



New Mills & District Volunteer Centre

Groups Policy

1. Equal Opportunities

It is the policy of the New Mills and District Volunteer Centre (NMVC) to provide opportunity for all group members regardless of impairment, age, gender, sexual orientation, race, colour, national, ethnic or class origin, religious belief or marital status.

2. Health and Safety

- a) The Management Committee of the NMVC acknowledges its responsibilities under current legislation and believes that good practice requires that guidelines be observed.
- b) All staff members will adhere to the safety procedures as laid down by the organisation and conform to all instructions given by these with a responsibility for health and safety.
- c) All accidents, near miss occurrences and hazardous situations must be reported to the Group's Co-ordinator, Centre Manager or other appropriate persons.
- d) In the event of an emergency the group leader will notify the centre's first aider.
- e) The group leader must ensure that all activities planned are suitable for each group member. In particular vulnerable group members will not be allowed access to potentially dangerous materials or equipment
- f) Vulnerable group members will be supervised when using the lift.
- g) A member of staff or a volunteer must accompany any vulnerable clients who require assistance to the toilet.
- h) Tutors and volunteer have a duty to work safely, efficiently and without endangering the health and safety of themselves, their colleagues, their group members or any other person who has a right of access to the NMVC premises at any time.
- i) A first aid box is located in the kitchen area of the centre.
- j) A first aid box will be taken with the group when the NMVC arrange outings.

3. Finance

The overall responsibility for managing the financial affairs of the NMVC lies with the Board of Trustees.

4. Charges

- a) The task of agreeing and monitoring all income and expenditure for group activities lies with the Trustees who are advised by the Treasurer at the beginning of each financial year.
- b) The decision about how much subscription group members pay will be set up by the Treasurer and agreed by the Trustees for the beginning of each financial year. This contribution is to cover the nominal costs of the group's activities.
- c) Certain groups will require a budget to cover resources. The Treasurer will set this amount at the beginning of the financial year.
- d) Payment for any resources purchased will be made upon acceptance of a receipt with the order, quality and price of the goods displayed.

5. Service Delivery

- a) The overall management of the groups is the responsibility of the Group's Co-ordinator.
- b) The Sessional Worker, Group Co-ordinator or Group Leader, will plan activities provided.
- c) Group members will be consulted about the content and delivery of activities and their ideas will be taken into consideration when planning.
- d) Group members can share any concerns they may have with the Group Leader/Co-ordinator regarding to the service delivered.
- e) A meeting will be arranged with the Centre Manager if there are any disagreements about decisions being made concerning the activities provided.

6. Standards

- a) The quality of the service provided will be monitored bi-annually. We will review how effective a group is using client evaluation sheets.
- b) The Groups Co-ordinator and the groups' leaders will review the running of the groups periodically. Groups will be evaluated in relation to how the group is meeting its need in the community, numbers in attendance, its effectiveness and the satisfaction of those involved.
- c) All sessional workers will be assessed after 6 sessions by the Centre Manager to monitor performance. This is an opportunity for both parties to be open and honest about the arrangement.

7. Transport

- a) Appropriate charges will be made for those group members who require transport to meetings.
- b) When outings or trips are planned, groups should normally cover expenditure by charging its members.
- c) Any volunteers or workers who go on outings or trips in support role for the group will not be charged.
- d) All payments for trips and outings should be paid in advance.

8. Attendance

- a) Group members are encouraged to attend regularly and phone the centre in cases of absence or illness.
- b) A waiting list will be kept when groups are over subscribed.
- c) Any group member booked to go on a trip or outing must let the centre know the day before if they are not able to attend. If notice is not given then they will be charged if their place is not filled.
- d) Anyone who cannot attend due to ill health will not be charged.

9. Resources

- a) It is the responsibility of the group leader to ensure that there are adequate resources for the running of their group.
- b) All group resources will be purchased from the groups' budget, which will be set by the Treasurer at the beginning of the financial year.
- c) All resources bought for the group members must be used for that purpose.

10. Volunteers

- a) Volunteers should not be used in place of previously paid workers.
- b) The relationship between paid workers and volunteers should be complementary and mutually beneficial.
- c) Paid workers at the NMVC should be fully aware of the areas of work undertaken by volunteers and the responsibilities of both themselves and volunteers.
- d) Volunteers have the right to make complaints about their role and in the first instance should contact the Groups Co-ordinator who is responsible for supervising them. If this is not appropriate they should contact the Centre Manager.
- e) Volunteers should not suffer financial loss through working with the groups at the New Mills and District Volunteer Centre. Volunteers will not pay any contribution towards groups expenses.
- f) Volunteers should receive out of pocket expenses to cover their travel costs to and from the NMVC.

11. Confidentiality

- a) All group members, potential users, staff and voluntary workers are required to fill in a form providing their personal details and an assessment of their needs. This information will only be available to the appropriate staff members at the NMVC and will not be accessible to others.
- b) Disciplinary action will be taken in a case of a breach of confidentiality.

12. Outside contacts

- a) Only the Centre Manager, the Group's Co-ordinator, Office Manager and the people serving on the Board of Trustees can negotiate or speak on behalf of the NMVC.
- b) Group members, sessional tutors and volunteers will not talk about the services provided at the NMVC to the media.

13. Gifts

When acting on behalf of the centre workers, volunteers must under no circumstances accept gifts from users. When pressed to do so they should report the circumstances to the staff supervisor or Centre Manager.

14. Difficult Situations

- a) Any member of staff, group member or volunteer will be asked to leave the building if there is evidence of:
 - i. Use of alcohol abuse or illegal drugs on the premises
 - ii. A case of violence or threatened violence
 - iii. Racist, sexist or other personal abusive or offensive behaviour
- b) Any suspected illegal activity must be reported immediately and confidentially to the Centre Manager.

Date