

Ellen Phillips, was awarded the British Empire Medal for her many years of service to Motherwell & Wishaw CAB and her involvement in many areas of her local community.

When outlining our proposed programme to Ellen, she was able to draw on the views of many colleagues in CAB and the wider advice community and says

“The ATP Programme has proved a wonderful tool to provide volunteers to sustain and improve our CAB’s offering to the local community, however lately the lack of volunteers has been very obvious.

As lead tutor on the ATP I have also been aware that some candidates have struggled, some with the content, others with managing to give the time necessary or with the lack of a single training location, and we have undoubtedly lost good volunteers through some or all of these issues, and perhaps we could have prevented that.

Given the wide range of local people we are trying to attract, and the various issues (including confidence) that they have, I do feel that consistency is a key factor. To have a named individual who volunteers are able to connect with, reach out to if concerned and help guide them through the process of volunteering would be an invaluable help. I feel that clients would be re-assured of their worth to our organisation and this will help us build up our service.

I am also a huge fan of more volunteers attaining the SVQ qualification – not just selfishly for the additional quality it brings to their work here, but so that they can apply for other jobs too if they want to. Volunteering roles within CAB often lead to employment, and I feel that this success would be boosted if we are able to encourage more volunteers to undertake an SVQ if it would be useful to them. The cost can be quite prohibitive for us, though, so having help to afford to put more people through would be fantastic.”