

Woolton Community Life

**Volunteer Befriending Service**

Bringing people together

Registered Charity Number 1159642

Woolton Community Life,

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VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK

***In this Volunteer Handbook you will find:***

* Welcome to Woolton Community Life
* Volunteer Role Description
* Volunteer Policy
* Frequently Asked Questions
* Volunteer Responsibilities

**Welcome to Woolton Community Life**

Thank you for choosing to volunteer at Woolton Community Life. Volunteers are involved in Woolton Community Life at every level from being a trustee to those people involved in volunteer befriending.

By volunteering with us you are helping to extend the service that we are offering allowing us to reach more potential beneficiaries and volunteers, and improve the quality of life for a wide range of people and our community. Volunteering with Woolton Community Life is important and we greatly value your contribution.

**Getting Going**

When you start you will have an induction, the checklist of which is included in this pack. As part of your induction we will talk you through what your volunteer role is. This is laid out in your role description.

As a volunteer with Woolton Community Life you are a representative of the organisation. As such it is important that you read, understand and volunteer within all our policies and procedures. These cover things such as safeguarding, confidentiality, equal opportunities and health and safety.

## Volunteer Policy

### Recruitment

We will use appropriate means to advertise for volunteers locally that take into account the principles of our Equal Opportunities and Diversity Policies.

An applicant will complete an application form and supply two references.

Once references have returned, the applicant will be sent agreement forms and a DBS form (criminal records check) to complete and asked to attend a very informal chat with the documents. Help with completing forms can be arranged.

A DBS check with the Disclosure Barring Service will be made for every volunteer.

### Induction and Training

There will be an induction prepared and delivered by a WCL team member*.* This will include:

* The role of the volunteer
* Copies of all the relevant policies including this Volunteer Policy, Confidentiality, Health and Safety, Safeguarding, Lone Working Policy, Equal Opportunities and Diversity, and Whistleblowing.
* Essential procedures i.e. timekeeping, rota etc.
* Induction training and details of on-going training
* Information about the relevant Code of Practice
* Other information as appropriate

There will be a trial period of 26 weeks to give the organisation and the volunteer time to discover if they are suited to each other. A review will be made midway through the trial period and at the end.

### Expenses

We value our volunteers and want to ensure that there are no barriers to volunteer involvement. Small out-of-pocket expenses, if required, will be reimbursed for public travel or petrol expenses to visit beneficiaries. In order to claim expenses, an expenses form must be completed and given to the admin team or Trustee for approval.

**Support**

The Admin team or Trustee will offer support to the volunteer. There will be a briefing session at the beginning and a de-briefing at the end of each session.

The Admin team and trustees will support all volunteers and will have regular meetings with the volunteers to discuss any problems or issues that may arise.

The volunteer will receive support and regular supervision sessions from the Chair of the Trustees (or from another named and approved member)

### Insurance

The organisation has a valid insurance policy available on the website.

**Car Insurance**, **Breakdown cover & Traffic violations**

If transporting beneficiaries we advise that you tell your insurance company. Your company will not charge you for this. We have a cover letter for you to use, please ask.

1. It is your responsibility to have **valid up to date insurance** policy on your vehicle.
2. It is recommended that you have **membership of a Roadside Assistance Group.**
3. Any **traffic violations** are your responsibility.

### Confidentiality

This organisation’s process requires an explicit confidentiality policy, which all workers, which includes Trustees, or Management Committee, members, volunteers and staff, are obliged to observe.

**Personal support**

*We hope that you will enjoy the experience of being a Befriender with WCL, but we appreciate that over time it is possible situations may arise with your Beneficiary that you could find upsetting or stressful.*

*The death of a Beneficiary, or seeing their declining health, can be an emotional experience, and it is also true that sometimes we can become so focused on helping or caring for someone else that we forget about the need to care for ourselves.*

* *We would like to advise you of the need to be mindful of your own personal self-care and emotional wellbeing. If you feel the need for some emotional support, it can be provided in an entirely confidential and non-judgemental setting.*

*If you would like the opportunity to access emotional support for yourself please contact Bill Bethell direct,**billdisco@hotmail.co.uk**- 07788 825187*

Bill Bethell has a wealth of experience in supporting people in Age UK.

Bill agreed to offer those skills to WCL for the benefit of all volunteers.

 *You can also contact Dr Kuruvilla or Derek.*

What You Cannot Do

It is essential that you comply at all time with policies and procedure such

as Confidentiality, Health and Safety, Equal Opportunities and Safeguarding

* Any home or personal care tasks i.e. bathing, dressing, and toileting even if a Professional Carer asks you.
* Give any form of medication
* Lift or move heavy objects
* Discuss or deal with money matters
* Cook, Housework or Gardening
* Accept any form of gift
* Never undertake a task that will compromise you or Woolton Community Life. If you are not sure, don’t do it and seek advice.
* Take on behalf of or use money/bank cards belonging to a beneficiary

Volunteer Responsibilities

# **RELIABILITY**

It is vital that all arrangements and appointments you make are kept and any alterations relayed as soon as possible.

# **COURTESY**

To treat others as you would expect people to treat you.

# **PRIVACY**

Always respect privacy. This may take the form of unwilling to talk on particular subjects or not wanting to see you on occasions.

# **TO LISTEN**

You need to be a good listener.

# **CONFIDENTIALITY**

Confidentially is a priority at all times. Any information that you see or discuss must never be taken beyond your relationship, unless consent is given.

# **PROBLEMS**

Always report a problem or something that may concern you as soon as possible to the admin team or Chair of Trustees.

# **MEETINGS & TRAINING**

From time to time volunteers and groups of volunteers will be invited to attend meetings and training sessions. These are seen as a vital part of your volunteering.

**NEVER BE AFRAID OF ASKING FOR HELP OR ADVICE**

### Resolving Problems

The relationship between the organisation and its volunteers is entirely voluntary and does not imply any contract. However, it is important that the organisation is able to maintain its agreed standards of service to the clients who use it, and it is also important that volunteers should enjoy making their contribution to this service.

If your role as a volunteer does not meet with the organisation’s standards, here is how it will be dealt with:

1. Initially with a meeting with an appointed person who will explain the concerns.
2. If this does not resolve the concern, then a meeting with the chair of the trustee/management committee will be convened.
3. If your work still does not meet with our standards, then we shall have to stop using your services. At all times you will be able to freely state your case and can have another person to accompany you.

This person is to observe only and will not be able to make any comments at the meeting.

However, both the volunteer and observer may retire to discuss proceedings.

**If you are dissatisfied with any aspect of your work, you should:**

1. Initially explain your dissatisfaction with any WCL trustee you have contact with.
2. If that does not resolve the issue, then a formal meeting with the Chair of the Trustee/Management Committee should follow.
3. If after this, your dissatisfaction remains unresolved, and we are unable to resolve your grievance, then it would be inappropriate for you to continue to be a volunteer.

At all times you will be able to freely state your case and can have another person to accompany you.

This person is to observe only and will not be able to make any comments at the meeting.

However, both the volunteer and observer may retire to discuss proceedings.

This Volunteer policy is freely accessible to all. It will be reviewed to adapt or improve it

**Frequently Asked Questions**

**How can I get my travel money or petrol expenses back?**

Travel and petrol expenses will be refunded for visits to beneficiaries’ homes within the Woolton and surrounding areas. To get the money back for your travel you need to keep your ticket or the receipt. It is essential to keep your receipt otherwise; we cannot give you a refund.

To claim your money back you need to give your receipt to the admin team or Chair of Trustees. They will refund your money back from petty cash.

**I come here by car/motorbike can I get some money back for this?**

Yes! You need to fill in a mileage form, just ask the admin team or Chair of Trustees. However, it is your responsibility that your car/motorbike is parked safely and legally and that you are fully insured with road tax. **Any traffic violations are your responsibility.**

**I am currently receiving benefits, will volunteering affect this and should I let the Job Centre know?**

It is good practice to inform the Job Centre that you are volunteering.

**If I volunteer with Woolton Community Life for long enough, will I get a job?**

**No** is the simple answer! Volunteering with Woolton Community Life does not automatically lead to any paid employment. It is hoped that the experience you gain from your time as a volunteer may put you above other candidates when applying for employment.

**Can I get a reference from you?**

Yes, but only after 6 months continuous volunteering in your designated role.

As a volunteer, you can get a reference but please do let us know if we are going to expect one! When using Woolton Community Life as a reference please use the name of the Chair of Trustees for the reference.

**What happens if I don’t get on with someone or things don’t work out?**

If you feel that something isn’t working out or your volunteering isn’t meeting your expectations talk to the admin team or Chair of Trustees to see if something can be changed.

**Can I do more if I want to? And what happens if my role changes?**

If you ever want to try something different or want to extend your role, i.e. Events team. Talk to the admin team to see if it is possible.

**What happens if I’m ill?**

Please inform the person you visit so they don’t worry about you not attending and if necessary inform any trustee you are in contact with.

**What happens if I need to have some time off?**

If you need to miss some weeks because of holidays or a change in your personal situation, please let us know. The more advance warning that you give us the better.