

Updated: November 2022

VOLUNTEERING POLICY

PURPOSE

Age UK Cambridgeshire and Peterborough (AUKCAP) values the contribution of its volunteers without whom we would not be able to offer our range of services and reach out to so many older people in our community who need our support and services.

This policy aims to establish clear principles for our involvement of volunteers in terms of their recruitment, training, roles and on-going support to ensure that as an organisation we offer meaningful, quality opportunities which recognise the rights and responsibilities and the importance of volunteers within AUKCAP.

SCOPE

This policy relates to all volunteers in all services and projects undertaken by or on behalf of AUKCAP. Our definition of volunteering is anyone who freely chooses to engage in tasks unpaid for by AUKCAP but who may receive out of pocket expenses.

We aim to ensure that volunteers enjoy their involvement with us and feel it is a worthwhile use of their time and commitment. We believe that volunteers contribute to building active and sustainable communities which reflect the needs and values of local people.

POLICY

Our commitment to volunteers

Our volunteers can expect us to:

- Treat all volunteers with respect, consideration and appreciation for the time and commitment they donate to our charity.
- Provide a safe environment for volunteers to undertake their tasks. This will be done via risk assessments, training and robust health & safety, and safeguarding policies to ensure both the physical and mental safety of our volunteers.
- Ensure that tasks are clearly defined in role descriptions so that both volunteers and staff understand the requirements and responsibilities of each role and the anticipated time commitment involved. These are subject to regular review in consultation with volunteers.
- Conduct volunteer recruitment in an open and transparent manner and ensure that opportunities are accessible to the whole community.
- Support volunteers through regular contact with a named individual so that there is an opportunity to discuss any issues arising from their role, give feedback and update volunteers on the impact of their role on the service.
- Reimburse volunteers for any out-of-pocket expenses in accordance with our expense policy as detailed in the Volunteer handbook.
- Provide both an organisational and service specific induction, mandatory training and ensure all volunteers are aware of further opportunities and training available to them.
- Inform volunteers of our policies including Health & Safety, Equal Opportunities, Whistleblowing, and Complaints which are set out in the volunteer handbook issued to all volunteers.
- Inform our volunteers of developments and changes within our services so that our volunteers feel part of the wider team and have an opportunity to take part in consultations on policies and decisions which affect their volunteering role.
- Deal promptly with any complaints arising during the course of their volunteering role.

Volunteer Expectations

We expect our volunteers to:

- Treat our service users, other volunteers and staff with respect and comply with our Equalities Policy and Code of Practice as set out in the Volunteer handbook.
- Familiarise themselves and carry out their roles in accordance with their role description, our policies and guidance as set out in the handbook, accept supervision from their key contact, and meet and reflect the aims and values of AUKCAP.
- Complete mandatory training and comply with relevant legislation.
- Check for and read communications issued by AUKCAP, some of which will be requests for data we are legally bound to provide to retain our charity status.
- Communicate with their key contact so that service managers can ensure continuity for service users. We value whatever time our volunteers can share with us, but our services need to be able to plan to meet the needs of service users. Therefore, we ask our volunteers to inform us if they are unable to attend/visit a service user so that we can make alternative arrangements.

Induction and Training

All volunteers will receive an organisational and service specific induction to ensure they are aware of the values and work of our charity and have the information they need to confidently carry out their volunteering role.

All volunteers will receive mandatory training and will be offered opportunities for further training according to their role and interests. This will be both in person and e-learning.

See AUKCAP Training Policy for more details.

Communication

It is important that we communicate with all our volunteers, and we will do this through email, post, telephone, newsletters

and social media. We ask all our volunteers to keep us updated with their contact details and to check for emails and communication from our team.

Personal Safety

All volunteers are required to be aware of and understand our Health & Safety, Loneworking and other policies detailed in the volunteer handbook to ensure that they know how to stay safe within their volunteer role. This includes maintaining clear boundaries within their role and accepting the guidance and supervision of their key contact as this is designed to prevent harm to all parties. AUKCAP takes the safety of our volunteers, staff and service users very seriously and we require our volunteers to adhere to the policies, training and guidance they receive during their volunteering role.

If a volunteer has any concerns either for themselves or others, they should inform their key contact as soon as practicable.

Insurance

AUKCAP has employers' liability insurance which covers volunteers whilst they are acting in a volunteering capacity for us. Volunteers are also covered by our Public Liability insurance when carrying out tasks on our behalf.

All volunteers should inform their car insurers if they use their vehicle whilst carrying out their volunteering role. If they claim fuel expenses, they must have business insurance on their policy as this is a requirement set by HMRC for reimbursement of fuel expenses. It is also the volunteers' responsibility to make sure their vehicle is road worthy and safe. Please see the Drivers Handbook for further details.

Recruitment

We welcome applications from all sections of the community. Written role descriptions set out the time commitment, time of day, actual tasks and requirements for the roles to inform potential volunteers about our roles. All potential volunteers

are required to complete an application form and provide two references, these do not need to be employment based. All roles which have contact with service users will require a DBS check, paid for by AUKCAP.

Informal interviews are carried out to ensure that volunteers understand the role requirements and are suitable for the role. There are no particular skills or qualifications needed for most of our roles as training will be given. We endeavour to place volunteers in activities which match their skills, interests, and availability. Once in place all volunteers are required to comply with AUKCAP's policies and procedures as set out in the handbook and in their induction training.

Equality and diversity

AUKCAP does not accept any form of discrimination and will not treat anyone less favourably on the grounds of age, disability, gender reassignment, marital or civil partnership status, pregnancy or maternity, race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation (Protected Characteristics) or political allegiance.

AUKCAP is committed to involving a diverse range of local people in its volunteering as we believe that volunteers bring to our charity a value which adds to our understanding of, and response to, older people's needs.

See AUKCAP Equality & Diversity Policy for more details.

REVIEW OF THIS POLICY

This policy will be reviewed every 36 months.

Volunteering policy approved: November 2022 (Date)



Signed by Chair of Trustees: