



## VOLUNTEER POLICY

***What does the organisation exist to do?***

*The Living Room* exists to provide a safe overnight space for people who would otherwise be sleeping on the streets or in unsafe accommodation.

***Why are volunteers important to achieving that?***

Volunteers are crucial for allowing us to keep *The Living Room* open and to provide a warm welcome to visitors.

***What statement can you make about how volunteers fit into the organisation?***

By involving volunteers in *The Living Room*, we benefit from their experience and skills and they are a highly valued part of the organisation. Together, with our different skills and ideas, we can help those we seek to serve.

### Recruitment

- Volunteers will be recruited from a variety of backgrounds and sources. See 'Equal Opportunities' policy for more information.
- Volunteers will be requested to complete a brief application form, Confidential Declaration form and to attend for an informal interview.
- References will be taken up once a volunteer has been interviewed.
- It is a requirement that all volunteers are DBS checked – see Safeguarding Policy for more information.

### Induction and Training

- All volunteers will be expected to attend induction training, which will include:
  - An introduction to the project
  - Dealing with challenging behaviour
  - Safeguarding
  - Professional Boundaries
- Additional training may be offered including:
  - Drug and alcohol awareness
  - Mental Health awareness

- Health and safety

Volunteers are strongly recommended to attend this training when it is offered.

### **Volunteer formalities**

- All volunteers will have a role description outlining what they are expected to do.
- All volunteers will sign a volunteer agreement
- All volunteers will have a named person to whom they can take concerns.
- Volunteers can have reasonable travel expenses to and from *The Living Room* and their home address reimbursed by completing an expenses form.

### **Dealing with problems**

- If a volunteer is dissatisfied with any action taken relating to his / her personal involvement as a volunteer at *The Living Room*, or if you have a grievance against *The Living Room* in some other respect, you should in the first instance raise this with the Project Co-ordinator, who will talk through the issue informally and look for possible solutions.
- If this does not resolve the matter, the volunteer should then put his / her complaint in writing to the Management Committee within 28 days, accompanied by any relevant documentation. The Management Committee will make formal acknowledgement of the complaint within seven days, and meet to discuss the situation as soon as possible thereafter. You may be asked to attend such a meeting, in order to present your complaint personally or to clarify certain details of the situation that has arisen. The outcome of this meeting will normally be communicated to you in writing within seven days.
- If, after this process has been completed, you are still gravely dissatisfied with the situation, then it is advisable for you to refer your complaint to the Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service \* (ACAS) for further advice.
- The Management Committee is committed to handling any problem that arises within the volunteer relationship as swiftly and equitably as possible.

### **DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURE**

If at any time the Management Committee has any concerns regarding poor practice or inappropriate behaviour in relation to a volunteer, then the following steps will be taken.

- The Project Co-ordinator / member of the Management Committee will in the first instance meet with the volunteer within 7 days to discuss the concerns.
- If this does not resolve the matter satisfactorily then the concerns will be set out in writing within 14 days of the above meeting. The volunteer will then have 28 days to respond to the concerns and will be offered the opportunity to discuss the concerns with two or more of the Management Committee, in person.
- If at the end of the 28 day period the Project Manager and Management Committee continue to have concerns then you will be asked by the Management Committee to cease your work with *The Living Room*

#### *Note*

If there is any allegation related to safeguarding there are no circumstances when this wouldn't be reported to the police and the Project Co-ordinator will report to the chair of *The Living Room* management committee immediately they are aware of an issue.

If any disciplinary or grievance matter arises which relates in any way to allegations involving child protection, then the police or Social Services will be contacted.

#### **Implementing the policy**

The management committee of *The Living Room* is responsible for the implementation of this policy and it will be reviewed annually.