



Volunteering Policy

Introduction

This policy sets out the broad principles for voluntary involvement in Natural Kirklees. It is of relevance to all within the organisation, including volunteers, members, and those elected or appointed to positions of responsibility.

Commitment

Natural Kirklees recognises the right that people have, to participate in the life of their communities through volunteering. It also acknowledges that volunteers contribute in many ways, that their contribution is unique and that volunteering can benefit users of services, local communities and the volunteers themselves. Natural Kirklees values the contribution made by volunteers and is committed to involving volunteers in appropriate positions and in ways which are encouraging, supportive and which develop volunteering.

Definition

Volunteering is an important expression of citizenship as well as an important component of democracy. Volunteers are people, who, unpaid and of their own free will, contribute their time, energy and skills to benefit the community.

Statement of values and principles

Volunteering is a legitimate and crucial activity that is supported and encouraged by Natural Kirklees and is not intended to be a substitute for paid employment. The volunteer role is a gift relationship, binding only in honour, trust and mutual understanding. No enforceable obligation, contractual or otherwise, can be imposed on volunteers to attend, give or be set a minimum amount of time to carry out the tasks involved in their voluntary activity. Likewise the organisation cannot be compelled to provide either regular work or payment or other benefit for any activity undertaken by the volunteer. Although volunteers offer time freely and willingly without binding obligation, there is a presumption of mutual support and reliability. Reciprocal expectations are acknowledged – both of what the organisation expects of volunteers and what volunteers expect of the organisation.

Training & Development

All volunteers will be made aware of and have access to all the organisation's relevant policies, including those relating to volunteering, health & safety and equal opportunities. Where necessary, relevant training will be provided to the volunteers as required in the support of their role.

Expenses

Natural Kirklees ensures that the organisation's volunteers are able to claim reasonable out of pocket expenses, subject to the production of receipts as evidence

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of the expenditure. What can be reclaimed from the organisation and the calculation of expenses will be explained to the volunteer before they start any activity likely to give rise to expenses.

The organisation has a consistent approach to the reimbursement of expenses and is as approved by the Inland Revenue. It is the responsibility of Natural Kirklees to make volunteers aware of the procedure for the reimbursement of expenses.

Insurance

The organisation's liability insurance policies include the activities of volunteers and liability towards them. The organisation does not insure the volunteer's personal possessions against loss or damage

Confidentiality

The organisation will advise the volunteer on its Data Protection policy and procedures, where relevant. This would include those relating to personal information held by the organisation relating to the volunteer.

Settling Differences

The organisation aims to treat all volunteers fairly, objectively and consistently. The organisation seeks to ensure that volunteers' views are heard, noted and acted upon promptly and aim for a positive and amicable solution.

Rights and Responsibilities

The organisation recognises the rights of volunteers to:

- know what is (and what is not) expected of them
- have adequate support in their volunteering
- receive appreciation
- have safe working conditions
- be insured
- know their rights and responsibilities if something goes wrong
- receive relevant out-of-pocket expenses
- receive appropriate training
- be free from discrimination

The organisation expects volunteers to:

- be reliable
- be honest
- respect confidentiality
- make the most of training and support opportunities
- carry out tasks in a way that reflects the aims and values of the organisation
- work within agreed guidelines
- respect the work of the organisation and not bring it into disrepute
- comply with the organisation's policies

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Support, Supervision and Recognition

Volunteers may contact the chair if they have any volunteering concerns and seek guidance and support.

Signed



Ed Day – Chair of the Trustees

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