



Interview with Godfrey – February 2025

How did you first learn about ICOS and what motivated you to start volunteering with us?

I came to Sunderland and in September 2024, I decided that I can't stay in the house anymore. I got in contact with Daniel and Daniel asked why I want to volunteer and discussed interests. I started to volunteer with refugees and asylum seekers with some wellbeing sports. We started ICOS Sports Football at the Stadium of Light. We used the Beacon of Light indoor field. We did this from September to December. I was also involved with basketball and went on the Stronger Shores walk. We are currently discussing about running ennis sessions.

What kinds of volunteering do you get involved in?

I organise sports and wellbeing activities. We get players from FODI (<https://fodisunderland.org/>) and- they have a drop in on Wednesdays for asylum seekers and refugees. We also get clients from ICOS for employability, housing aspect of it. The asylum seekers and refugees have issues with their immigration status.

Can you share what you enjoy most about your volunteer work? And are there any particular experiences or moments that stand out to you?

I enjoy meeting people. I moved from Essex to Sunderland and made a lot of friends. We provide support to people who are depressed or want to take their own life. We talk to them and signpost them to professionals. I went to Durham Community Action and did some training.

In what ways has volunteering with ICOS impacted your overall wellbeing and personal growth?

ICOS has given me a lot of positive energy. I am always busy and I am very active. I am unemployed but I am looking for a job. Volunteering with ICOS has been very exciting and everyone is lively. ICOS has friendly people.

What advice would you give to someone wanting to volunteer at ICOS?

I went to the ICOS 15-year celebration at the Carnival House. I have met some friends too. I can tell anybody that ICOS is the place to volunteer. They are friendly people. Daniel is doing a good job. He took us out for dinner and I had the experience of trying Polish food. I tried pierogi and it was nice. We went to Beamish, Lightwater Valley, Bishop Auckland. It makes me move and be very active. I feel like I have another family. ICOS cleans Backhouse Park.