**Volunteering Policy**

**Introduction**

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

The Charity offers a range of volunteering opportunities and, in accordance with its equal opportunities and diversity policies, ensures 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 Charity. The Charity 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 Charity will provide work for the volunteer.

However, the volunteer is free to refuse to fulfil the role, and the Charity is not bound to provide the work.

It is also expected that both the Charity 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 National Manager, who will draw up a Role Description. 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 Charity is able to match the applicant to a suitable role, references will be required and, depending on the nature of the role, the prospective volunteer may be required to undergo a health and/or
criminal records check.

**Volunteering agreement**

The volunteer will be required to enter into a volunteering agreement with the Charity. This agreement will identify the volunteer's experience and contact details, the sort of role in which the volunteer is interested, the induction training that the volunteer is expected to undertake, who will supervise the volunteer. By signing the Agreement, the volunteer undertakes to abide by the charity’s confidentially requirements and policies.

**Training**

The Charity will provide induction training required for the role and will offer further training on an ad hoc basis.

**Health and safety**

The Charity has a responsibility for the health and safety of volunteers. Volunteers should at all times follow the Charity'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 line manager. The Charity will provide volunteers with appropriate guidance on any health and safety issues that arise.

**Recompense**

Volunteers are unpaid. The Charity is currently unable to reimburse volunteers for travel and subsistence expenses unless these are pre-approved by the National Manager. Any reimbursement of expenses will be made on completion of an expenses claim using the Charity’s paperwork and with production of original receipts.

**Policies and procedures**

Volunteers are expected to comply with all the Charity'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 Charity will ensure that volunteers are covered for insurance purposes in respect of personal injury. The Charity 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 or actions outside the volunteer’s authorised role.

**Confidentiality**

Volunteers are likely to become aware of confidential information about the charity, its staff, its service 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.

Certain service user data may be used for research/publication/PR purposes but only in fully anonymised form, and subject to service user agreement (see “Service User Pack”).

**Supervision**

The National Manager and or Line Manager will be responsible for supervision and management of the volunteer. The supervisor will review the arrangements after every 3 months. 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 line manager will normally try to solve any problems informally, but if this is not possible the formal complaints system will come into operation. The complaints policy can be accessed via our website.

If a complaint is made about a volunteer, this will be notified to him/her in writing, and the National Manager will decide whether any action should be taken. If the volunteer is dissatisfied with the decision, he/she may raise it with the Chair of Trustees.

**Volunteer drivers**

Any volunteers who will be transporting equipment or people using a vehicle provided by the Charity must have a valid driving licence. They will be covered by the Charity'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 Charity. He/she must also report any motoring offences or police cautions to the Charity. The Charity will not pay any parking fines accumulated by the volunteer.

**Volunteer's pack**

On commencing his/her volunteer work, the volunteer will be given the following information,

* The Volunteering Agreement (for signature).
* A copy of this Volunteering Policy.
* The General Induction Brief (general information about the Charity and volunteering).
* The Role-Specific Induction Brief relevant to the role in which the volunteer is approved.
* Email notification of approval in the allotted Role.
* Details of where he/she can access the Charity's policies and procedures.

Other issues such as provision of a charity email, charity mobile, access to the CircleLoop or Caseworker systems, etc., will depend upon specific role.

Last update: 29/08/2025 Nick Gray senior manager for the Charity