



# Volunteering

## 1. Background

At Abbeyfield The Dales (ATD) we are committed to involving a diverse range of local people in our work in both formal volunteering and community activity.

We do this because we believe that:

- we fulfil our vision of 'making more time for older people' by providing opportunities for local people to use their skills, knowledge, and experience through volunteering.
- without the contribution of volunteers, we would only be able to achieve a small percentage of our work with and for older people.
- as volunteers who reflect the diversity of their communities, local people bring a different perspective to that of professional paid staff, which adds value to our work.
- older people with whom we work value the involvement of volunteers; and
- by involving volunteers, we can offer genuine opportunities to add social value to our local communities, providing learning and development for individuals.

A volunteer is anyone who freely chooses to undertake work for us through the giving of their time, skills and experience without financial remuneration beyond the reimbursement of out-of-pocket expenses. It is undertaken by choice and is unpaid.

Our Volunteers:

- serve on our Executive Committee/Board.
- provide activities and befriending which stimulates residents both mentally and physically.
- help with the delivery of our services.
- provide additional support with administration.
- are active in projects and community-led activities supported by us; and/or
- help raise funds to support our work.

We believe that our relationship with volunteers is one of mutual responsibility and expectations. We aim to ensure that volunteers enjoy their involvement with us and gain from it in terms of their own personal objectives.

## 2. Objectives

ATD is committed to providing services that enhance the quality of life for older people and developing services that will meet the needs of future generations. This commitment is based on the Mission and Values of ATD. ATD will also comply with all relevant and current legislation.

Our purpose in adopting this policy is to:

- highlight and acknowledge the value of the contribution made by volunteers.
- reflect our purpose, value, standards, and strategies in our involvement of volunteers.
- recognise the respective roles, responsibilities, and expectations of volunteers.
- confirm our commitment to involving volunteers in our work.
- establish clear principles for the involvement of volunteers.
- clarify their roles and the relationships between them, those who involve them and those who receive their services or work alongside them.

- help ensure the quality of both the volunteering opportunities on offer and the involvement of volunteers; and
- acknowledge our current areas of volunteer involvement.

The policy is intended for internal management guidance only and does not constitute, neither implicitly or explicitly, a binding contractual or personal agreement.

### **3. Scope**

This policy applies to all volunteers in programmes and projects undertaken by or on behalf of ATD. To all our sites of operation and to our volunteer trustees.

### **4. Policy**

#### **4.1. Statement of principles of good practice**

In involving volunteers, we will be guided by the following principles of good practice:

- tasks will be clearly defined so that all concerned with volunteers' activities are sure of their respective roles and responsibilities.
- records will be kept of work done by volunteers as a basis for monitoring, and volunteers will have access to their records.
- volunteer roles will add value to the services we provide to and for older people.
- existing and future policies will be checked as to how they affect volunteers; and
- The Abbeyfield Society core standard will be the mechanism by which policy and procedures on volunteers will be monitored, reviewed, and delivered.

#### **4.2. Recruitment and Selection**

- Our equal opportunities statement will be adhered to when recruiting and selecting volunteers.
- Role descriptions will outline the time, commitment, skills and experience, and actual duties agreed between ATD and the volunteer.
- We will ensure that procedures are in place to cover good practice requirements for volunteers selected to work with vulnerable older people.
- We will request references in most circumstances and where appropriate carry out DBS checks in relation to our DBS Policy and safeguarding procedures.
- People who offer to volunteer will have their offers dealt with as quickly as possible.
- Volunteers will be placed in activities which match their skills, talents, and desire and, once placed must comply with our existing policies and procedures; and
- We will regularly review the ways in which potential volunteers can contact us.

#### **4.3. Support for Volunteers**

- We will invest financial and personnel resources for the management of volunteers.
- We will provide an induction programme and review session(s) for volunteers to assess the progress of their placements and resolve any problems at an early stage.
- We will provide funding for volunteers' out of pocket expenses.
- Volunteers will be given clear information about what expenses can be claimed and how to make a claim.
- Our insurance policies and procedures will include volunteers.
- Volunteers will be given information on legislation and other policies which may affect them, such as Health and Safety.
- All volunteers will be offered appropriate support and supervision on a regular basis, with a named person, and will be informed of who to contact in an emergency.
- All volunteers will be offered appropriate training to enable them to develop their capabilities and competence in relation to their volunteering role.

- Volunteers will be able to develop their involvement as desired by the volunteer and appropriate to our needs.
- Volunteers will be made aware of feedback and complaint procedure(s) and whom to contact if they have a problem about any aspect of their work.

#### **4.4. Volunteers on our Executive Committee/Board**

We will provide for our executive committee/board members:

- An induction on the role and responsibilities of executive/ board committee members and our work.
- Opportunities to meet with staff and volunteers; and
- Written information and reports in good time on matters related to the governance of the organisation, our Constitution or Memorandum and Articles of Association and other relevant legislation.

#### **4.5. Volunteers' Expectations**

In involving volunteers, we will ensure they:

- know what is expected of them and be given clear information.
- have clearly specified lines of support and supervision.
- are shown recognition and appreciation.
- have safe working conditions.
- are insured.
- are paid out-of-pocket expenses.
- receive training and learning & development opportunities.
- be treated in a non-discriminatory manner.
- can ask for a reference.
- are consulted on decisions which affect what they do; and
- can stop volunteering whenever they choose.

We expect volunteers will:

- carry out their tasks in a way which corresponds to our aims and values.
- work within agreed guidelines and remits.
- be reliable.
- respect confidentiality and follow our safeguarding and confidentiality policies.
- attend training and support sessions where agreed.
- not discriminate against volunteers, staff, users, and others associated with us; and
- maintain our good name and reputation.

#### **4.6. Relationships with paid Staff**

- We will ensure that paid staff at all levels are clear about the role of volunteers and that good working relationships are fostered between them and volunteers.
- Appropriate training, support and resources will be provided for those who work alongside volunteers and for those who have a managerial role in relation to them.
- Volunteers will be given clear information about the roles undertaken by paid staff and of their value to us; and
- Volunteers on our executive committee/ board will observe fair and non-discriminatory standards and conditions of employment, and health and safety in respect of paid staff.

#### **4.7. Contracts and Service Level Agreements**

In entering into contracts or service level agreements which involve volunteers, we will ensure that:

- The role of Volunteers is made clear and that satisfactory arrangements are in place for their management.
- The terms of the service level agreement provide for a necessary resource to involve Volunteers.
- Arrangements are made to set out the roles and commitments of Volunteers; and
- The impact of volunteering and its benefits are promoted and acknowledged.

#### **4.8. Relationships with other groups and organisations meeting the needs of older people**

In all our relationships with other groups, organisations, or partners we will:

- promote volunteering as an important means of contributing to our core value of ‘making time for older people’; and
- promote good practice in volunteering.

In funding other groups, organisations or partners involving volunteers we will ensure that they adopt commitments to volunteers like those contained in this policy where appropriate.

#### **4.9. Monitoring Impact of Volunteers**

We will monitor the impact of volunteering on our residents and the local community (Social Value). Records will be kept of work done by volunteers as a basis for monitoring, and volunteers will have access to their records.

### **5. Finance, Value for Money & Social Value**

#### **5.1. Finance**

ATD commits to investing financial and personnel resources for the management of volunteers.

#### **5.2. Value for Money**

We will collect data on numbers of volunteers and estimated volunteering hours gifted in kind. This data will be used to inform our work on Value for Money.

#### **5.3. Social Value**

We see volunteering as a key in growing social capital (alongside physical, economic, cultural, and human capital) within our local communities, by providing opportunities for local people to use their skills, knowledge and experience through volunteering.

### **6. Supported Appendices**

Good practice guidelines and templates to support this policy can be found on Abbeyfield Connect within the relevant ‘Volunteering’ Section.

### **7. Linked Policies**

Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS) (S006P)

Equality & Diversity (LG016P)

Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults (LG031P)

Data Protection (LG013P)

Confidentiality, Privacy & Dignity (R005P)

Lone Worker (S016P)

Board Member & Volunteer Expenses (LG002P)

## **8. Legislation/Regulation**

We will aim to act in conjunction with any Government legislation or regulation that effects volunteering.

## **9. Review**

Every 3 years, subject to any regulatory or legislative updates.

## **10. Procedure/Guidance**

Volunteering is an Abbeyfield Core Standard.

Good practice guidelines and templates to support this policy can be found on Abbeyfield Connect within the relevant 'Volunteering' Section.