

## **Volunteering policy**

A volunteer is a person who gives freely of his/her time, skills and experience without expectation of financial reward. Volunteering can take many forms. Some tasks require particular skills whereas others require none. Volunteering may be for a limited time to complete a particular project or may be on an ongoing basis.

The organisation recognises the immense benefits that volunteers bring to the organisation, and the bridges that they build between the organisation and the local community. In return, the organisation hopes to give its volunteers an opportunity to exercise their skills in a different environment and to undertake new experiences.

The organisation tries to offer a range of volunteering opportunities and, in accordance with its equal opportunities and diversity policies, to ensure that the opportunity to volunteer is widely available.

### **Status of volunteers**

A volunteer is not an employee and will not have a contract of employment with the organisation. The organisation will agree a role with the volunteer and there will be an expectation that the volunteer will meet the role's requirements and that the organisation will provide work for the volunteer. However, the volunteer is free to refuse to fulfil the role and the organisation is not bound to provide the work. It is also expected that both the organisation and the volunteer will give as much notice as possible if unable to meet these expectations.

### **Volunteering roles**

Roles suitable for volunteers are identified by the programme facilitator, who will draw up a volunteer outline. This will set out the requirements of the role and the skills or experience needed, as well as any training that is required before the volunteering work is undertaken. Volunteers will not be used as substitutes for employees.

### **Recruitment**

A person wishing to become a volunteer will be asked to complete an application form. The applicant will be asked to identify areas in which he/she would like to volunteer. If the organisation is able to match the applicant to a suitable role, references will be required and, depending on the nature of the role. All roles are subject to a satisfactory Disclosure of Barring Service (DBS).

### **Volunteering agreement**

The volunteer will be invited to enter into a volunteering agreement with the organisation. This agreement will identify:

- the volunteer's role;
- the training that the volunteer is expected to undertake;
- the insurance cover that will be provided for the volunteer;
- who will supervise the volunteer;
- the notice that is given to a volunteer if his/her role is to come to an end.

### **Training**

The organisation will provide any training required for the role, including health and safety training, safeguarding and any other relevant training to support the individual within their role.

### **Health and safety**

The organisation has a responsibility for the health and safety of volunteers. Volunteers should at all times follow the organisation's health and safety policies and procedures. Volunteers have a duty to take care of themselves and others who might be affected by their actions. Volunteers should not act outside their authorised area or work. Volunteers should report all accidents to their supervisor.

The organisation will provide volunteers with appropriate guidance on any health and safety issues that arise.

### **Recompense**

Volunteers are unpaid. However, the organisation will reimburse volunteers for travel and subsistence expenses when accompanying the group for events and excursions. The cost of your travel fare and relevant entrance fees will be covered by Sen Talk. Additional expenses may be covered when agreed with the Director and may be dependent on voluntary hours.

### **Policies and procedures**

Volunteers are expected to comply with all the organisation's policies while they are on its premises or undertaking any of their volunteering duties. Their induction will include an explanation of these policies and procedures.

### **Insurance**

The organisation will ensure that volunteers are covered for insurance purposes in respect of personal injury. The organisation will also ensure that volunteers are provided with professional and public liability insurance. The insurance will not cover unauthorised actions or actions outside the volunteering agreement.

### **Confidentiality**

Volunteers are likely to become aware of confidential information about the organisation, its staff, services users and suppliers. Volunteers should not disclose this information or use it for their own or another's benefit without the consent of the party concerned. This does not prevent disclosure once the information is in the public domain (unless it has been

made public as a result of the volunteer's breach of confidentiality) or where the law permits or requires disclosure.

### **Supervision**

A supervisor will be appointed to support and manage the volunteer. The supervisor will review the arrangements after [three months] and thereafter on a regular basis. If the volunteer has any queries or would like to change his/her role this should be discussed with the supervisor.

### **Dealing with problems**

The supervisor will normally try to solve any problems informally, but if this is not possible the formal complaints system will come into operation.

If the volunteer wishes to make a formal complaint he/she should put the complaint in writing to his/her supervisor. If it is not possible to reach a solution the volunteer may raise the matter with the supervisor's manager.

If a complaint is made about a volunteer, this will be notified to him/her in writing and the supervisor will decide whether any action should be taken. If the volunteer is dissatisfied with the decision he/she may raise it with the supervisor's manager.

### **Volunteer drivers**

Any volunteers who will be transporting equipment or people using a vehicle provided by the organisation must have a valid driving licence. They will be covered by the organisation's insurance policy. Where the volunteer will be using his/her own vehicle, he/she must provide a copy of the vehicle's insurance policy and, if appropriate, the MOT certificate.

The volunteer must report any accidents to the organisation. He/she must also report any motoring offences or police cautions to the organisation. The organisation will not pay any parking fines accumulated by the volunteer.

### **Volunteer's pack**

On commencing his/her volunteer work, the volunteer will be given a pack containing:

- a copy of this volunteering policy;
- a standard volunteering agreement;
- details of where he/she can access the organisation's policies and procedures;
- Information in regards to training and other opportunities