As I write this 2018 has already begun with supporting the Royal visit to the city and I am planning towards the Coventry Half Marathon as well as exploring a range of new opportunities across events, training and volunteering and so hopefully 2018 can be another successful year as we build and look towards 2021 with our inspiring volunteers.

David Boughey

Thumbs Up for City of Culture!

The nervous excitement was palpable on the evening of December 7th. Why? Because the most momentous event for Coventry since the Olympics and 1987 [I needn’t remind readers!] was within our grasp.

Coventry Ambassadors had been involved in Bid events from the Business launch eons ago to this very special day.

Over 30 of us had arrived early to welcome invited guests, give out flags and generally smile and be happy. Crammed into the Belgrade Theatre foyer, I felt very much part of this amazing atmosphere.

We had heard how Hull had blossomed and benefitted in 2017. Our city could surely do the same. I also knew this could be a time for us Ambassadors to shine. The moment was imminent, technological hiccups meant we were relying on the result via phone not TV, thumbs up or down. Silence. Looking up.

Fingers crossed. Yes? No? YES!

Flags, cheers and tears [from me anyway]. TV, radio and social media coverage showed how we felt and still feel. This single announcement has changed our city. We know as Ambassadors how important this will be for us. We can now shout from the rooftops what an amazing city this is.

Astrid Clarke.

Images by Atul Patel
Celebration & FUNdraising

The Fundraising Events Task Group has been working very hard in the last few months with two very important events in the same week as well as the City of Culture announcement.

The 2017 Celebration event was at the Ricoh Arena and over 50 Ambassadors attended along with a few VIP guests including our opening speaker Dave Moorcroft, who was very complimentary about the Ambassador Programme and our help with the City of Culture bid. After an enjoyable meal came a few games which were organised by Sunny and Caroline.

After a vote we decided to partner our fundraising efforts towards the Coventry Music Museum in 2018. We also had a raffle with the amazing prizes sourced by Lisa. All in all a great night was had by everyone, it was good for the new ambassadors to join in too.

Later that week saw 12 Ambassadors at Tesco checkouts offering to pack customers’ bags and asking for donations. We were raising money for Free Radio’s Cash for Kids and ourselves for volunteer uniform and training. Customers were very generous and in total across all events for the different causes we raised a more than expected £300. An encouraging start – well done Task Group members!

Diane Jones

Is any Buddy there? A tale of two recruits.

We all recognise how scary it can be doing something the first time as well as being with [mostly] strangers, worried about doing the wrong thing etc. So the Induction and Training Group have now put in place a ‘buddy’ system. New recruits wearing their hi-viz jackets are easily recognisable and are paired with more experienced Ambassadors at events. With support and a smile from a partner they can then hopefully enjoy the experience more and continue to volunteer. I wanted to know if this was the case.

JANET joined us very recently and is currently a ‘hi-viz’ wearer. She says it was good to meet other ‘newbies’ as well as seasoned Ambassadors at her training session. I then met Janet again at her first event, the Coventry Christmas Lights switch-on and asked her about her Ambassador experience. She told me ‘I loved it, great to meet the public, handing out leaflets to be in the mix of this annual event. I was ‘buddied up with Kay who ensured I felt comfortable and supported.

She is looking forward to volunteering in 2018 and beyond supporting events that are key to this fantastic city. Well said, Janet.

AYUB joined us early in 2017 and now has ‘earned’ his uniform. From wanting to volunteer his time towards supporting his city, he felt some apprehension prior to coming to the training session. But he felt very welcome in the relaxed and friendly atmosphere. He says it was a positive experience for him.

His first event, the Coventry Half Marathon, was very enjoyable interacting with so many. Ayub remarked on the ambience of the team, looking out for each other. 6 events later he now feels experienced [you are, Ayub!]. He looks forward to a great 2018. So do we all!

We hope that 2018 will bring us more recruits with the enthusiasm, positivity and attitude of Janet and Ayub.

Astrid Clarke

Induction & Training- Moving Forward

We experienced Ambassadors can easily forget what it is like to be a new recruit. New faces, new roles, even new places can be daunting. The Induction and Training Task Group responded to feedback and observation that have led to recent developments in the training process. We now have sessions more frequently with smaller groups. Positive feedback has told us applicants feel better supported, confident and ready to volunteer at the earliest opportunity. The next Induction and Training session will be on 28th February.

Sheila Grainger
We have been busy supporting the following – THANK YOU!

Remembrance Sunday Parade

30 Ambassadors were used in this event making it very popular. We had Ambassadors in places which members of the public were at, making sure that they stayed safe as the marching bands and procession went past. We used the Buddy system very effectively as there were lots of new Ambassadors and it worked so well. We also had people at the Cenotaph helping with the wreath laying ceremony. Rosie from the Lord Mayor’s Office gave us lots to do so it made an interesting event. It was bitter cold but sunny and all the Ambassadors I spoke to really enjoyed it and would like to volunteer for it again next year.

Diane Jones – Lead Ambassador Coordinator.

Royal Visit to Coventry

Building upon the existing partnership between Coventry City Council, Coventry University, Coventry Cathedral and the Positive Youth Foundation – all friends of the Coventry Ambassador programme, the Royal Visit showcased the very best of what Coventry can offer and how we can play such a key role in local events.

Braving the cold, our Ambassadors were there to provide that familiar warm smile and assistance to the public that we have a reputation for. At all stages of the Royal Visit, our volunteers were assisting the public to get the best vantage point of Prince William and Kate and create a truly memorable experience for everyone, inside and outside of the Cathedral.

The fact the Royal Visit follows so closely after Coventry winning the City of Culture is monumental and speaks volumes about the increased recognition our city is gaining.

Organisations and people are choosing to come here; a far cry from the tradition of being sent here. I firmly believe that the Phoenix is the right symbol for Coventry as we continue to re-build and innovate into the future.

As the lead Volunteer Coordinator during the Royal Visit, I am proud of the energy and enthusiasm, each and every one of our volunteers brought, which cannot be understated and always makes the difference. I am proud that entering our sixth year since the London 2012 Olympic Games, we continue to thrive and bring new volunteers into our legacy as we move forward.

Paul Chinn – Lead Ambassador Coordinator

Engage with us!

EnV is a Community Interest Company that manages and delivers a range of events, training & volunteer programmes in Coventry and the surrounding area. Winners of the SME Coventry & Warwickshire Award for Community Business of the Year 2017. EnV manage and sustain the award winning Coventry Ambassador volunteer programme.

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