



*Registered Charity No. 1094571*  
WILLOW ROAD, DARLINGTON, DL3 6DX

## VOLUNTEER POLICY

### 1.0 Introduction

The purpose of this policy is to set out the aims and approach to the involvement of volunteers, it also provides guidance and direction to volunteers. It is not intended to create a legally binding relationship or contractual agreement.

### 2.0 Definition

Volunteering is work for a not-for-profit organisation, or work for someone who is not a member of the volunteer's family, where only reasonable expenses are paid.

2.1 A volunteer is someone who commits time, energy, expertise and skill for the benefit of others, through personal choice and without expectation of financial gain, except for payment for actual out of pocket expenses.

2.2 A WRCC (Willow Road Community Centre) Volunteer is a highly valued member of the team. This is reflected in WRCC's recruitment and selection process, the training, supervision and on-going support that we provide throughout the time volunteers are with WRCC. Whatever the reason for volunteering, WRCC values the gift of a volunteers time and commitment.

### 3.0 Aims

WRCC is committed to maximising the participation of volunteers in its existing work. We are also committed to maximising the creation of opportunities for volunteer involvement.

3.1 WRCC will ensure that the appropriate organisational structures and financial arrangements are in place to support the participation of volunteers.

### 4.0 Volunteering at WRCC

Volunteers are seen as an essential, unique and valuable part of WRCC complementing the work of the Management Committee.

4.1 Volunteers will whenever possible be included in all areas of work within the organisation and at all levels within WRCC.

4.2 WRCC makes its commitment to volunteers through the following: -

#### 4.2.1 WRCC volunteers can expect:

- to be valued as an individual
- to be respected for their individual knowledge and skills
- to have support, feedback, appreciation and encouragement
- to have opportunities to contribute to developments

- to have opportunities to discuss concerns or problems relating to their duties
- not to have their duties changed without prior discussion
- to be reimbursed for out of pocket expenses
- to be insured
- that WRCC has an agreed volunteering policy
- up to date information about the organisation and its development
- information about philosophy, policies and procedures
- to have clear guidelines within which to carry out duties
- to have a clearly defined task description for their role
- opportunities for training, both general and specialised
- to have an organised working schedule
- a safe working environment

#### **4.2.2 WRCC expects its volunteers to:**

- show commitment to the organisation
- treat clients, staff and volunteer colleagues with respect
- have a flexible approach to their duties
- be sensitive and tactful in their dealings with clients
- follow procedures and guidelines
- be punctual
- be reliable and regular in their attendance
- inform the organisation in all cases of absence
- report any accidents promptly to staff
- respect confidentiality
- have read and understood volunteer policy and procedures
- be prepared to undertake appropriate training
- carry out their tasks to the best of their ability
- discuss concerns with the appropriate person/manager
- consult the appropriate manager, if in need of help and guidance.
- report sickness to the appropriate person/manager.

### **5.0 Recruitment and Selection**

- 5.1 Volunteers will be recruited from the widest of sources in the community.
- 5.2 Volunteers who have the appropriate knowledge and skills and are representative of the community in which a particular project is based will be welcomed.
- 5.3 All volunteer applicants will be given clear, complete and current descriptions of the tasks and responsibilities they would be expected to fulfil.
- 5.4 All volunteer applicants are required to complete a WRCC volunteer application form.
- 5.5 WRCC will require potential volunteers to make a declaration and sign a volunteer agreement in regards to:
- any physical or mental health problem, or disabling condition, which may be relevant to the volunteer placement
  - any criminal conviction, caution or bind-over
  - the accuracy of information provided on the application form
  - treating all information obtained during the course of tasks assigned as confidential.

Once accepted to the position of volunteer you will be given a clear, complete and current description of the duties and responsibilities of the tasks you are expected to fulfil.

- 5.6 Prospective volunteers must go through a proper selection process which will include a written application, a selection interview, written references and a written notification of the outcome.
- 5.7 Two references will be obtained; one of which must be from someone who has knowledge of the volunteer in an educational or workplace environment.
- 5.8 Each volunteer will be expected to undertake a probationary period at the end of which each volunteer position will be reviewed. You will then be allowed to apply for vacant positions as an internal candidate within the organisation.
- 5.9 At the end of your voluntary service with WRCC, we will provide you with a reference for any prospective employer.

## **6.0 Training and Development**

- 6.1 WRCC is committed to offering all volunteers the opportunity to enhance existing skills and to develop new ones.
- 6.2 All volunteers will receive support and regular supervision.

## **7.0 Volunteer Management Procedure**

### **7.1 Volunteer records**

Confidential records detailing names, addresses and telephone numbers are maintained on a database. Original copies of the volunteer application form, references, interview notes, and specific checks are also held with WRCC's Secretary. Volunteer records are accorded confidentiality and each volunteer will have access to their own personal record in accordance with data protection.

### **7.2 Volunteer Code of Conduct**

The purpose of this code is to ensure that the relationship between volunteers, staff and clients is as positive and successful as possible and to ensure clarity of role.

#### **7.2.1 Some Do's and Don'ts**

##### **DO:**

- **Do** respect the clients' right to a confidential service by not discussing them in any forum or context other than in discussions with your supervisor.

**Reason:** you are providing a service for someone who will need to feel safe and secure in the knowledge that they can trust you. It is also easy for other people to identify clients from the slightest bit of information.

- **Do** remain within the law when working with clients and encourage them to remain within the law.

*Reason:* if you break the law or encourage a client in any way to break the law this could put yourself, the client, and WRCC at risk.

### **DON'T!**

- **Don't** buy gifts or give money to clients. Don't borrow from clients.

*Reason:* you will be giving a gift of time, interest, and consistency during your relationship with the client. You are not expected to spend money and doing so could create an expectation or dependency.

- **Don't** accept/put up with any form of harassment from clients. If such incidents occur, or you feel they are likely to occur, please contact your supervisor, who will support you in dealing with this.

*Reason:* any form of harassment, intimidation or abuse is not to be tolerated and you have the right to conduct your voluntary work without fear of it.

## **7.3 Communication**

Volunteers are asked to make every effort to keep up to date with information and to attend relevant meetings. Those with supervisory responsibilities will provide relevant and updated information to Volunteers on a regular basis. In order to meet Health and Safety requirements Volunteers must sign the Attendance Register when both arriving or leaving the project/activity.

## **7.4 Insurance**

All volunteers are covered by WRCC Insurance Policy whilst they are engaged in activities on WRCC's behalf. Volunteers are also covered by WRCC's Health and Safety policy

## **7.5 Reimbursement of expenses**

All volunteers will have appropriate out of pocket expenses, such as travel costs reimbursed on production of receipts.

## **7.6 Absence**

Volunteers are asked to inform their supervisors if they will not be available for work due to illness, holidays or for any other reason. It is helpful if volunteers can give WRCC as much notice as possible so that cover may be arranged. There may be occasions when volunteers may wish to take a break from work for a period of time and WRCC respects this.

## **7.7 Dress Code**

As ambassadors of WRCC, volunteers are expected to present a positive image of the organisation. Dress code is smart but casual at all times.

## **7.8 Health & Safety**

WRCC has a statutory responsibility under the Health & Safety at Work Act 1974, not to harm or damage the health of volunteers through their involvement in the activities of the organisation.

All volunteers are expected to conduct themselves in a safe manner and not to act in a way that may cause injury to others.

## **8.0 Smoking**

WRCC operates a non-smoking policy in the building and site. Doing so is considered to be a breach of WRCC's policy.

## **9.0 Drug/Alcohol/Substance Misuse**

The misuse of drugs, alcohol and other substances, which may inhibit the faculties of an individual, is not permitted. Any volunteer in breach of this will be dealt with accordingly.

## **10.0 Confidentiality**

- Volunteers should regard all information they have access to or are given as a result of their volunteering as being confidential unless advised otherwise. No information should be released to a third party without first seeking the agreement of your supervisor and/or the individual concerned, as appropriate.
- Volunteers should not disclose personal details (home address, telephone number etc) to clients but should use their business address when an address has to be given.
- WRCC will fulfil its duty to safeguard the information contained within application forms etc.
- Volunteers have the right to access their own records, including personal training records and application forms.

**APPROVED BY THE WILLOW ROAD COMMUNITY CENTRE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE**

**SIGNED:**

**DIANE EVANS**

**DATE: SEPTEMBER 2017**