



Volunteering Policy

COR-POL-17

Version 2.2

Date approved: 1st September 2022

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 several 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 value our volunteers and the key role that they play in helping us to deliver services and activities that benefit our tenants.
 - We recognise that volunteering can be demanding and require specific skills and provide ongoing training and support as required.
 - We treat volunteers with respect and do not advocate or practice the use of volunteers instead of paid staff.

- We behave responsibly and professionally when working with volunteers and in return we will expect the same from them.
- We are 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 are not 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 is taken very seriously. Staff ensure that volunteers are aware of their responsibilities and the support they can expect to receive.
- We aim to involve volunteers from a diverse range of backgrounds, and we ensure that all volunteers are given equal access to volunteering opportunities and treated fairly.
- We monitor the equality and diversity characteristics of our volunteers and aim to address any gaps from clearly underrepresented groups by targeting volunteering opportunities in particular areas or communities.

3. Recruitment

- 3.1 We 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 is positive and transparent and reflects 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 We provide an induction programme and a review session for volunteers to assess the progress of their placements and resolve any problems at an early stage.
- 4.2 Training and equipment appropriate to the volunteering role is provided to enable volunteers to effectively carry out the tasks required. This includes the provision of a safe working device where a risk assessment deems it necessary.

4.3 All volunteers are offered access to support and supervision on a regular basis, with a named person, and informed of who to contact in an emergency.

4.4 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

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

- Volunteer Code of Conduct
- Induction Procedure
- Volunteer expenses Procedure
- Health and Safety Procedure for volunteers
- Volunteer’s Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Procedure
- Volunteer’s Grievance and Disciplinary Procedure
- Data Protection/Confidentiality Procedure for volunteers

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 V2 – CE – April 2017 V2.1 – CE – Jan 2020	
Date of last EIA:	April 2017
Review lead by:	Maureen Ward, Customer Involvement & Community Investment 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 2025/26