



Volunteer Policy – September 2015

1. Introduction

Maindee Unlimited is committed to involving volunteers in appropriate positions and in ways which are encouraging, supportive and which develop volunteering.

This policy describes the principles for voluntary involvement in Maindee Unlimited.

We will arrange volunteering efficiently and sensitively so that volunteer's time is best used to the mutual advantage of all concerned.

The policy applies to all volunteers, members and those elected or appointed to positions of responsibility. It is approved by the Trustees of Maindee Unlimited and will be reviewed periodically to ensure that it remains appropriate to the needs of our volunteers and Maindee Unlimited.

2. Definition

Volunteers are people who are unpaid and, of their own free will, contribute their time, energy and skills to benefit the community.

3. 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
- volunteer in a safe environment
- be insured
- know their rights and responsibilities if something goes wrong
- receive relevant expenses
- receive appropriate training
- be free from discrimination
- be offered the opportunity for personal development

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
- carry out tasks within agreed guidelines
- respect the work of the organisation and not bring it into disrepute
- comply with the organisation's policies

No enforceable obligation, contractual or otherwise, will 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 tasks, 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.

Volunteers will not be used during times of industrial action to do the work of paid staff.

4. Volunteer Co-ordination and support

All volunteers will have a nominated person to offer guidance and advice to help the volunteer carry out tasks effectively. Volunteers will be informed of who this person is.

A Trustee, or other nominated person within the organisation will hold overall responsibility for the development of voluntary activities within the organisation. This person is responsible to Trustees for the maintenance of this policy and the general management and welfare of the organisation's volunteers.

Volunteers will have regular access to support and supervision. This will enable both the volunteer and the supervisor to identify, monitor and evaluate the volunteer's involvement, recognise achievements and identify individual training needs, including that relevant to their particular volunteering role and to their wider personal development. The frequency, duration and format of these sessions will be negotiated between the volunteer and the designated officer referred to above.

5. Recruitment & Selection

Maindee Unlimited is committed to equal opportunities and believes that volunteering should be open to all regardless of race, gender, religion, sexual orientation, political beliefs or an offending background that does not create a risk to vulnerable groups including children. The acceptance of volunteer assistance for a particular role is made on merit, the sole selection criterion being the individual's suitability to carry out agreed tasks. Information about the volunteer not relevant to the performance of the volunteering tasks concerned will be disregarded by the organisation in terms of recruitment and selection.

Volunteering opportunities will be widely promoted in ways that makes them accessible to all members of the community.

Volunteers who are considered unsuitable for a particular task will either be offered alternative voluntary involvement with us or referred to a more suitable alternative organisation.

If the volunteer will be carrying out activities with vulnerable groups (children and/or adults) there may be other safer recruitment procedures carried out including asking a volunteer to undergo an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Services (DBS) check. More detailed information will be made available specific to legislative requirements and to the particular volunteer position.

Volunteers will receive clear and concise task descriptions, which will be kept up to date as required. Task descriptions will be prepared in conjunction with the volunteer and their supervisor.

New volunteers will be properly inducted into the organisation.

Volunteers will be properly briefed about the activities to be undertaken and given all the necessary information to enable them to perform with confidence.

6. 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, safeguarding vulnerable groups and equal opportunities.

The development of training and support for volunteers is a high priority for the organisation in order to equip them with the necessary information and skills to carry out their tasks. It will be the responsibility of the designated person referred to above to see that this training is provided. It is the responsibility of the volunteer to attend relevant training.

Training in the supervision of volunteers will be provided for all those who have direct responsibility for volunteers.

7. Expenses

The reimbursement of expenses incurred in traveling to and from the place of volunteering or in the course of volunteering helps ensure that all individuals have equal access to voluntary opportunities.

The organisation's volunteers are able to claim reasonable out of pocket expenses, subject to the production of receipts as evidence 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 for both volunteers and paid staff.

It is the responsibility of each volunteer's supervisor to make volunteers aware of the procedure for the reimbursement of expenses.

8. Insurance

Maindee Unlimited will insure all the activities of volunteers and liabilities towards them with a reputable insurance company, but does not typically insure volunteers personal possessions against loss or damage.

9. Confidentiality

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

10. 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.

The designated officer referred to above is responsible for handling problems regarding volunteer complaints or conduct and these should be referred to him/her. In the event of a problem, all relevant facts should be obtained as quickly as possible. Support will be provided by the organisation to the volunteer while it endeavours to resolve the problem in an informal manner. If an informal resolution proves impossible, the organisation's wider grievance or complaints policies and procedures (which include volunteers) will be referred to. If a volunteer's behaviour is repeatedly or seriously unacceptable, they may be asked to change their role, or to leave the organisation.

11. Further information

The [Investing in Volunteers Standard](#) requires that the organisation has a written policy on volunteer involvement that sets out the organisation's values for volunteering involvement and highlights the need for procedures for managing volunteers, based on principles of equality and diversity (Indicator 1.1).

WCVA

www.wcva.org.uk/volunteering

12. Approval

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David Moses, Chairperson, Maindee Unlimited Trustees

September 2015 (Version 1)