



The Link Charitable Trust

Volunteering Policy Agreement

1. Introduction

The Link Charitable Trust (The Link CT) is committed to involving volunteers directly within the organisation to:

- Contribute to the delivery of our services
- Make sure we are responsive to the needs of our users
- Provide different skills and perspectives
- Offer opportunities for participation by people who might otherwise we excluded.

This volunteer policy sets out the principles and practice by which we involve volunteers.

2. Principles

The Link CT:

- Recognise that voluntary work brings benefits to volunteers themselves, to service users and to paid staff.
- Will ensure that volunteers are properly integrated into the organisational structure and that mechanisms are in place for them to contribute.
- Will not introduce volunteers to replace paid staff.
- Expects that staff at all levels will work positively with volunteers and, where appropriate, will actively seek to involve them in their work.
- Recognises that volunteers require satisfying work and personal development and will seek to help volunteers meet these needs, as well as providing the training for them to do their work effectively.
- Will endeavour to identify and cover the costs of involving volunteers.
- Recognises that the management of volunteers requires designated responsibilities within specific posts.
- Will endeavour to involve volunteers from a wide range of backgrounds and abilities and ensure our volunteering opportunities are as accessible as possible.

3. Recruitment

Recruitment of volunteers will generally be from all sections of the community, and will be in line with, The Link CT Equal Opportunities and Diversity Policy. Positive action in recruitment may be used where appropriate.

People interested in becoming volunteers with The Link CT will be invited for an informal talk with the appropriate contact person. They will be given information including general information about the organisation and specific information on the volunteer post in which they are interested.

All volunteers will be asked to complete a simple registration form appropriate to the role that they are applying for and to supply two references. Where applicants are not placed in the role applied for, they will be provided with feedback and given the opportunity to discuss alternative roles both with The Link CIC and other volunteer involving organisations.

Every volunteer role will undergo a risk assessment. For volunteer roles which involve 'regulated work' such as care giving and/or sustained and direct contact with children or vulnerable adults, The Link CT has a legal obligation to ensure that volunteers are not barred from working with children or vulnerable groups. Potential volunteers for such roles will be required to join the Protection of Vulnerable Groups (PVG) Scheme, and scheme records and/or disclosure records will be assessed. This information will be dealt with in the strictest confidence and will not necessarily prejudice the person being accepted for voluntary work.

4. Volunteer Agreements and Voluntary Work Outlines

Volunteers will receive a role description and volunteer agreement containing full information about their chosen area of work and a clear idea of responsibilities and the volunteers responsibilities to them.

5. Introduction and Training

Volunteers will be given induction and training appropriate to the specific tasks to be undertaken.

6. Support/Supervision

Volunteers will be assigned a named contact person who will provide regular support. Support sessions will provide the opportunity for ongoing dialogue about the development of the volunteering role and any advice and guidance needed. Where the volunteering role is emotionally demanding these sessions also give volunteers the opportunity to access emotional support from the organisation.

7. The Volunteers Voice

Volunteers will be consulted in decisions which affect them. The Link CT is committed to developing consultation and representational procedures for volunteers.

8. Records

Minimum details will be kept on volunteers. This will include the registration form, references, placement details, crisis contact, correspondence and any other relevant information in accordance with The Link CT confidentiality policy.

9. Expenses

The Link CT will ensure that there is a clear and accessible system to enable volunteers to claim out of pocket expenses.

10. Insurance

Volunteers will be covered by insurance while carrying out agreed duties.

11. Health and Safety

The Link CT will take all reasonably practicable steps to ensure the volunteers' health, safety and welfare while at work in accordance with the centres Health and Safety policy.

12. Equal Opportunities

Volunteers and staff will work in accordance with The Link CT equal opportunities and diversity policy and will prevent discrimination on any grounds.

13. Problems

The Link CT has a policy to help deal with grievances that volunteers may have. In line with this policy volunteers have the right to discuss any concerns they may have with their names contact at any time.

14. Endings

When volunteers move on from their role at The Link CT they will be asked to provide feedback on the volunteering experience by way of an exit questionnaire. They will also be given the opportunity to discuss their responses to the questionnaire more fully with their Volunteer Support worker or a member of the management team.

On the basis of their voluntary work, volunteers will have the right to request a reference. Volunteers will be supported to move on to other options.

The Link CT has a policy on how it will deal with any disciplinary issue regarding all those working within The Link CT.

15. Monitoring and Evaluation

The Link CT will systematically monitor and evaluate its use of volunteers with reference to this Volunteer Policy Agreement.

Date Approved: February 2021

Reviewed Date December 2022 by Lorraine Bateman