



## No. 13 – Developing a Volunteer Policy

### Key Points

A Volunteering Policy sets out a clear framework for the involvement of volunteers. It is based on the recognition that volunteering is a two-way process benefitting both the volunteer and the organisation. As you build the way in which you work with your volunteers – you build your Volunteer Policy, for example procedures for recruiting, supporting and protecting volunteers, paying expenses etc. It should be based on equal opportunities principles and good practice. As with all policy documents, your governing body (for example, your committee) needs to approve this document.

### Why Have a Volunteering Policy?

Having a volunteering policy is part of clear framework laying out expectations and procedures for the volunteer and the organisation. It aims to prevent misunderstandings developing. Think of it as a “user manual” for involving volunteers. Developing it should help you think through how you involve volunteers. To be worth the paper it's written on it should be reviewed and updated annually.

### What should be in a Volunteering Policy?

Headings could include:

- Introduction - containing your organisation's objectives and principles including why your organisation involves volunteers
- Recruitment - explaining how volunteers are recruited and a brief note of what roles are typically available
- Volunteer Agreements, Induction and Training and Support (how volunteers are offered support appropriate to their roles),
- The Volunteer's Voice (how volunteers can make their views known or feed in to decision-making),





- Records (explaining how volunteers' records are stored which should comply with Data Protection legislation)
- Confidentiality (general statement - might also refer to a separate Policy or Signed Agreement, depending on the nature of the volunteering)
- Expenses, Insurance, Health and Safety, Equal Opportunities
- Problems (an outline of how the organisation deals with complaints by or about volunteers)
- Endings (This section should mention any procedures such as Exit interviews or questionnaires, and whether a reference is offered after a certain period or number of hours of volunteering.)

## What Next

Once the policy is written it should be approved by the Management Committee. If it is to be properly implemented, people need to know the policy exists and to understand its purpose. It's often useful call a meeting to introduce the policy, which gives people a chance to talk through the policy and understand its importance.

Give a copy of the policy to all staff and volunteers, including those staff who will not be supervising or directly working alongside volunteers. Display a copy of the policy on notice boards.

Remember you will need to set aside time regularly to review the policy, to ensure it is up to date.

## More help?

If you would like more help or advice in relation to this factsheet please contact the Volunteer Centre Edinburgh on the following details:

Tel: 0131 225 0630

Email: [admin@volunteeredinburgh.org.uk](mailto:admin@volunteeredinburgh.org.uk)

Or you can drop in and see us:

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