

Volunteer Policy 2017

1. Introduction

- 1 This policy sets out the broad principles for volunteer management within St Peters House Project.
- 2 This policy is endorsed by the Trustee Board and is reviewed every 12 months to ensure that the terms and conditions are appropriate for volunteer management within our organisation.
- 3 We recognise that volunteers are a valuable resource of support for our staff and clients, and working with volunteers is an effective way to promote community development.
- 4 We value the contribution made by volunteers and are committed to providing the support and recognition that they need for personal development.
- 5 The Volunteer Handbook 2017 contains further information about volunteer management within our organisation.

2. Definition

- 1 A Volunteer is not an employee and will not have a contract of employment with the Charity.
- 2 Volunteering is defined as unpaid activities undertaken by individuals who freely offer their time and commitment to contribute to our work.
- 3 Volunteering must be a choice freely made by each individual. Volunteers are to be distinguished from other work placements, where the primary aim is usually for the participant to obtain certain work experience or to carry out work or research in certain areas.

3. Principles

We, members of the Trustee Board of the Charity:

- 1 Recognise the benefits that volunteers could bring to our organisation in terms of their skills, knowledge and personal experience.
- 2 Will ensure that volunteers are properly integrated into our organisational structure and that mechanisms are in place for them to contribute to our work.
- 3 Will not introduce volunteers to replace paid staff.
- 4 Expect our colleagues at all levels to work positively with volunteers and, where appropriate, actively involve them in their work.

- 5 Recognise the need to promote learning and personal development for volunteers through appropriate training and support facilities.
- 6 Will endeavour to identify and cover the costs of involving volunteers.
- 7 Recognise that volunteer management requires designated responsibilities within specific posts.
- 8 Will endeavour to ensure volunteering opportunities within our organisation are as accessible as possible.

4. Recruitment and selection for volunteering roles

- 1 Volunteers are recruited from all sections of the community in accordance with our Equal Opportunities Policy. We welcome people from all social, cultural and ability backgrounds to join us as volunteers.
- 2 Information about our organisation and volunteer roles is displayed through our Charity's website and other communication channels including volunteer recruitment websites and local voluntary groups.
- 3 People interested in volunteering can discuss any volunteer roles with the Volunteer Coordinator or a member of staff before they submit their applications.
- 4 All applicants are required to complete an application form, an Equality & Diversity form and supply two sources of reference in accordance with our Recruitment Policy.
- 5 Applicants are informed if they are shortlisted for interview within 21 working days of their applications. We'll provide unsuccessful applicants feedback including information on other volunteering options within and outside our organisation.

Potential volunteers who meet the requirements of the volunteer role will be asked to attend an interview.

- 6 Volunteers are subject to an enhanced DBS check if their roles involve a position of trust and/or unsupervised direct contact with vulnerable clients in accordance with our Safeguarding Adults Policy.
- 7 Information related to DBS is being dealt with in the strictest confidence and does not necessarily prejudice the volunteers being accepted for voluntary work.
- 8 Volunteers, specifically recruited as drivers, are required to have a valid driving licence and adequate insurance cover. In addition to this requirement, volunteer drivers must inform their insurance companies that they are undertaking voluntary work which involves transporting people or items from one place to another. Failure to do so may invalidate their policy and make them liable for damages.

5. Volunteer Role Summaries & Agreements

- 1 Volunteer role summaries are kept up-to-date and clearly displayed through our corporate website and other communication channels including volunteer websites and local voluntary action groups.
- 2 All volunteers are required to sign a Volunteer Agreement before they start volunteering with us.

The Volunteer Agreement will identify:

- The volunteer's role;
 - the training that the volunteer is expected to undertake;
 - the expenses that the organisation will pay to the volunteer;
 - the insurance cover that will be provided for the volunteer;
 - who will supervise the volunteer; and
 - the notice that will be given to a volunteer if his/her role is to come to an end.
- 3 Volunteers are expected to comply with all our policies while undertaking any of their volunteering duties. Please see the Volunteer Handbook for further information on these.

6. Induction & Training

- 1 Volunteers are required to take part in induction sessions as part of their training and development. Generally, the induction will include an orientation session which will include an introduction to the Trust's ethos and how it is run, relevant health and safety procedures and practical elements such as arrangements for breaks etc.
- 2 From the point of induction, volunteers are required to take part in mandatory training to promote best practice in volunteering work. Key areas include confidentiality and data protection.
- 3 Volunteers may be asked to attend additional training sessions if their roles involve direct contact with clients or a specific set of skills.

7. Support & Supervision

- 1 Volunteers are assigned a named contact person for support and supervision.
- 2 We'll provide timely support, supervision and guidance for volunteers to develop the qualities, skills and knowledge required for their roles.
- 3 We'll provide additional support for volunteers who feel emotionally compromised by client support work in accordance with our Health & Safety Policy.

8. Record Keeping

- 1 We'll keep minimum details on volunteers including the application form, references, role details, signed documents, emergency contact details, correspondence and other relevant information in accordance with our Confidentiality and Data Protection policies.
- 2 We'll actively reduce the use, storage and disposal of paper documents in our workplace and encourage our volunteers to handle documents electronically as much as possible.

9. Expenses

- 1 Volunteers are unpaid. However, we'll ensure that systems are in place to enable volunteers to claim out of pocket expenses including travelling costs.
- 2 Reimbursement of out of pocket expenses will be subject to completion of an expenses claim form and production of the appropriate receipts. Reimbursement of out of pocket expenses is not subject to tax or national insurance deductions.

10. Insurance

- 1 We'll take all reasonable steps to protect our volunteers from public liability while on duty through corporate insurance cover. The insurance will not cover unauthorised actions or actions outside the volunteering agreement.

11. Health & Safety

- 1 We'll take all reasonably steps to ensure the health well-being and safety of our volunteers in accordance with our Health and Safety Policy.
- 2 Volunteers should at all times follow our 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.
- 3 We will provide all volunteers with appropriate guidance on any health and safety issues that arise.

12. Confidentiality

- 1 Volunteers are likely to become aware of confidential information about us, our service users and third parties. Volunteers are required to familiarise themselves with their obligations and responsibilities in relation to confidentiality as detailed in our Confidentiality Policy. If volunteers have any queries about confidentiality, they should liaise with their named person.

13. Equal Opportunities

- 1 We operate an equal opportunities policy which applies to all stakeholders including volunteers, trustees and other partners or member of public who come into contact with us.
- 2 We aim to ensure that no-one is treated less favourably on the grounds of their race, colour, nationality, religion, ethnic or national origin, age, gender, gender reassignment or marital status, sexual orientation or disability.
- 3 We'll take all reasonably steps to protect our volunteers from being discriminated on any grounds in accordance with our Equality & Diversity Policy.

14. Resolving Problems

- 1 The Volunteer Coordinator or a member of staff will discuss any issues that volunteers may have and endeavour to resolve them in a timely manner in accordance with our Grievance & Dispute Policy.
- 2 If the Volunteer Coordinator or a member of staff is unable to resolve these issues, senior management will be contacted for advice.

15. Consultation

- 1 We value the opinions of our volunteers and are committed to developing consultation and representational procedures for service improvement.

16. Exit Interviews

- 1 We'll ask volunteers to provide feedback on their experience when they leave the organisation.

17. Monitoring & Evaluation

- 1 We'll systematically monitor and evaluate our volunteer programme for improvement in accordance with our Volunteer Policy.

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