

York Museums Trust



at the Castle

Hands on Here! is a Trust wide programme where staff and volunteers demonstrate and interpret objects from our collections to visitors. At the Castle Museum there are two broad themes: Military and Social. Each theme has a set of activities which volunteers can choose from.

We run a programme of changing activities throughout the year. Some examples include:

Military:



Helmets, using helmets worn during the Civil Wars as a hands-on, try-on case study, this activity explores changing styles and uses of helmets and looks at how the design of helmets has adapted to give soldiers protection from

developing weapons and forms of warfare.

Weapons of War, looks at the weapons and tactics used on the western front during the First World War. It gives an insight into how the war was fought by the 'Tommies' in the trenches.

Social:

Bringing up Baby, look at some of the traditions of childcare, especially feeding, clothing, soothing and entertaining babies. Help visitors swaddle our baby with traditional swaddling clothes and look at how baby clothes developed into the flowing Victorian baby robes and then the modern babygro.

Rag rugs, explores the tradition of making rugs by reusing scraps of material, something that has been done in this part of the country for centuries, but which is enjoying a revival today.



Training

We provide object handling and customer care training for Hands on Here! volunteers as well as specific training sessions for each of the different activities we run. All our volunteers receive a full health and safety site induction.

Time Commitment

During school holidays when the museum is particularly busy, the Hands on Here! run a preplanned program of guide-assisted activities, with guides and volunteers working together to run the sessions. Volunteers have fixed times for these activities, morning sessions are 10am – 1pm and afternoons are 1 – 4pm. Volunteers can cover as many sessions as they like and can do full or half days.

However, the core activities for Hands on Here! are volunteer-led and run during term time. There is a selection of activities for each theme for volunteers to choose from; running them on their own, in pairs or in small groups, for anything from a couple of hours to a full day. The Kitchen is available in term time from 10am to 4pm every day of the week and it works best when volunteers can commit to a regular slot, eg every Tuesday morning or every Saturday afternoon.

A minimum commitment of one half day activity session per week or fortnight is acceptable, but volunteers who have more time to offer can always be accommodated. Ideally we like volunteers who commit to the project for at least 6 months, as it can take several weeks to get through the initial training programme.

Other essential information

As a charity, we do not have a budget for travel expenses or meal allowances, so unfortunately we are unable to reimburse travel or subsistence costs incurred by volunteers in the course of their day to day volunteering.

We do cover the cost of all the training and training materials that we provide. As a visitor facing volunteer, you will be asked to wear YMT volunteer t shirts and sweatshirts and name badges so that visitors can easily identify them as being the people in the know!