

*“We have gained a more youthful outlook and viewpoint on the volunteer role approach and what we should be talking about.”*



*“Our City Host volunteer role is very flexible and can be for just two hours a week.”*

## Norwich Business Improvement District

Louise Hunt

City Host Supervisor

Norwich Business Improvement District (BID) is run for local businesses by local businesses. It enhances and promotes the local environment for its businesses, employees, customers and the community. This includes the City Hosts who welcome, guide and assist visitors in the BID area providing help and advice to enable them to gain the maximum benefit and enjoyment from their visits.

Norwich BID hosted UEA History student Ben Kitchener as a City Host Volunteer from June 2016 to August 2018. Ben volunteered as part of the team assisting locals and visitors to positively promote Norwich. The role involved giving directions and guidance to contacts, assisting them in finding both businesses and attractions. Ben also mentored new Host Volunteers in the role.

“Volunteering with the scheme provides a unique opportunity for students, during their time at University, to make a positive contribution to their local community and feel more socially connected. They can learn more about the city they live in. It provides practical work experience and enhances their interpersonal skills to aid them in future employment. Volunteering also improves mental well-being and gives greater self-confidence.”



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“The City Host Volunteers have the opportunity to be involved in many events during the year, for example, The Lord Mayors Procession, Run Norwich, The GoGoHares Project, Norwich Christmas Lights Switch On, Head Out Not Home Summer Evening entertainment and Norwich City of Ale.”

Louise would recommend students as volunteers to other non-profit organisations.

“Our team has gained a more youthful outlook and viewpoint on the volunteer role approach and what we should be talking about.”

#### **Ben Kitchener, student volunteer says...**

“This role has allowed me to continue developing a number of key skills which have included communication, in providing clear and coherent information to city visitors, team working as such work is often under taken as a group and also interpersonal skills through being able to connect with people from a range of different backgrounds.

In the future I believe this experience and the skills that I have developed from it will aid me in finding a position in a public facing role which is my ambition.

I would definitely recommend volunteering whilst at university it is a great way to connect with a local community which may feel a little distant, should you have just moved to the area. It is also something good to put on your CV and obtain a good reference. If you are looking to volunteer I would recommend an opportunity which can offer flexible time commitments in order to fit around your studies.”



*Ben, student volunteer: “It is a great way to connect with a local community.”*



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