

## **Volunteers Week: shoppers learn the value of volunteering**

People shopping in Hammersmith in the first week of June had the chance to find out new ways to spend their free time, as well as their money, when the Hammersmith & Fulham Volunteer Centre (HFVC) celebrated Volunteers Week at a local shopping centre. Members of the public visiting the Kings Mall shopping centre on King Street between June 1 and June 7 were able to chat with HFVC staff and learn about how they could benefit from volunteering, both by improving the lives of others and by gaining new skills and experiences themselves. The event, which also featured face painting for children, coincided with Volunteers Week, a nationwide festival exploring innovative ways to recruit volunteers. HFVC staff highlighted the many different groups of people who are able to take part in the centre's volunteering schemes, including unemployed people who can gain on-the-job work experience, local businesses and organisations who can take up volunteering 'challenges' at community venues like schools and parks, and young people. The week culminated with a Volunteer Awards night on Friday June 8 to recognise those already involved in local voluntary work.

Marion Schumann, HFVC director, says: "Volunteers' Week is a great time to talk about the personal benefits of doing voluntary work, such as the opportunity to gain new skills and experience, to meet and socialise with new people in your neighbourhood, and to feel more connected to your community. This year we were particularly keen to speak to lone parents about the support we can provide if they're looking to return to work: by getting some experience under their belt they can boost their self-confidence and improve their CV. But we also wanted to tell everyone about the difference that volunteering can make to their lives; even if you didn't make it to the Kings Mall shopping centre to see us, we'd be happy to have you drop by the Volunteer Centre to learn a bit more." To find out more about volunteering call the HFVC on 020 8741 9876 or visit the centre at 148 King Street (entrance on Galena Road).