



Street Paws – Volunteer Policy

Lead responsibility:	Street Paws Chair Person
Approved by:	Street Paws Trustees
Operational from:	January 2018
Review due:	January 2019
Legal framework:	Equality Act 2010 UK Data Protection Act 1998 Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 Health & Safety at Work Act 1974

This Policy is intended to give both potential and current volunteers an overview of Street Paws and the volunteering opportunities available within our organisation. It also outlines the principles on which the relationship between volunteers and the charity are based and provides general information about volunteering with us.

1. Introduction to Street Paws

Street Paws promotes animal welfare and relieves the suffering of animals by providing free of charge veterinary care to animals owned by people who are homeless, vulnerably housed or other vulnerable groups severely affected by poverty. We are an ever-expanding team of over 130 veterinary and fundraising volunteers.

We achieve our aims by delivering veterinary care via monthly street-based outreach sessions across the UK. We currently operate across the North East, North West, Yorkshire and Wales, and are continuously expanding our reach. We work with local community groups in each area to reach out into the local community and engage with potential beneficiaries.

Our team routinely provide vaccinations, flea and worming treatments and microchipping. We fund treatments diagnosed by our veterinary surgeons for example treatment of eye and ear infections. Street Paws has funded operations and spaying at our supporting veterinary practices. We also distribute donations of pet food, bedding, treats and other supplies.

2. Our Team

Street Paw's **Chair Person** is Michelle Southern. Michelle founded Street Paws in April 2016 and she is responsible for the overall management of the charity, including oversight of all outreach activity nationally. Michelle works with a team of **six charity trustees**, who together govern the charity and make all major decisions. They are: Rachel Bean, Rebecca

Lawrence, Fiona Willis, Leah Southern, Sue McCabe and Jackie Bennett. The charity also receives clinical leadership from our **Executive Veterinary Director**, Caroline Scobie.

Each region's outreach programme is led by a dedicated **Regional Coordinator**. The Regional Coordinators schedule and oversee the running of each outreach session in their designated areas, coordinating all volunteer activities and working voluntarily themselves.

They are:

North East

Newcastle - Rebecca Lawrence

Stockton - *TBA*

North West

Manchester - Rachel Bean

Blackpool - Lucy Bellwood

Lancaster – Lucy Bellwood

Morecambe – Lucy Bellwood

Wigan - *TBA*

Yorkshire

York - Fiona Willis

Leeds - Fiona Willis

Wakefield - *TBA*

Wales

Cardiff - Nichi Tanner

Our **veterinary volunteers** are vital to the work that Street Paws does. Volunteers support each outreach session, checking the health of animals living with their owners on the streets, diagnosing issues, providing ad-hoc treatments, and referring animals for further treatments as required. They also hand out pet food and donations.

3. Getting Involved

We are always keen to hear from any qualified Veterinary Surgeons or RVNs who are interesting in becoming Street Paws volunteers. Volunteers can either join one of our established outreach teams or can potentially work with us to set up new outreach locations in different cities across the UK.

All individuals interested in volunteering must be:

- Veterinary qualified and registered with the relevant professional bodies.
- Able to provide your own Veterinary Defence Society (VDS) cover and Professional Indemnity insurance (or use your practice's with their written permission).
- Aged 18 or over if you wish to take part in outreach activity.

4. How to Apply

Please email Michelle Southern to express your interest: streetpaws.northeast@yahoo.com. Michelle will then contact you to set up a telephone call, during which she will introduce Street Paws and set out the role requirements, our expectations and the induction process. She will ensure there is time to answer any questions or queries you may have. If you mutually agree that you would like to proceed with the application process, you will be inducted into the charity, including all relevant policies (including Health and Safety, Safeguarding, Equality and Diversity, and Data Protection).

With your permission, Michelle will then pass your contact details to relevant Regional Coordinator who will contact you to set up a face-to-face meeting. You will be given an information sheet which will give you all key contact numbers and safety information. You will then be given the times and dates of outreach sessions and added to area rotas.

5. Responsibilities and Expectations

Volunteers can expect a warm welcome from the team, and to be supported by Street Paws throughout their time with us. All outreach activity will be planned and overseen by the Regional Coordinator, who will liaise with you in advance of each session. You will also be provided with a Street Paws t-shirt which should be worn whilst undertaking activities for the organisation. Volunteers are also able to buy hoodies at their own expense if desired. As we are a volunteer-led charity, we are unable to provide any expenses.

Street Paws' responsibilities to you are to:

- Introduce you to the organisation and your role within it.
- Provide training related to your responsibilities as a volunteer.
- Offer regular communications with your Regional Coordinator so that you can give us feedback and vice versa.
- To consult with you and keep you informed of possible changes.
- To respect your skills, dignity and individual wishes and to do our best to meet them and treat you fairly.
- To promote a healthy and safe working environment.
- To resolve problems if they should arise.

We also offer our volunteers the opportunity to:

- Get involved with an organisation that is continually growing
- Contribute your ideas and suggestions for our ongoing learning and development
- Join a friendly and supportive team.
- Participate in a range of fundraising activities and events.

We want you to enjoy volunteering with us and we take our responsibilities towards you very seriously. As a volunteer, you will also be a representative of Street Paws and as such, we ask that you represent our organisation in a positive and professional manner, both in person when conducting activities under Street Paws' name, and when referring to the organisation on social media.

Our expectations of you as a volunteer are to:

- Aim for high standards of efficiency, reliability and quality in your volunteering.
- Regularly attend monthly outreach sessions wherever possible.
- Work in partnership with other volunteers, our beneficiaries and the general public to deliver our services.
- Participate in any training that will help you in your role.
- Support, respect and adhere to our organisational policies and Board of Trustee decisions – including all aspects of Health and Safety, Safeguarding, Equality and Diversity, and Data Protection.
- Act responsibly and within the law;
- Let your Regional Coordinator know if you have any problems so that we can work together to identify a solution.

Volunteers are responsible for their own health and safety and should not put themselves in any position that could place them, or others, in danger. You are under no obligation to participate or continue with any Street Paws activity, and you should never undertake any work if you have concerns about your own, or others', health and safety. Please see our Health and Safety Policy for more information.

6. Giving Feedback

If you have any suggestions for improvement, issues, or complaints about your volunteering, we ask that in first instance you raise them with your Regional Coordinator. They will do all they can to rectify the issue as quickly as possible.

If a problem persists, volunteers can complain in writing to our Chair Person, Michelle Southern, by emailing streetpaws.northeast@yahoo.com. Michelle will:

- Acknowledge receipt of the complaint and the issue/s raised.
- Liaise with all individuals as appropriate to best establish facts and accurately assess the situation.
- Provide a response in writing within 10 working days.
- Use the outcome of the complaint and any action taken as a method of monitoring and improving services and/or procedures.

7. Contact Us

If you would like further information or advice on any aspect of volunteering with Street Paws, please contact our Chair Person, Michelle Southern on streetpaws.northeast@yahoo.com.