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National Release:

Give something really valuable this festive season: Your time!

With thousands of young people worried about their finances over the festive period, The National Young Volunteers Service **v** has come up with an innovative solution. Rather than buying an expensive present, v says why not 'Give the Gift of Time' to your friends, family or even your community instead!

On Thursday 3 December, v's nationwide 'Gift of Time' campaign will start with the opening of the 'Gift of Time' store on Berwick Street, London, (Just off Oxford St). The pop-up store will surprise hoards of festive shoppers by becoming the only shop in London where everything is absolutely FREE!

Lucie Jones, from X Factor, who will be opening the store on the 3 December, says:

"Giving your time is such a great idea. It's personal, costs nothing and captures the real festive spirit. Last year, it became popular to ask for charity donations instead of a gift. This year, with money tight, the new trend could be giving 'the gift of time'."

The 'Gift of Time' store will work by asking shoppers to consider doing a good deed for someone instead of buying a present. This could be something as simple as offering to mow the lawn, walk the dog or even cook a loved one breakfast in bed. The young person will then have their 'gift of time' pledged on a free, personalised Time Token which can be gift wrapped, ready to pop under the tree, for friends or family.

Many young people, especially if they are unemployed, don't think their time is worth anything. However, The Office of National Statistics' figures show the average hour of a 16-25 year olds' time is worth £7.07. This means an hour of mowing the lawn for your dad is worth the same as a decent bottle of wine and would be remembered long after the wine is consumed!

The v 'Goodie Hoodie' squad who will be manning the pop-up store are all volunteers themselves and will be easily identifiable by their purple festive, furry 'hoodies'. They will be giving out the Time Tokens to 16-25 year olds and encouraging shoppers to step out of consumer mayhem into an oasis of calm.



The 'Goodie Hoodie' crew, will also be on hand to suggest wider volunteering opportunities which the shopper may also be interested in pursuing, which could benefit their local community and the environment, as well as family and friends. Ideas might include helping a charity or a local community group, or even getting valuable experience in the work environment to help further a career dream.

The '**Gift of Time**' Store will be opening in central London on Thursday 3 December for four days only. However, the store launch is only the start of a much larger nationwide festive campaign that will see an army of volunteers, across the country, harnessing the goodwill and time of the country's young people. Regional stores and regional "Goodie Hoodie" squads will also be popping up in over 40 locations across the country including Leicester, Watford, Newcastle, Liverpool, Exeter, Portsmouth, Bristol, Gloucester, Derby and Hull. (Please see the full list below)

If you miss the London shop opening or the regional activity, you can also visit v's online virtual 'gift of time' store which will allow you to download your very own personalised Time Token or alternatively log on to Facebook and see the new Time Token application. Please visit: www.vinspired.com/giftoftime

If you would like more information or would like to arrange an interview with Lucie, please contact us on the below details.

- ENDS -

For further information, please contact:

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Notes to Editors:

v, The National Young Volunteers Service aims to inspire a new generation of volunteers (aged 16-25) in England. It does this by funding voluntary organisations all over England to create inspiring, diverse opportunities and by helping to overcome barriers that stop people from taking action to improve lives, communities and the planet. v's aim is to create a culture where volunteering comes naturally and where the benefits of volunteering are understood and celebrated.

v is an independent charity launched in May 2006 as a result of the Russell Commission report, A National Framework for Youth Action and Engagement.

Visit: www.vinspired.com for more information on what we do and how we do it.



The following regions also have their own localised “Gift of Time” activity happening in December.

Huntington, Cambridgeshire	East	Exeter	South East
Ipswich, Suffolk	East	Portsmouth	South East
Watford	East	Portsmouth	South East
Peterborough	East	Portchester	South East
Leicester	East Midlands	Brighton	South East
Wigston, Leicester	East Midlands	Pulborough, West Sussex	South East
Shadwell	London	Milton Keynes	South East
Kennington Park	London	Bristol	South West
Lewisham	London	Glastonbury	South West
Barons Court	London	Gloucester	South West
Willesdon	London	Bristol	South West
Wembly	London	Wellington, Shropshire	West Midlands
Eltham	London	Worcester	West Midlands
East London	London	Hereford	West Midlands
Sutton	London	Coventry	West Midlands
Richmond	London	Pershore, Worcestershire	West Midlands
Shiremoor, Tyne and Wear	North East	Derby	West Midlands
Newcastle	North East	Beverley, Hull	Yorkshire
Blackburn	North West	Shipley, Bradford	Yorkshire
Bolton	North West		
Blackburn	North West		
Winsford, Cheshire	North West		
Blackpool	North West		
Warrington	North West		
Liverpool	North West		

For more regional information please contact the v Press Office

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