



Volunteering Policy

COR-POL-17

Version 2.0

Date approved: 28 July 2017

Approved by: Chief Executive

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This Volunteering Policy sets out broad principles for voluntary involvement at Southway.
- 1.2 Volunteering is where individuals or groups contribute their time, experience, knowledge and skills without any financial gain, to provide a benefit to them, other people, the environment or the wider community.
- 1.3 The aim of this policy is to set out objectives for our relationship with volunteers and provide a framework for best practice in our volunteer programmes. It provides the basis for the positive relationship we wish to have with our volunteers.
- 1.4 Having a well established and widely understood volunteer policy will have the following benefits:
- Commitment: It demonstrates that care and thought has gone into our volunteer opportunities.
 - Consistency: It allows decisions to be consistent and ensures that all volunteers are treated equally and fairly
 - Clarity: It offers security and makes it clear where volunteers stand if things go wrong and outlines how they will be supported.
 - Unity: It helps staff and management understand why volunteers are involved and explains their role.

2. Policy Principles

- 2.1 We will value and appreciate the role that our volunteers play and recognise that a number of our services and activities would not be able to take place without them.
- 2.2 The following principles will apply to all volunteering opportunities:
- The achievements and practical contribution of volunteers will be recognised appropriately and with the agreement of volunteers, including in the media.
 - Southway recognises that each volunteer's contribution is unique. We will value our volunteers and the key role that they play in helping us to deliver services and activities that benefit our tenants.
 - We will recognise that volunteering can be demanding and require specific skills and will provide on going training and support as required.
 - We will treat volunteers with respect and will not advocate or practice the use of volunteers instead of paid staff.

- We will behave responsibly and professionally when working with volunteers and in return we will expect the same from them.
- We will be consistent in our treatment of volunteers but will also be flexible enough to reflect on and support the needs of individuals who are working with us.
- Volunteers will not be paid but we recognise that volunteers should not lose out financially as a result of their volunteering activities and will be appropriately reimbursed for any expenses incurred.
- The health and safety of volunteers will be taken very seriously. Staff will ensure that volunteers are aware of their responsibilities and the support they can expect to receive.
- We will aim to involve volunteers from a diverse range of backgrounds and we will ensure that all volunteers are treated fairly.

3. Recruitment

- 3.1 We will use a variety of methods to recruit our volunteers, including via our website and Southway Stories, through links with Community Centres and Learning Hubs, and via appropriate publicity and marketing including the use of social media.
- 3.2 Our recruitment process will be positive and transparent and will reflect our commitment to equality and diversity.
- 3.3 In some cases it may be necessary to require references and for the volunteer to complete a DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) check. Having a criminal history will not be an automatic barrier to volunteering with us. Situations will be assessed on a case by case basis and will be dependent upon the volunteering activity.

4. Training and Support

- 4.1 Training and equipment appropriate to the volunteering role will be provided to enable volunteers to effectively carry out the tasks required.
- 4.2 Some volunteers, for example those carrying out placements with adults at risk or with children, will need particular advice, training and support. They should be made aware of the special requirements for this type of volunteering.

5. Supporting Procedures

5.1 The following procedural documents will be used as required to support volunteering opportunities.

- Staff / Volunteer Handbook
- Code of Conduct
- Induction Procedure
- Expenses Procedure
- Health and Safety Procedure
- Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Procedure
- Grievance and Disciplinary Procedure
- Data Protection/Confidentiality Procedure

POLICY REVIEW HISTORY	
<i>To be completed during each review</i>	
Previous versions (version number – approved by – approval date – title if different)	
V1 – Board – 21 January 2014	
Date of last EIA:	April 2017
Review lead by:	Maureen Ward, Customer Involvement Manager
Main points or amendments made and reasons	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Review was due. No significant changes made. 	
Next review due:	Q1 2019/20