



# New Mills & District Volunteer Centre

## Volunteers Policy

### 1. Introduction

New Mills and District Volunteer Centre was founded by volunteers and remains to this day run and enriched by its volunteers. The emphasis of the Centre's work - expressed in its governing documents - is to provide opportunities for volunteers to participate in the activities and projects offered by the Centre to the benefit of both the Centre's users and the volunteers themselves.

In setting out this policy, the Board of Trustees recognise that volunteers come with different skills and experiences and with different expectations; whilst the Centre will always seek to offer opportunities to prospective volunteers, not all can be accommodated and not all are suitable. There must, therefore, be an assessment process which may include checks for relevant criminal offences. Such offences do not necessarily preclude an application from becoming a volunteer.

In recruiting people to do voluntary work with the Centre, we seek to follow these seven principles:

- a) We believe that people who do voluntary work should do so out of personal choice.
- b) We believe that voluntary activity should be encouraged in as many forms as possible - including mutual support and co-operation, service giving, campaigning and advocacy - and that it should include unpopular causes as well as popular ones. We believe that all forms of volunteering are of equal value.
- c) We believe that appropriate volunteering opportunities should be available to all members of society.
- d) We believe that a vital function of voluntary activity is to empower people so that they can enjoy their rights and fulfil their potential.
- e) We believe that volunteering contributes substantially to the well-being of society and to social change.
- f) We believe that voluntary activity is a way of enabling a wide range of people to participate in social, economic and cultural life, including many who might otherwise be excluded.
- g) We believe that volunteering, to be effective, must reflect good practice in the involvement of volunteers and in the management of voluntary activity.

Our policy is to ensure that the management of the organisation at all levels takes full account of these principles. We wish to ensure that volunteers are treated as full participants in the work of the organisation.

## 2. Procedures and Practices

### a) *Recruitment*

It is the policy of the Centre to seek opportunities actively to recruit volunteers. This includes publicity, addressing meetings and personal contacts. All prospective volunteers will be required to complete an application form and to provide two references. Each applicant will be interviewed by a member of staff who will have responsibility for overseeing the application and, where successful, the induction of the volunteer.

### b) *Induction*

New volunteers will be given at least one induction session when they will meet other volunteers and members of staff and be made familiar with all relevant procedures and policies. Volunteers, like staff are required to follow the policies of the Centre in particular the equal opportunities and health and safety policies, copies of which will be made available to new volunteers. Volunteer drivers are required to have the appropriate driving licence and to have undertaken relevant training. Copies of all the Centre's policies can be read in the Staff Handbook.

### c) *Induction period*

A discussion with all new volunteers will be carried out after one month to see how they are settling in and to clarify any issues that may have arisen. This is to be seen also as an opportunity for the volunteer to express any doubts or reservations they may have about their role. In the event that a volunteer proves not to be suited to the work or decides to withdraw, they will be offered support in this and in moving on to other voluntary work, if appropriate.

### d) *Recording of hours*

All volunteers will be required to keep a record of the hours they work and to complete a monthly report for this purpose.

### e) *Expenses*

Volunteers should not be out of pocket as a result of supporting an individual, a group or an activity on behalf of the Centre. The charity fully accepts its responsibility for ensuring that volunteers are reimbursed against receipts for all legitimate expenses agreed in advance by the Centre Manager.

Volunteers who support groups or group activities provided by the Centre are not required or expected to contribute towards the cost of the group or activity.

### f) *Responsibility*

The responsibility for volunteers rests ultimately with the Board of Trustees, who are themselves volunteers. Day-to-day responsibility for volunteers is vested in the Centre Manager who can delegate this to other members of staff. Each volunteer will have a named member of staff who will take responsibility for all matters relating to them. It is, however, the responsibility of all members of staff to ensure that volunteers are welcomed and supported in their various roles. Volunteers should not undertake (or be asked to undertake) tasks which they have not been authorised or trained to undertake.

g) *Training*

Volunteers develop as they progress. One of the Centre's roles is to encourage this development and to offer opportunities for training. Training may be required prior to undertaking certain activities.

h) *Confidentiality*

The Centre operates a full policy of confidentiality with respect to all those who work or volunteer. Volunteers are expected to treat Centre users, other volunteers and staff with respect and courtesy and to respect the confidential nature of the information they will see or receive in the course of their work.

i) *Insurance*

The Centre takes full responsibility for ensuring that all volunteers and their activities are covered by the charity's insurance policies.

j) *Involvement*

As a vital part of the organisation, volunteers will be invited to all meetings (including meetings of the Board of Trustees as observers), events, reviews and planning sessions.

k) *Gifts/Witnessing*

When acting on behalf of the Centre, volunteers must in no circumstances accept gifts from users. Where pressed to do so, they should report the circumstances to their staff supervisor or to the Centre Manager. Volunteers are also prohibited from acting as a witness for wills or any other documents, legal or otherwise.

l) *Volunteer Information Pack.*

This will be provided and will include the following information:

- Background information of the Centre
- Current programme of activities
- The Board of Trustees and the staff team
- The Volunteer Policy
- The Equal Opportunities Policy
- The Confidentiality Policy
- The Health and Safety Policy
- The Disciplinary and Grievance Procedures
- Recruitment of Ex-offenders Policy

The latest Annual Report is available in reception.

Dated April 2003

Amended August 2008

N H Heald Company Secretary

## **VOLUNTEER AGREEMENT**

This agreement describes the arrangement between New Mills and District Volunteer Centre and you. This document is not a contract (as in a contract of employment) and as such is not legally binding. It sets out in general our responsibilities to you and yours to the Centre. We hope in this way to give you a secure basis for your role with the charity.

### **Part 1            The Organisation**

Your role as a volunteer is/are..... and starts on ..... This work is designed to complement and support the role of the New Mills and District Volunteer Centre in the community. The Centre commits itself to the following:

#### **1.1    Induction and Training**

- To provide through induction to the work of the Centre, its staff and volunteers, your volunteering role and the training you may need to meet the responsibilities of your role.

#### **1.2    Supervision**

- To explain the standards we expect for our services and to encourage and support you to achieve and maintain them.
- To provide a named person who will meet with you regularly to discuss your volunteering, both successes and problems.
- To do our best to help you to develop your volunteering role with us.

#### **1.3    Expenses**

- To repay such expenses as you may legitimately incur in the course of your work.
- The cost of travel between your home and the Centre and any other travel incurred in the course of your volunteering.
- A meal allowance to a maximum of £3.00; a receipt must be produced if you are undertaking volunteering for a lengthy period which covers a meal time.
- Specialist clothing where this is required and provided by you (requires a receipt).

#### **1.4    Health and Safety**

- To provide adequate training and feedback in support of our Health and Safety Policy.

#### **1.5    Insurance**

- To provide adequate insurance cover for volunteers whilst undertaking work approved and authorised by us.

#### **1.6    Equal Opportunities**

- To ensure that all volunteers are dealt with in accordance with our Equal Opportunities Policy.

#### **1.7    Problems**

- To seek to resolve fairly and promptly any problems, grievances or difficulties you may have.
- In the event of an unresolved problem, to offer an opportunity to discuss the issue in accordance with the procedures set out in the Staff Handbook.

**Part 2            The Volunteer**

I ..... [Name in block capitals] agree

- To work with the Centre to fulfil its aims and objectives.
- To perform my volunteering role to the best of my ability.
- To follow the organisation's policies and procedures and to seek to maintain its standards.
- To maintain as confidential all information relating to the organisation and its users, volunteers and staff.
- To meet time commitments except in exceptional circumstances and to give reasonable notice where this proves impossible.
- To agree to a criminal records check (where necessary).

**Signature.....**

**Signature of Staff Member.....**

**Date.....**

Dated April 2003  
Amended August 2008  
N H Heald.  
Company Secretary