
Swansea University



**STUDENT COMMUNITY
ACTION**

HANDBOOK '91 - 92

Imagine as you are reading this booklet, if you don't have any of these disabilities, that you can't hear any of the sounds around you, or that you can't see anything and someone is reading this to you. Or that you can't hold the booklet because of a disability, or you're in a wheelchair; would any of these things make you a different person? Of course not; but you may or do find people treat you as a different person. In Community Action, in order to treat people as people, we view our work not as "helping" people, but working with those who have social, physical, mental or emotional disabilities, for a beneficial experience that we hope works positively for everyone. So, whilst you're at university, don't isolate yourself from those who are isolated without a choice.



Swansea Student Community Action (S.S.C.A.) is committed to equal opportunities for all people to be fully involved in our work. We recognise that discrimination exists in all levels of society, including at University, and that discriminatory practice leads to isolation. We are aiming to fight this, especially within S.C.A, by taking positive action to move towards redressing the balance. The chance to participate is open to anyone, regardless of age, gender, physical abilities, race, sexual preference, colour or religion and we would positively encourage anyone who feels discriminated against to feel able to take part in S.C.A. We strive for all our activities and publicity to reflect this, and would welcome any comments or criticisms.

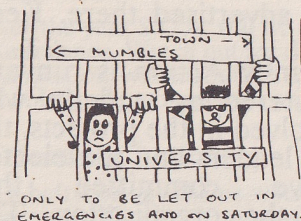
The aim of this booklet is to introduce you to Swansea Student Community Action; what S.C.A. is, the projects it runs and is involved in and the opportunities available to you through volunteering with Community Action.

About Student Community Action.....

Swansea, as you know or will soon discover, is a campus university set in Singleton Park and at Hendrefolian House, both away from the city centre. Although many students live outside the college, the focus is still on the campus. Swansea has many of the complex social issues and concerns of major cities, and all of us can seem oblivious and uninterested in these at times, and in the communities that face them. However



students can, and do, play a part in the community by offering practical support in local issues, such as homelessness, lack of provision for play, loneliness and discrimination. To bring about change may seem a challenging task, but with people and positive involvement, achievements are made. Being involved in S.C.A. allows you to work with various sections of the



local community, which can bring changes practically and in people's awareness.

Introduction Meeting.....

We are holding an Introduction Meeting on Monday 7th October in Mandela Bar, on the top floor of the Students' Union (Mandela House) at 7.30 p.m. This will tell you more about all the projects and what volunteering with Student Community Action means, and you can meet those involved. If you can't make the meeting, feel free to call into the S.C.A. office any day, except Tuesday mornings and Thursday afternoons, between 10.00 a.m. and 4 p.m.

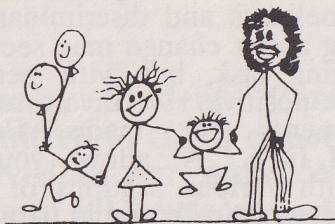


Getting Involved.....

Getting involved in S.C.A. is open to anyone who wishes to volunteer. A volunteer is someone who gives part of their time, energy, ideas and enthusiasm freely (i.e. unpaid) to work with others. People volunteer for all sorts of reasons.... wanting to meet others, including people other than students; something different to do; having volunteered with people with disabilities, children, etc. before; and for fun.

Over the next few pages are brief descriptions of the projects that S.C.A. runs (these are run by students who have been involved in the project, and are now running it) and the ones that we refer volunteers to (these are run by other voluntary organisations in Swansea and West Glamorgan). If you are interested then find us at Fresher's Fair, or in the Community Action offices on the 1st floor of the Students' Union (same as the coffee bar) for more information.

We have a large noticeboard in the foyer of Fulton House, and all our activities and need for volunteers are advertised there. Keep your eye on it.



Community Action is run and administered by students who are involved in the projects, the project leaders and the elected executive committee that directs the organisation. The elected chairperson of the committee is Sharon Lister, who has overall responsibility.

We employ a full-time co-ordinator, John Evans, and a part-time administrative assistant, Gina Threlfal, who both work in the office and there to talk to you about S.C.A.

About the Projects.....

You don't need any experience to volunteer with our projects. If you feel unsure, arrange to see the co-ordinator. We offer training and support for volunteers. If you want more details, ask in the office. Transport is provided for most of our projects. If you need to use public transport, then S.C.A. will re-imburse all the costs, as we provide ALL expenses needed. Please keep all your tickets/receipts & bring them to the office.



Age Concern's Lifeline Project..

involves working with elderly people on the use of emergency lifesaving telephones, installed by Age Concern, who train volunteers how to use the phone, to then teach the clients. This project needs regular commitment, and is extremely worthwhile.

Childminding Scheme..

involves volunteers looking after a child/children, some with a learning difficulty (mental handicap), when the parent/s need a break. We also offer the service to parents who are studying at college. Ask in the office for details.



Cwm Youth Club..

is on Weds. 3.30 p.m to 6.30, when volunteers take children from a local youth club to Swansea's deluxe leisure centre to go swimming. The children are great, and will broaden your vocabulary, if not your mind!

English as a Second Language (E.S.L)..

is a project working with the partners (mostly women) of, and/or overseas students and local Asian women, where volunteers spend time sharing their experience and knowledge of English language and British culture.

First Aid..

over the year S.C.A. will be offering First Aid courses in conjunction with St.John's Ambulance. Watch out for details on the S.C.A. noticeboard in Fulton House. Upon completion we encourage you to make use of your skills by volunteering with St.John's when they cover events.

Friends In Action..

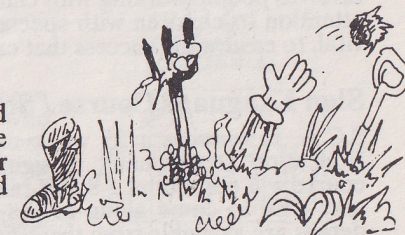
is a befriending scheme where each volunteer spends time with a young adult with a learning difficulty. You usually spend a couple of hours each week, so this needs a regular commitment, but is very rewarding.

Friendship House Literacy..

is on Tuesdays 6.20 p.m. to 8.30. A minibus will pick you up from college to go to the literacy classes that aim to provide basic literacy, numeracy and social skills for adults with learning difficulties. Volunteers work alongside teachers, assisting on a one to one basis with the students.

Gardening and Decorating..

each Wednesday and Friday afternoon, armed with equipment to work on the front line, and the front garden, you can paint or mow, weed or paper for those people in Swansea that need assistance with their house or garden.



Gingerbread..

is a self-help group run by, and for, single parents. The Brynmill branch meets on Friday evenings 7 - 9 p.m. in the community centre, and volunteers offer play facilities for the children during the meetings.

Hoppits Holidays..

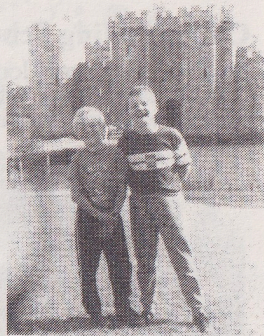
runs day trips and weekend holidays (4 per term) for young people with learning difficulties, and their sisters and brothers. The emphasis is on fun for both volunteers and young people. You needn't go on every trip, but there are weekly meetings on Monday nights, 6.30 in College Bar.



Kid's Away..

runs day trips and 3 weekend holidays each term for children (aged 6-8, 9-12, 13-15) referred by social services. Holidays have been to London, Bristol, Stratford, as well as within Wales. As with Hoppits the emphasis is to work for an enjoyable holiday. Again, there are weekly meetings in College Bar on Weds. 12.30 p.m.

Both Hoppits and Kid's Away have big Christmas parties, so watch out for those, as we need lots of volunteers.



Pensioner Visiting..

is an area of work we'd like to develop. At present you can visit individuals, or in local residential homes. We'd very much like to arrange trips, tea dances, or social clubs, so if you would like to work with the elderly, please come to the office.

P.H.A.B. Club..

is a social club for students and young people, with physical disabilities, providing social contact through trips to the cinema, pubs, bowling, bar-b-ques, and it goes on..on Monday nights 7.15 to 10 (bus picks up from Fulton House steps)

Pooh Bear..

involves people working with children in primary schools in Swansea, giving valuable attention to children with special learning needs. A regular weekly commitment is vital, to ensure the success that can arise from this scheme.

Sign Language Course / Social Club..

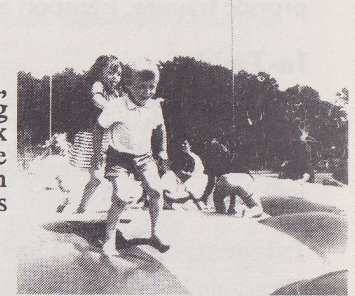
S.C.A. is running a 25 week course, in conjunction with the University's Adult Education Department, in sign language for communication with the deaf. The course will cost about £ 8, but places are limited. As you gain a basic knowledge you may wish to come along to the social club we run. If you can already sign, then details are available from the office.

Sport for Young People..

with special needs..as part of the Special Olympics organisation we provide sporting opportunities for young people with special needs. If you have any sporting skills you'd like to share, then volunteer for this.

Tuesday Night Club..

is for older teenagers in Bon-y-maen, East Swansea, where the young people direct the club. The young people are very upfront and challenging, and the work within the club is often very demanding. If you are looking for a challenge in your volunteering, then Tuesdays 6 p.m. to 8.45 p.m. is for you! (the bus picks up from Fulton House steps.)



Union Playscheme..

runs during each term's half term when children of students and staff are offered a place on the Student Union's playscheme. It's great fun, and runs for one week a term, so if you have limited time to volunteers, please consider this.

Reading Project..

Swansea University is increasing its' access for students with visual impairment, which is something S.C.A. feels very strongly about. The opportunity for a higher education degree should be open to anybody, so the University's encouragement to disabled people to study is a positive step. However, the support needs are great. One way in which we can assist is by reading course literature onto tape, as and when it is needed by the students. If you are interested in being one of a pool of volunteers, then all you need is the text, the equipment (which you can use in your own home), and to call into the office.

About the Projects run by other agencies.....

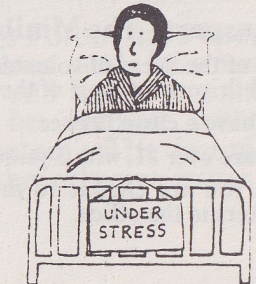


Arts for people with disabilities..

runs drama workshops that investigate "things" through drama and movement. Working with people through drama can allow people to explore many things, especially everyone's disabilities. More details from the office.

Cefn Coed..

is Swansea's hospital for people with a mental illness, where there is a full time volunteer organiser who works with volunteers to provide support. Opportunities involve befriending a client, visiting them on a regular basis, helping to relieve the problem of social isolation. On Thursday evenings there is a social club, which aims to rehabilitate clients. Volunteers are welcome to come along and join in with the activities.



Co-operative Youth Initiative (C.Y.I.)..

encourages young people to work together and use their skills to create their own jobs in co-operative enterprises. Volunteers are needed to help present the ideas, and run events in local schools, with a group of 10-12 young people. C.Y.I. staff provide training, transport and lunch.

In-Tandem..

is a local project that gives people with visual and other disabilities the chance to ride a tandem bike, with a sighted volunteer taking the front seat. Volunteer for this and you won't look back.

Integrated Play and Leisure Project..

occasionally looks for volunteers for one off play activities that integrate young people with special needs into the action. Very often this includes half-term playschemes, so keep your attention on the noticeboard.

Sport for people with disabilities..



Swimming, where volunteers assist with children at a local school during their swimming sessions. You can do this at a variety of times, on any day.
Riding, for people with special needs where volunteers lead the horse, walk alongside or talk with the riders. This is on Fridays, 4.30 to 7 p.m.

Tulath House..

is home for young people with special needs. Volunteers can be involved in the education programme, including teaching educational and practical skills, or in socialising with the young people.

Working with stroke victims..

at the Speech Club, Sketty, Mondays 2 - 4 p.m., which is for stroke victims with speech difficulties, working one to one, encouraging people in renewing skills or simply chatting. This can also be done at the people's homes, all of which is a very rewarding as the process progresses.

Transport - The Minibuses

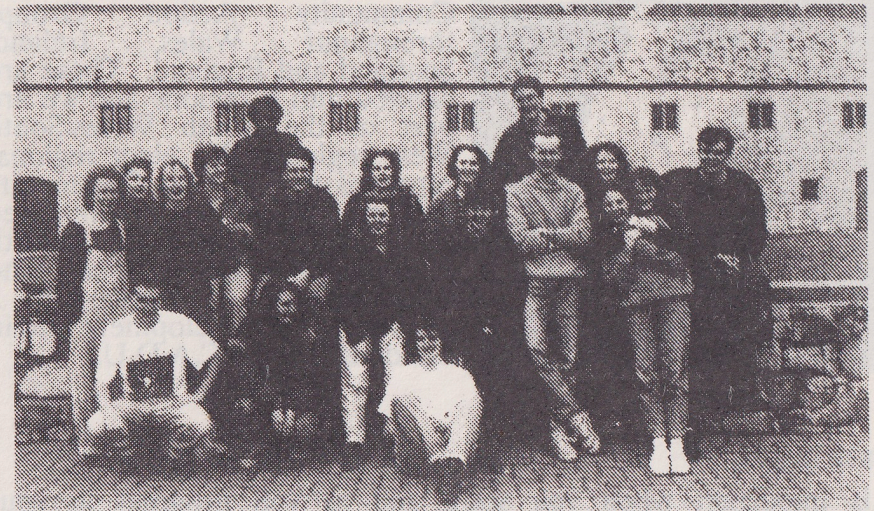
One of the areas of volunteering which crosses most of the projects is driving, as we need drivers for most of them. However there are some requirements. If you;

- have a clean licence
- are over 21, with 3 years driving experience

then you are eligible to drive. If you can offer your skills, please see one of the workers in the office.

About the Organisation.....

The Executive Committee



The executive committee is an elected group of students that directs Student Committee Action (S.C.A.). It is made up of elected officers and project reps. They deal with any problems or tackle issues that arise. Any student is eligible to sit on the committee when a post is free or at the A.G.M.

Open Meetings

All students are invited to our open meetings. These meetings are for information, discussion, and to look at the issues to do with volunteering. They are also a good time for meeting the project leaders.

Project Leaders Forum

The aims of the newly formed Project Leaders Forum have been set as forming a support network, sharing ideas and information, implementation of S.C.A. issues and policies and finally to enhance training possibilities. The structure will be relaxed, with the leadership of meeting based on a rotation system. The forum will meet about 2 or 3 times a term to discuss the relevant issues and problems concerning each project.



About The S.C.A. Network.....

Swansea is one of a network of Community Action Groups throughout Wales, Ireland, Scotland and England. These are divided into 9 regions and we are part of the South Wales/South West region. We elect regional reps onto the Student Community Action Network Committee (S.C.A.N.C.) which deals with policy on a national level. The whole network is serviced by 3 workers at the development unit in London, called S.C.A.D.U.

Training.....

It is important when you start, and as you progress in your volunteering, that you feel equipped to do the job. For this you may need some information and practical training. The projects often offer their own training, so please attend when you can. They often have regular meetings which are important for you to feel confident within the group. Try to attend these to give yourself time to fit in and you will reap the benefits. S.C.A. runs a number of training events. Do attend these. Also, if you want training, please ask as we can always try to arrange training sessions.

Support.....

As a volunteer you have a right to be supported in the work that you're doing. This may come in the form of information, training, a chance to feed back your thoughts or feelings to co-volunteers, the project leaders or the full time worker. This can be done by informal chats, or at meetings. To be effective in what you're doing, get support to help you move forward in your community work. S.C.A. consists entirely of volunteers, so the collective support we can give each other only enhances our effectiveness.

A few notes and helpful hints about getting involved...

Think about what type of work you want to do, and about yourself - would working with a group of noisy kids, or quietly on a one to one basis, suit you best?

Give the project a chance, it may take you a few weeks to settle in.

Make sure you are clear about what you are taking on, the commitment in terms of time and energy. Ask others involved.

If you feel unhappy with the project, lack of training etc. please talk to any one involved in S.C.A. or use the volunteer support sessions- if you're not getting anywhere, it's likely those you're working with aren't either.

Make sure you are never 'out of pocket' - claim expenses.

Occasionally you may be told things in confidence, please respect this confidentiality.

Be aware of the principles of the organisation with which you are going to volunteer, and how it runs.

If you decide to leave, please tell someone.

