



Unpaid Work

In Sheffield



Community
Payback

SOUTH YORKSHIRE

Individual Placements

Individual Unpaid work placements account for 35% of all hours worked in Sheffield. In order to qualify as potential placements, agencies need to be voluntary, statutory, charitable and non-profit making in nature. They also have to offer work not otherwise done by paid staff. The duties have to be physically, emotionally or intellectually taxing, but must also be interesting and of value to both the worker and the placement.

The voluntary sector has become a lot more organised and professional. Most now have policies in place which govern the use of volunteers, for example some placements will not consider taking offenders with offences such as theft, drugs or violence.

Our main aim was to build up a range of placements which could offer work capable of being done by most able of clients as well as the least able. At the moment we have 107 participating placements.

These placements vary from elderly persons' homes to schools, animal sanctuaries, museums, charity shops, churches and mosques. One client with joinery skills is currently building a library shelving unit with computer work station areas for a junior school, another client has helped install sound equipment in a theatre. We have also forged links with the Territorial and regular Army which has resulted in career opportunities for some offenders.



Serving the community in South Yorkshire

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All clients who receive a UPW order in court, are interviewed by a CS duty officer. A number of factors are taken into account when identifying a potential individual placement candidate including previous convictions, present offence, child care problems and health problems. We attempt to find out as much as possible about the client, they may have special skills, talents or abilities which may compliment a placements requirements. Every effort is made to make the link-up safe and successful for all concerned.



The next stage is to visit the placement and put forward a case for consideration. The placement can decline at that point or it may agree to an interview with offender. This meeting allows the parties to meet and work out what tasks they will carry out and the day and times they will work. This is formalised by written work instructions. Each client must perform a minimum of 6 hours per week. Some clients perform UPW duties during the day, some in the evenings and others at weekends. A supply of time sheets and a clocking in card is left with each placement manager.

The key to the successful placement of offenders depends upon a number of factors – primarily a “round pegs in round holes” operation, equally important is the support given to each participating placement. After all without their goodwill and enthusiasm to help offenders there would be no scheme.

The vast majority of offenders complete their order with great credit. To date well over 40 people have been given employment by their placements. As for statistics the monthly attendance rate averages 90% and the completion rate is 98%.