Policy No. 5001	VOLUNTEER POLICY

AGE UK CROYDON is a registered charity no. 1081013 and a registered company no. 3921436. AGE UK CROYDON TRADING LIMITED, registered company no. 5792724 is a wholly owned subsidiary of Age UK Croydon. All Policies and Procedures apply to both companies

AGE UK CROYDON is committed to working with volunteers from a diverse range of backgrounds and any discrimination or harassment on the grounds of gender, disability, race, sexual orientation, age and religion or belief, marital status, domestic circumstances, trade union membership/non-membership will not be tolerated.

DEFINITION

A volunteer is defined as anyone who is accepted by the organisation and freely chooses to undertake duties through the giving of their time, skills or experience without financial remuneration beyond the reimbursement of out of pocket expenses.

1. **Introduction**

    Age UK Croydon places great value on the involvement of volunteers in its work in various ways ranging from office and clerical tasks to decision and policy making in Committees. Volunteers help enhance the range and quality of services provided by Age UK Croydon by putting their time, skills, knowledge or experience at its disposal. They help keep Age UK Croydon's work relevant to the Croydon community by bringing a range of personalities, backgrounds and experience into the organisation.

    This policy is intended to ensure good practice in the involvement of volunteers in Age UK Croydon's work, and promote understanding of the respective roles of staff and volunteers in the organisation.

2. **Role of Volunteers and Task Specification**

    Before recruiting volunteers, the Chief Executive Officer and/or Volunteer Programme Manager will have considered the appropriateness of the role envisaged bearing in mind the following points;

2.1 The roles of volunteers and those of staff in Age UK Croydon should be distinct.

2.2 Work carried out by volunteers should not be such that might jeopardise or replace paid posts.

2.3 The voluntary role must allow for job satisfaction on the part of the volunteer, as well as meeting a need of the organisation.

2.4 Existing staff and volunteers should be consulted on the creation of new roles for volunteers which are likely to affect them.

2.5 When a role for volunteers is identified and approved a role description outlining the general tasks, required skills or qualities, and conditions of service (i.e. reimbursement of expenses, insurance) should be available in writing.

3. **Recruitment and Selection**

3.1 The recruitment and selection of volunteers will be carried out by nominated members of staff who possess the appropriate skills.

3.2 Volunteers will be recruited from the widest possible base and selected accordingly to their own individual ability to perform the expected tasks in line with the Role Description.

3.3 The selection process will commence on receipt of application and the selection criteria will determine whether the applicant is suitable.

3.4 If the applicant successfully meets the criteria they will be invited to an informal interview.

3.5 Time will be given at interview to explore the candidate's reasons for wanting to volunteer asking about their skills and interests and how these can be developed in line with the need of the organisation.

3.6 If the applicant is successful at interview permission will be requested to contact the two referees provided on the application form.

3.7 The applicant will be asked to submit the appropriate documents to support the DBS process after the references have been contacted, which will be done after a successful interview.

3.8 The applicant will then be invited to attend the next available volunteer induction.

3.9 New volunteers will be invited to commence their role once they've attended and completed the induction.

3.10 Each volunteer appointment is subject to a review at the end of a three month trial period.

3.11 If unable to involve a particular volunteer, the staff responsible for the selection must make the reasons clear in a sensitive manner.

4. Support and Supervision

4.1 An individual member of staff should be nominated to provide support to individual volunteers and is responsible for providing regular support to, and supervision of, the volunteer. Clear lines of communication should be identified.

4.2 Staff need to devote time to support volunteers, and if necessary be provided with training in relevant skills.

4.3 Where appropriate, additional methods of support will be used e.g. volunteer meetings, newsletters.

4.4 Note should be taken of the individual needs of volunteers.

5. Induction and Training

5.1 All volunteers will be given an induction to Age UK Croydon before undertaking their specific project induction in addition to an information pack and/or volunteer handbook.

5.1.1 Where appropriate, training is in support of the organisation's Health & Safety policy.

5.2 Volunteers will attend the core training modules as mandatory to enable them to develop their capabilities in relation to their volunteering role.

5.3 Volunteers are encouraged to identify additional training that will enhance them in their role with Age UK Croydon, and as part of their continuous personal development, supported by their line manager/Supervisor

5.4 The cost of any additional training may or may not be paid for by Age UK Croydon subject to available financial resource.

6. Role in Decision Making

6.1 Volunteers will be consulted on any major policy or operational changes in Age UK Croydon that will affect them.

6.2 Volunteers will be encouraged to express their opinions on the work of Age UK Croydon and to develop their role within Age UK Croydon.

6.3 Volunteers may be invited to attend and/or speak at Board meetings.

7. **Conditions**

7.1 Volunteers will not be asked to work in conditions considered unsuitable for paid staff, and will have the same provisions made regarding Health and Safety.

7.2 Insurance arrangements will be made for volunteers to cover them whilst undertaking duties on behalf of Age UK Croydon.

7.3 Out of pocket expenses will be reimbursed including travel to and from the organisation, or to a venue when fulfilling their role. Details of the Volunteer Expense policy including reimbursement rates are detailed in the Volunteer handbook.

7.4 Where the role is carried out over a meal time, or for over a four hour period, a subsistence allowance may be paid or a meal provided, up to an agreed amount. Refreshments etc. will be freely available to volunteers as for paid staff.

7.5 If a volunteer raises a complaint which cannot satisfactorily be resolved by their supervisor, it should be brought to the Volunteer Programme Manager or Chief Executive Officer. If it cannot be resolved, it will be referred to the Board of Trustees.

7.6 All volunteers will be made aware of the above rights and conditions at their induction. Details of current rates for expenses, how to claim, and the nature and extent of insurance cover will be readily available.

7.7 Conditions such as rates for expenses, allowances, etc. will be reviewed periodically.

8. **Equality and Diversity**

8.1 Age UK Croydon relies on volunteer involvement to keep it relevant to the community it serves and so encourages involvement from all sections of the community.

8.2 Age UK Croydon operates an Equality and Diversity Policy. We aim to ensure that we do not unfairly exclude or discourage the involvement of potential volunteers because of:

- age
- race, colour, nationality or ethnic background
- disability
- gender or marital status
- sexual orientation
- pregnancy and maternity
- unrelated criminal record.

8.3 Each volunteer person specification will make clear the requirement that volunteers adhere to Age UK Croydon's Diversity and Equality policy.

8.4 If a volunteer has a special need or disability that makes their involvement difficult, every effort will be made to involve them. An explanation will be given upon the unlikely event of this if this is not possible.

9.   Monitoring & Evaluation

9.1 Age UK Croydon is committed to its Volunteer Programme and standards of volunteer management across its various projects in which volunteers are involved. Age UK Croydon recognises the impact that volunteer involvement has and aims to measure its impact through the process of monitoring and evaluation.

9.2 Monitoring and evaluation (collecting information and analysing information) processes are in place to:
- measure the value of volunteering to the volunteer

- measure the quality of the volunteers' experience within the organisation

- identify the impact that volunteers have to Age UK Croydon

- identify areas within the volunteer programme which may need improvement

10. Recognition and Reward

10.1 The value that each volunteer contributes to the organisation is unique and valuable. Age UK Croydon is committed to recognising the contribution that each volunteer makes whilst volunteering with us.

10.2 Recognition may be via various methods, both formally and informally, and Age UK Croydon is committed to a fair and consistent approach to recognising and rewarding its volunteers and includes thank you letters; certificates; internal events and annual celebrations.

11. Leaving

11.11 Each volunteer will be invited to give feedback on their volunteer journey through an exit questionnaire and/or interview.

12. References

12.1 We are happy to provide a standard a reference upon leaving the organisation. This can however be requested at any time.

Date this policy came into effect, approved by the Board of Trustees	Name: Kate Pierpoint Signature: *K Pierpoint* Date: 27.2.18
Policy review date:	
Name & position of person responsible for this policy:	Volunteer Programme Manager
Related policies:	Complaints Confidentiality Data Protection DBS Checks Equality & Diversity Expenses Health & Safety Problem Solving
Useful information:	Volunteer Handbook Volunteer Induction checklist Volunteer Recruitment & Selection process Volunteer Role Descriptions Volunteer Person Specifications