**Volunteering Policy**

**Families Need Fathers Both Parents Matter Cymru**

**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 in a maintained procedural document, Volunteer Roles. This sets 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. As a minimum this will always include an Induction process before a volunteer is authorised in a specific role.

**Safeguarding**

This is dealt with in the General Safeguarding Policy

**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 and to itemise areas of relevant experience, training and education. Depending upon the role, the Charity reserves the right to ask for references and the prospective volunteer may be required to undergo a health and/or criminal records check, though this is not standard practice.

**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 supervisor. 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 regardless of location. 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.

**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.

**Confidentiality**

Volunteers are likely to become aware of confidential information about the charity, its staff, its service users, its volunteers and third parties. Volunteers shall 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 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**

Volunteers have a well-defined line-management or supervisory arrangement specified in the corresponding role specification document. The supervisor/line-manager will be one of the following: National Manager, Volunteer Coordinator, Buddy Coordinator, Workflow Coordinator or Helpline Coordinator. The Volunteer Coordinator retains responsibility for personnel/HR/well-being issues for all volunteers, whilst line-management of function is via the other charity officers.

**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. The complaints policy can be accessed with the other policy documents on the charity’s website. 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 Volunteer Coordinator or the National Manager. If a complaint is made about a volunteer, the responsibility lies with the line manager to address the matter according to its merits. The line manager may be able to resolve the matter; if not, he/she should escalate it to the management team who must 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'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.