



# Our guide to being a guide

## What does a volunteer do?

There are 12 scenarios in Hazard Alley, each being visited in turn by a group of up to six children. Every scenario has an important message that is explained by a volunteer guide. Many of the scenarios have an interactive element controlled by the guide, often to the surprise of the children. A guide quickly learns how to make a train leap out of a tunnel or set a house 'on fire'.

## Why are they needed?

We need 12 tour guides per session and we rely heavily on volunteers to keep costs to an affordable level. Hazard Alley has a tradition of using volunteer resources – much of the original construction was only possible due to the carpenters, electricians, painters and designers who contributed thousands of hours to it.

## Will I be trained?

Guides receive training on each scenario and how to get the message across to the children in the most effective way. You will not be asked to take a group of children until you feel confident. Although the safety messages are consistent, every guide develops his or her own presentation style.

We are always looking for new volunteers to help us with the growing numbers of children wishing to visit the Safety Centre. We offer excellent training, expenses and sweat-shirts – but most of all rewarding experience. Read on for our step-by-step guide to being a volunteer guide.

## Is it difficult?

The thought of guiding six children around interactive scenarios for two hours at a time might seem a bit daunting at first. Don't worry – once you have been trained, it will soon become second nature. New volunteers quickly get caught up with the children's enthusiasm, answering questions and helping them get the most out of the day.

## How much time do I have to commit?

A session lasts for two hours and you need to be at the centre 15 minutes before the children arrive. There is normally a short finishing session so you need to allow about two-and-a-half hours for each session you work. The majority of visits are during the school day, during term time. Typically a morning session starts at around

9.30am, the afternoon one around 12.30pm. There are also evening sessions starting at 6.30pm, lasting 90 minutes, which tend to be for adult groups, or older children such as Scouts and Guides.

## Do I need qualifications?

Anybody over the age of 16 may apply to be a guide. Academic qualifications are not required. What is needed is enthusiasm, lots of patience and a willingness to be trained. Above all, you'll need a sense of humour! We accept Year 10 students from local schools for their Year 10 two-week work experience and they often follow up their time with us by taking the evening tours.

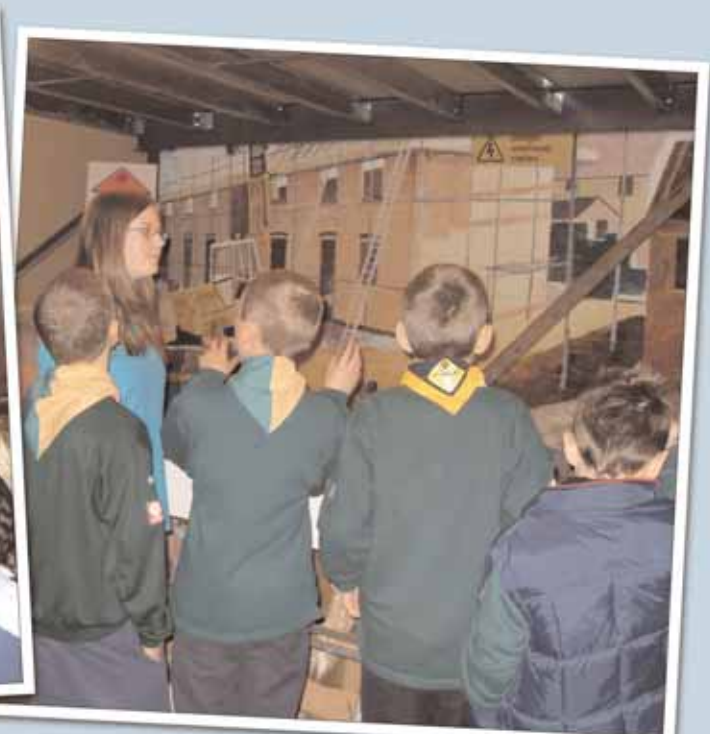
## What about my expenses?

Hazard Alley will reimburse you for certain expenses – you will be given details at your interview. We'll even measure you up for your Hazard Alley sweatshirt.

## How do I apply?

If you think this could be for you, just give us a ring and come and have a look at how it works. Call **01908 263009** and ask for our Volunteer Coordinator Val Williams.

**ABOVE:** Some of our guides went on the volunteers' summer trip to Bath in July – a beautiful day was enjoyed by all. We also arranged a trip to see Flashdance at Milton Keynes Theatre in November for those guides who were unable to go to Bath.



**BELOW:** Welcome to our new recruits – left to right they are Laura Cullingham, Amelia Morisco, Mary Masiyano, Jason Stewart, Theresa Brown, Kate Harper and Nicola Smith. All these volunteers have recently completed their training and are now enjoying taking children around the Safety Centre.



## Feedback from schools

THE Safety Centre receives a lot of feedback from schools after their visits, including children's letters and completed evaluation forms. Here is a selection of comments from teachers:

We do lots of work on protective behaviours and keeping safe – this gives 'practical experience' - PHSE Coordinator, Bow Brickhill School

Hazard Alley is always a worthwhile visit and the children really enjoy it - Teacher, Willen School

An action packed session which prompted lots of useful discussion back at school - KS2 Manager, Hobbs Hill Wood Primary School

Layout and experience for the children was excellent. All children gained a great deal. Our welcome was warm and helpful - Year 6 teacher, St Louis Catholic Primary School

The children always love coming here and find it a really worthwhile experience. I feel the internet safety is brilliant, especially with the children of today - Teaching Assistant, Micklem Primary School

This trip is always a favourite one in Bishop Wood. I have yet to find a child in 10 years who has not enjoyed it! - Year 5 teacher, Bishop Wood School

The children enjoyed the range of activities because it enabled them to consider situations that they may not have experienced or thought about in real life - Teacher, Thomas Harding School