

Mencap Shoe box appeal with corporate volunteers 2022

The processes used in the build up to engage the businesses.

One of the important roles at Mencap is to involve people with a learning disability in events which benefit them. In order to do this, we rely heavily on support from members of the community and in particular, corporate companies who are able to support us.

Our first shoe box event was in December 2022. Contact was established with businesses by making use of expressions of interest in volunteering emailed by the Volunteer Centre at Macc on behalf of local businesses. As soon as I see the message in my inbox, I am quick to look at the specifics of the companies who offer support and see if it can fit in with our needs making contact by email and phone if there is a potential match.

One of the biggest challenges we have is our location as we are situated just outside the M60 and many corporates set the M60 as their boundary for volunteering. Despite this, our success rate last year running up to the Christmas appeal was a ratio of about 1:5 enquiries – support that is invaluable.

Last year the shoebox appeal was supported by two companies – Avignon Capital and Aspire. Avignon provided the majority of volunteers. Following my initial contact with them I had face to face online conversations with two senior representatives of the company. The issue of the location of our centre was overcome by Avignon paying for a space in a hotel in central Manchester. As they are a multinational company volunteers were travelling from different places, so a central location was essential.

The other company who supported us was Aspire. Three members of staff were able to join us. The most significant outcome of their involvement was that they very kindly offered space at their offices for our 2023 shoe box event. This is free of charge, and we are extremely grateful. Not only that but they have confirmed 19 volunteers for the day and have also been raising funds to help purchase items to fill the shoeboxes!

We are so very grateful to corporate volunteers. They are helping us to ensure that people with a learning disability are able to give back to their community and support people less fortunate than themselves during the festive season.

June B Stacey, Connection Agent, Mencap