such as Arts and Craft, Chatty Café’s, Living Well Walks, Fibromyalgia and Chronic Pain, Bilingual Story Time, Therapeutic Thursdays, Friendship Groups and Women’s Group.

**Getting help**

We'll ask you for some basic details about what you need so we can work out the right type of support for you. If you want to go ahead with the support, we'll arrange for you to meet a Community Champion in a place that's convenient and safe, such as a local Library or Community Centre, should the support require a face to face appointment, or a phone appointment if meeting face to face is not necessary.

**Availability**

Please note that support does also depend on the availability of our Community Champions. If there aren’t any Community Champions available upon the request for support, Living Well will signpost you to other organisations such as Citizen’s Advice.

**Become a Community Champion**

If you're interested in becoming a Community Champion, contact us so we can discuss your interests and roles availbale. After this discussion, if you want to proceed, we'll contact you to invite you to an Induction, so that you can get more information and complete the necessary training and documentation required to become a volunteer. Most champions get a lot from their role and report that it helps to keep them well, is a chance to master their skills and support those who access the service.

**How the project works​**

It's important that Community Champions work alongside services to provide support to the people. They are not constrained by targets or budgets but can get on with helping people. They do not replace any service that should already be available. The aim of the project is to make life better for people and usually this means working co-operatively with others.

We find new champions, provide support and match them up with people who need their help. The team coordinate the service and sort resources including training, finding rooms and making sure that Champions' expenses are covered.

The Champions lead the project. They decide what they will do, how and where and they ask for changes to be made to enable them to do that. The team then make the arrangements, usually in partnership with other services.

Champions meet regularly with each other and with partners and also keep in touch with each other in their communities.

**Contact us**

If you'd like ​help from a Community Champion, or if you'd like to become one, please get in touch with us on the number below.

If you're contacting us on behalf of someone else, that's fine, just make sure you get the person's permission first.​

**Contact Living Well on 01706 392210 for further details.**