

Mencap Tameside Me Time



Shoebox appeal Tameside Me Time Report from the day

On Thursday 15th December 2022 we worked in three venues to decorate and fill Christmas shoe boxes to give to vulnerable people in the wider Manchester community during the Christmas period.

Boxes for elderly People

In Denton Morrisons community room, four MeTime participants with a learning disability volunteered, one other MeTime volunteer and a member of staff filled 20 shoeboxes for **elderly people**. These shoeboxes were wrapped the week before by corporate volunteers from Gatherwell.

In the MeTime venue, nine MeTime participants with a learning disability, and two members of staff filled a further 20 shoeboxes for **elderly people**. These shoeboxes were also wrapped the week before by corporate volunteers from Gatherwell.



Boxes for Children and the Homeless

In Central Manchester, four Me Time participants with a learning disability and one member of staff worked alongside corporate volunteers from the companies, Avignon Capital and Aspire recruitment. There were nine volunteers from Avignon, four of whom had flown from Europe to Manchester. Unfortunately, rail strikes prevented some Avignon volunteers from participating as they were unable to travel from London in time. There were also four volunteers from the company Aspire recruitment and one independent volunteer. Despite the reduced numbers of people, all 80 shoeboxes, 40 for Homeless people and 40 for children were wrapped and filled.



Boxes all wrapped
Filling boxes for homeless people



Distributing the completed boxes

The boxes for **elderly** people were distributed to a care home in Haughton Green on Friday. You can see from the following photos a full trolley of boxes, one of our volunteers and a member of staff giving boxes out. You can see how full the trolley was and then how it started to empty.



The boxes for **homeless** people were distributed as soon as they were filled on the 15th. By late afternoon, all the boxes had been given to homeless people. The team split into small groups and took different routes around the city. Most boxes were given in person to people on the street and the rest were given to a homeless charity for distribution. Two homeless people given boxes by my team agreed to having their photos taken. There were some lovely comments and stories. One gentleman we met had already been given a box and told us that he was already wearing the socks and showed us he was wearing the gloves. A disabled lady said she had had a really bad day and the gifts had turned it into a good day. Another gentleman was in his sleeping bag and when I said hello, he popped his head out. When we gave him his box, he was putting it inside his sleeping bag and we noticed he had another box, he will be extra warm and enjoy double portions of food. The volunteers I was with smiled at each other.



The boxes for children proved to be quite challenging. The children's hospitals at both Oxford Road and Wythenshawe were unable to take as many as I originally thought. I contacted Manchester social services and spoke with a social worker who works with looked after children. She said they have over 100 looked after children in Manchester.

She was delighted to receive the boxes. Within the bounds of confidentiality, she told me some stories of children who would receive the gifts. I left her feeling that this was where the boxes were meant to go and those are the children who need them most. Her joy and gratitude shone through.

June B Stacey, Connection Agent, Mencap