

Communications Department

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Gardener's Delight

Volunteer at the RUH this summer and you could find yourself digging up the flowerbeds.

Rather like the magical private gardens hidden in London squares, the RUH is lucky enough to have a series of courtyard gardens running along the central corridor bringing light and pleasure to anyone walking past.

Friends of the RUH volunteers can spend a few hours a week tidying or embark on more adventurous projects to redesign whole areas. Together with a well established and pioneering arts project, you may find yourself potting out the bedding plants under a 10 foot high crane fly sculpture or weeding next to a wire March hare.

Bernard and Jane Rymer have been volunteering in the RUH gardens for the past two years and make up part of the 8-strong team. Jane says "I love being outside and after 40 years of working in an office, volunteering in the gardens seemed a perfect idea. Hopefully my time spent volunteering helps make a difference to the environment for patients, staff and visitors."

Bernard and Jane fit volunteering in around all their other activities including preparing their own garden for opening to the public as part of the National Garden Scheme this summer.

Bernard adds "Anyone can get involved in gardening at the RUH, and you can give as much or as little time as you can spare."

Jayne Cresswell, Voluntary Services Manager says "So many people are getting involved in gardening nowadays and if you haven't got a patch of land of your own, we'd like you to help us dig over and maintain our lovely gardens. The gardens can be a real retreat or haven for many of our patients, either watching the wildlife and flowers from their bedside or having a few moments of fresh air in the shade."

And the main garden for the Friends Coffee shop has had a dramatic makeover just in time for the annual summer Fete on the 20th June. With new garden furniture and a lovely courtyard area, visitors to the coffee shop can relax over a cup of tea and panini in peace and quiet.

For more information on volunteering in the RUH gardens, or anywhere in the hospital, please contact Jayne Cresswell on 01225 824046 or pop into the Volunteers Office next door to the coffee shop. There are 19 other volunteer opportunities such as hospital guides, coffee shop volunteers, a knitting team and feeding team so if gardening doesn't suit there is sure to be another area where we need help.

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