

Could volunteering in your local community be your New Year resolution?

As we reflect on the year that is ending and look ahead to the New Year many people feel they would like to offer their time and skills through volunteering but are unsure how to do this.

Volunteering is open to everybody, no matter how much or how little time they have to offer. Many people of all ages, backgrounds, interests and abilities appreciate the value of volunteering; both to themselves and to the people they help. What's more they usually enjoy themselves!

Q: What do volunteers look like?

A: They look like this! This picture shows thirteen happy volunteers who have just finished their Preparation Course with Home-Start in St Albans, and they are proudly displaying their certificates – and their big smiles!

'I was anxious before I came on the course, but I have loved every minute of it,' said Angela, 'I can't wait to get started supporting a family.'

'I felt really valued, the course was run very professionally, and it was interesting and eye-opening. I'll miss it!' commented Jill.

These volunteers are now ready to go into the homes of families with young children who need a helping hand – practical and emotional support to make the difficult job of being a parent a bit easier, and hopefully more enjoyable.

Sally Patterson, Home-Start's Senior Co-ordinator is delighted with her new volunteers. 'Their commitment means that 13 more families will have a volunteer placed with them in January, and that will give these parents and children an excellent start to the New Year.'

Home-Start are looking for more potential volunteers, who must have full-time parenting experience, to join in the next Preparation Course which starts in January.

'The course will run on Thursday evenings from January to March, with two Saturdays as well,' said Sally. 'Anyone who is interested should contact us in the office for further information.'

So, do you think you look like a volunteer? Take a look in the mirror. Yes you do! So why not call Home-Start on 01727 833810 and you too can start the New Year with a big smile!