

**Volunteer Role Description**

Age UK York is an independent local charity, that has worked to support older people for over fifty years. We have over 250 volunteers helping us to deliver services and activities for older people in York.

**Volunteer role:** **Supporting Independence Volunteer**

**Service**: Supporting Independence Service

**Supported by:** Supporting Independence Coordinators/ Volunteering and Outreach Worker

**Commitment:** Visit on a regular basis, usually weekly. Commitment of at least 12 months.

**Training:** Age UK York Induction training part one and part two.

**DBS:** Enhanced with Barred DBS required (undertaken by Age UK York).

**Role purpose**

The aim of this service is to improve the quality of life for vulnerable and isolated people, maximising their independence and helping them to remain safe and comfortable in their own communities for as long as possible, whilst maintaining their individual dignity, privacy, freedom of choice and being treated with respect.

The volunteer will provide the support that the older person needs to maximise their independence and prevent, reduce, or delay the need to access long term care and other statutory provision.

**Personal qualities and experience**

Supporting independence volunteers are friendly, patient and good listeners, with an ability to understand the needs of older people and empathise with them. The volunteer will need to bring a reassuring presence to the service user. Being flexible is a key attribute to allow adaptation to the person’s needs and changing plans.

All Age UK volunteers must be willing to work within guidelines and always follow confidentiality policies.

**Tasks and activities could include the following, although is not limited to, and may not be appropriate or required for all service users:**

If the person is under short term support:

* Support them in reaching their goals.
* Build their confidence and independence so that they feel willing and able to undertake tasks themselves.
* Escort on short walks to local parks, cafés, libraries, etc.
* Introduce and attend social groups with the person.
* Discuss interests and what motivates them.
* Build their confidence in accessing public transport.
* Be understanding of the person’s wants and needs and never force or push an older person to do something they don’t feel comfortable doing.
* Accompany on shopping errands to encourage their independence and provide support to access online shopping services.
* Undertake shopping, by agreement with the service coordinators.
* Carry out dynamic risk assessments (training provided).
* Feedback on progress.
* Promptly raise with the service coordinator any concerns or changes in the person’s needs, including health and safety issues.

If the person is under longer term support:

* Visit the person in their home and spend time chatting to them.
* Undertake joint activities within the home, e.g., craft activities
* Work towards a beneficial and supportive relationship.
* Carry out dynamic risk assessments (training provided).
* Undertake shopping, by agreement with the service coordinators.
* Monitor the wellbeing of your older friend.
* Feedback on the person’s progress.
* Highlight any issues to the service coordinator, including safeguarding, health and safety issues (e.g. mobility) and changes in your older friend’s needs.

**In return, as an Age UK York Volunteer, you will have the opportunity to:**

* Be part of a friendly team and supported in your role.
* Support older people in the City of York to retain their independence.
* Contribute to the alleviation of loneliness and social isolation in York.
* Access training and development, as appropriate.

**Volunteer Agreement**

We ask you to:

* Work within the parameters of your volunteer role description.
* Visit the person within office hours where possible, when support is available.
* Maintain the commitment you choose to make.
* Undertake training and updates.
* Commit to regular appointments and complete any relevant paperwork.
* Keep us informed if your circumstances change.
* Inform us immediately of any new criminal convictions.
* Adhere to the Age UK York policy regarding confidentiality.
* Adhere to the Age UK York policy regarding data protection.
* Adhere to all other Age UK York policies and procedures, summarised in the volunteer handbook and available in full on request or via the website.
* Promote the work of Age UK York in your local community.
* Contact us if you have any issues or concerns.

**Please sign to confirm that you have read and understood the above.**

**Name:**

**Signature:**

**Date:**

This agreement is binding in honour only; it is not intended to be a legally binding contract between us and may be cancelled at any time at the discretion of either party. Neither of us intends any employment relationship to be created either now or at any time in the future.