# Volunteering Matters in Thanet

## GOGA Partner, Your Leisure in Thanet, has successfully created a new volunteer opportunity and recruited 4 volunteers. GOGA Coordinator, Sarah Johnson, talks about the new role, why the recruitment was a success and what the plans are for the future.

**Sarah, at the Get Out Get Active programme in Thanet you decided to create a new volunteer opportunity, GOGA Activator. Why?**

Well, in the beginning we had Buddy and Mentor opportunities that we had planned to recruit but we soon realised that those were very specific roles and we didn’t have anyone for the mentors to mentor so, with input from Volunteering Matters, we decided to go with a broader role. We didn’t want to exclude anyone and rather wanted to be able to tailor the role to the volunteer and therefore we developed the GOGA Activator opportunity.

**What does a GOGA Activator do?**

They are helping to support participants to lead an active lifestyle and record their story along the way. As well as looking into new activities and groups that may become part of the GOGA Thanet project. Most importantly our current GOGA volunteers have shaped the volunteer process for the rest of our project going forwards.

**How many volunteers have you recruited?**

We have recruited 4 volunteers, 2 are already volunteering, 1 is awaiting DBS check and I am due to meet with the last one.

**Volunteering Matters helped you set up a recruitment campaign for the GOGA Activator role in August, how did that go?**

It went well. We recruited 4 volunteers within a month and wanted to make sure we could support them before we recruited more. Therefore we put the recruitment campaign on hold after a month. We are planning to do another round of recruiting in the early 2018, and will then pilot our new interview and induction process that we have recently developed together with Volunteering Matters consultants. Hopefully then our current GOGA Activators can mentor the new ones.

**Why do you think the recruitment was successful?**

We put a lot of thought and consideration into creating the role and we had help from Volunteering Matters, we knew what we wanted, we wanted it to stand out, look good and feel dynamic – like GOGA. Another key thing was to respond quickly to the enquiries that came through and then to keep in touch and keep them engaged through the recruitment process, we successfully achieved that.

**How do you plan to continue this work?**

We have been working with Volunteering Matters to build and tailor our GOGA volunteer programme and we now know exactly what to do when a volunteer enters the door. Our recruitment and induction processes are fit for purpose and we will pilot the whole process early 2018. We feel much more confident in recruiting volunteers now.

