

Volunteering Case Study

Helena Gribben

When Helena Gribben started volunteering with Forth Valley Top Toes, she was looking for something different. She had no idea it would lead her along a new career path, with her own personal footcare service.

“I think if you’re volunteering, if it’s something you enjoy doing, it can open up lots of different avenues. But I didn’t expect this much.”

Having been a nurse for 30 years, Helena was looking to do something a bit different. She looked online for volunteering opportunities, where she found Forth Valley Top Toes, and began volunteering with them in March 2015.

At first, Helena admits, she was nervous. “Before I started, I wondered, can I do this? I honestly wasn’t sure.”

“But volunteering really helped me build my confidence, and my interpersonal skills. I loved it. It gave me the opportunity to connect with other people, to create relationships.”

“Volunteering with Forth Valley Top Toes gave me a routine, and helped me meet new people. I was helping others, but I was getting something out of it too.”

In December 2015, Helena started to think about taking her volunteering a step further. She began additional training to treat other simple footcare ailments. Since completing her training, she’s been working build her own service, assisting those who cannot visit the Forth Valley Top Toes clinics.

She says that working as a volunteer with Forth Valley Top Toes gave her a great deal of experience in footcare before she trained professionally, helping her understand her clients’ wants and needs better. “It was a great, stress-free way to learn the area and the skills I needed to run the service.”

Helena credits volunteering with Forth Valley Top Toes as the reason she was able to start her service, as well as giving her the experience and confidence she needed to be able to do so.

“I would never have realised there was such a need, or have ever thought about doing it on my own, without volunteering.”