



Volunteer Handbook

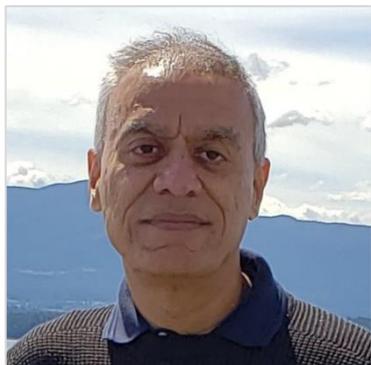


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Welcome



Thank you for being part of the team at Age UK Croydon. Volunteers are right at the heart of our organisation, and without you we would not be able to support older people across the Borough of Croydon. Last year, our 91 volunteers gave 3310 hours of volunteering support throughout the organisation.

We have a diverse group of volunteers who come from across the Borough and from many different backgrounds. Our volunteers are involved across the whole of our organisation – in our offices providing administration support, running and assisting with our activities, offering Information and Advice to clients, fundraising, and serving as our Board of Trustees. Age UK Croydon have been representing the interests of older people across the borough for over 25 years. Covid-19 pandemic has of course had a huge impact on the way we operate and will continue to challenge us to rethink and refocus the way we work with older people, to continue to provide the support they need in the best way possible. This makes it a very interesting time to join our organisation as we recover and rebuild and explore innovative ways to support older people.

This handbook has been created as a resource to use throughout your volunteer experience with us, especially when you first start. We have put together important information that you need to be aware of, in addition to some policies and procedures which you should familiarise yourself with. Please use this handbook as a guide, but never hesitate to contact your line manager or a member of the Volunteer Programme team if you have any questions or concerns.

Whatever has inspired you to join our team, we want you to enjoy your experience, and to feel supported and valued throughout your journey with us. I look forward to working with you and to the contribution you will make to the ongoing journey of Age UK Croydon.

Sanjay Gulati

CEO



We are Age UK Croydon

We are Age UK Croydon, and our mission is to reach, involve, support, and connect people so they can age well in Croydon. We have an expert team of staff and volunteers who work together to deliver our extensive range of services and activities right across the borough.

With services spanning information and advice, health, wellbeing, falls prevention, dementia support, one to one personal independence coordinators, befriending and social activities, Age UK Croydon offers a holistic solution for older people to access the services they require in one place.

Our Vision

We are Age UK Croydon, and our vision is valuing aging, improving lives, and growing communities.

Our Mission

Our mission is to reach, involve, support, and connect people so they can age well in Croydon.

Our Values

Our core values are at the heart of how we work. They represent the feeling we want people to get when they work with us, and they guide the decisions we make as individuals and as an organisation. They are:

Trust,

Integrity,

Compassion,

Inclusion,

Continuous improvement.

Brand Partner

We are independent of the national Age UK charity but have passed its quality standard allowing us to hold the Age UK brand, participate in national campaigns and add the voice of our clients to lobbying efforts, keeping older people's rights on the national agenda.



Our Trustees / Members of the Board

Our trustees are responsible for legal, financial and personnel aspects of the organisation, and for deciding on policies and strategies. Trustees of Age UK Croydon form part of the volunteer body.

As a company limited by guarantee we submit reports to Companies House, and as a charity we must comply with the regulations of the Charity Commissioners. These two bodies call the organisation to account in financial and management terms to ensure that appropriate work is carried out.

Chair
Samantha Nicklin

Vice Chair
Brenda Scanlon

Treasurer
Oumesh Sauba

Trustee
Opama Khan

Our Newest Members of the Board

Trustee
Imran Mannan

Trustee
Chris Briggs

Trustee
Dee Davison



Our outcomes for the people we support

These are the outcomes we seek to achieve for our clients. Through interacting with our teams and our services, we expect people to be able to articulate one or more of these outcomes. As we continue to develop our Volunteer Programme, we also want to support our volunteers to achieve these outcomes, where applicable.

I am more in control of my **health and wellbeing**

I am **less isolated** and feel more a part of my community

I have greater access to **information and services**

I have greater **independence**



Our Services

The range of services we offer are in response to the demographics and health and social care needs of the older population in Croydon. We also collaborate with older people to deliver services that people tell us they want and need. Our services combine practical support to offer advice around housing, benefits, and support needs; services to reduce the risk and impact of deteriorating health as well as managing long term health conditions together with access to a range of options and activities to retain independence, an active life and social interaction.

Information and Advice

We provide independent, impartial, free, and confidential information and advice in the community, over the phone, by email and online.

Personal Independence Coordinators

We work in a person-centred way helping people identify their own goals to regain independence and live the life they want to live.

Care Home Connectors

We link residents and their care homes to services in the community. We aim to enable clients to become more connected, less isolated and more informed.

Healthier Lifestyles

We provide regular exercise classes, health checks and wellbeing talks to enable older people to manage and improve their health.

Activities and Events

We run regular activities and events for older people to socialise and have fun.

- The Reader reading group
- Monthly talks on various topics
- Exercise sessions

Personal Safety and Falls Prevention

We reduce the risk of falls at home by arranging aids and home adaptations which build confidence and independence.

Memory Tree Café

The Memory Tree Café provides a much-needed safe environment for people living with dementia and their families/carers.

Befriending

We promote independent living by arranging home visits and phone calls from volunteers.

Volunteering

Our volunteers are integrated into the way we operate, with services relying on their support to provide a wider reach across the community.



Communications, Engagement and Fundraising

Fundraising and donating

Fundraising is a key part of our work, ensuring that we have access to unrestricted funds (money not associated with the delivery of a specific service) with which to run services that we know local, older people need. We have various ways for people to donate to us, including:

Leave us a legacy

Get in touch to find out how to leave Age UK Croydon a legacy in your will.

The Big Knit

For every Innocent Smoothie hat your knit for us, we get 25p – get knitting!



**Support us through
easyfundraising**



Partner with us

We work closely with many like-minded organisations across the borough and we're always open to working with others. Here are some of the ways we work with other local organisations in order to provide older people with access to the information and support they need.

Run an event for our clients

Would you like to run an event for us?
Perhaps you have a hobby or talent you can share with others?

Signpost clients to us

If you are a healthcare professional whose clients may benefit from our services, get in touch

Apply for joint funding

Do you have a great idea we could work on together that benefits older people?
We could apply for funding together

Promote your service

Does your service support older people?
Let us know and we can signpost people to you



Stay in touch with us

We have many different people across the borough who are interested in our work. Staff, volunteers, professional colleagues, clients, funders and more! Here are some of the ways we keep in touch with all our stakeholders.

Friends of Age UK Croydon

Sign up to our regular newsletter for everyone who is interested in our services, activities, volunteering opportunities, fundraising and good news

www.ageukcroydon.org.uk

Take a look at our website for all our latest news and information

Social media

Follow us on Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn and Instagram to get regular updates

Email or call us

Get in touch by phone or email to speak to the team



Our Volunteer Programme



“I can not recommend volunteering with Age UK Croydon enough. It is an open door to everyone interested to get involved, achieve goals and gain experience”

Age UK Croydon Volunteer

Supporting you on your volunteer journey

We recognise that there are many different reasons why people choose to volunteer, and we aim to support you on your journey with us, whatever your motivations may be.

We will work with you to explore opportunities which may be of benefit to you and your personal development, and through monitoring and evaluation we will help you to identify the skills you will have gained as a result of your volunteering.

Induction

During your induction, we welcome you to Age UK Croydon, and introduce you to staff and other volunteers who you may be working with.

We will cover important information, including our Health and Safety requirements. We will also give you a tour of the building, so you know where to get a cup of tea or coffee when you want one.

You will have an opportunity to meet your line manager and you'll be able to ask any questions or raise any concerns you may have.

Training

We want you to be well prepared and feeling confident when carrying out your volunteer role at Age UK Croydon. All volunteers will attend our core training which includes safeguarding and data protection.



Additional training is provided and will depend on your role. Your line manager will also talk to you about your personal development when you meet for supervision. Training may be in the form of e-learning, office-based, and/or practical hands-on training.

Support and Supervision

You will receive regular support from your assigned line manager. One-to-one meetings may be set up where you can discuss how your volunteering role is going and what you have achieved to date. You can always call or email your line manager with any questions or concerns, without needing to have a formal meeting.

We are happy to provide any accessibility, emotional, or signposting support to our volunteer as and when this may be required.

Expectations

As an Age UK Croydon volunteer, you can expect:

- To receive an induction and training relevant to your role, including health and safety
- To have a named line manager for support and supervision to discuss successes, issues, and goals you would like to achieve through volunteering with us.
- To be listened to and have your views taken into account when performing tasks.
- To be reimbursed for out-of-pocket expenses incurred while volunteering with us in line with relevant policies and procedures.
- To be treated fairly and with respect, in line with our Equal Opportunities policy
- To have any problems, complaints or difficulties you may face, to be addressed in line with our relevant procedures.
- To have adequate insurance cover in place for your volunteering role

We expect all Age UK Croydon volunteers:

- To support our mission and objectives through your volunteering
- To perform your volunteering role to the best of your ability
- To follow all relevant policies and procedures at all times
- To treat other staff, volunteers, members of the public, and clients with respect and understanding
- To meet time commitments and standards which have been mutually agreed upon and to give reasonable notice when this is not possible
- To inform your line manager and volunteering team when you no longer wish to volunteer with Age UK Croydon



Essential Information

As a volunteer, you are responsible for familiarising yourself with the policies and procedures pertinent to volunteers. You can find them on our volunteer portal or request hard copies.

Volunteer Policy

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.

Diversity

Age UK Croydon operates an Equality and Diversity Policy. We aim to be a diverse and inclusive organisation and value the contribution from each and every volunteer regardless of age, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, marital status, civil partnership status, disability, nationality, race, religion or belief.

Health & Safety

Age UK Croydon is committed to looking after the health, safety, and wellbeing of everyone who works for us, on our premises or uses our services. This commitment equally applies to our volunteers. Our volunteer roles are risk assessed and volunteers are encouraged to be involved in the assessment process. Speak with your line manager with any questions or concerns.

It is vital that you understand and accept your personal responsibility towards promoting and maintaining health & safety standards in order to provide a safe working environment for all. All incidents and accidents should be reported to your line manager as soon as possible. An accident report form will need to be completed. If you feel it is a real emergency, call the emergency services immediately.

Health and Safety

We are all responsible for our own health and safety and for the health and safety of others. What can you do?

- Follow health and safety rules and instructions
- Be aware of your actions and the impact they could have on your safety or the safety of others
- Report any health and safety hazards to your manager
- Think about a safer way to do a task to avoid risks
- Keep work areas clean and tidy
- Look out for other people
- Raise any concerns

Slips and Trips

Slips and trips can be caused by hazards (anything with potential to cause harm).

Risk assessments:

- Think about what might cause harm to people
- Take reasonable steps to prevent that harm



- A risk assessment matrix can be a useful measure to look at how often risks can occur and what could happen if it went wrong.

What can you do?

- Keep your workspace tidy
- Dispose of waste materials safely
- Remove any obstructions that may cause trips
- Make sure there are no trailing cables
- Be aware of potentially wet surfaces
- Clear up spillages immediately
- Be careful when using stairs or areas where the floor surface is uneven
- Inform your manager of any potential hazards
- Be prepared, know where the first aid kit is kept and who the workplace first aider is. Prompt, effective treatment can reduce the impact of an injury.

Fire

Fires start when three things come together in the right amount at the same time. These three things are:

- A source of fuel (something that will burn)
- A source of heat (or ignition)
- •Oxygen (present in the air around us)
- •These three things are known as the 'fire triangle'

What can you do?

- Make sure you are aware of the fire evacuation procedure
- Make sure you are aware of fire exits and the assembly point location
- Explain the fire evacuation procedure to visitors
- Use the nearest safe exit when the alarm sounds
- Follow instructions from fire wardens.

Stress

What can you do?

- •If you feel stressed, speak to your manager
- •Talk to a partner, friend, colleague or your HR department
- •Ask if a free confidential helpline is available at your workplace
- •Make sure you take breaks throughout the day
- •Avoid regularly working late
- •Try to take some exercise
- •Try to maintain a work/life balance.



Display screen equipment

Did you know there are around 15 things that can cause harm when working with display screen equipment? Working at a monitor is often seen as a low-risk activity but care needs to be taken to protect from long-term health issues.

What can you do?

- •Make sure your monitor, keyboard and mouse are correctly positioned
- •Position items on your desk within easy reach
- •Make sure that you keep the area under your desk unrestricted
- •Report any faulty equipment
- •Use blinds to help reduce glare on your screen
- •Take regular breaks away from your screen

What next?

Talk to your manager and stay up to date with the latest guidance

- •Report any concerns
- •Raise suggestions for improvements
- •Be aware of your surroundings.



Contact us if you would like more information on health, safety and environmental management.

Information Governance, Data Protection and Confidentiality

In your volunteer role, you may have access to personal information of clients, staff members, or other volunteers. You must only use this data as necessary and ensure that you dispose of it securely when you have finished using it.

Volunteers must maintain confidentiality during their time with Age UK Croydon. Sensitive information such as personal information relating to clients, staff, or other volunteers that you may be exposed to should be treated as strictly confidential. Where you have a concern about a client's health, safety, or security you should discuss this with your line manager.

We are committed to keeping your information private and secure, and to not share your information with 3rd parties without your explicit consent. Please see our Privacy Policy for more information.

Don't:	Do:
Share clients' personal details (address, phone number, etc.) without prior consent from the client	Only use personal data for the purpose as your role as a volunteer, and as directed by Age UK Croydon
Include identifying or sensitive information about your client in emails or text messages	Use initials when referring to clients in emails or text messages
Collect, access, or use more personal data than you need as part of your role	Contact your line manager if you have any questions or concerns
Share more of your own personal details with clients than is necessary	Contact your line manager if you think a data breach has occurred

Lone Working Policy

Whilst volunteers are responsible for their own safety, Age UK Croydon will take steps to reduce risks. If for some reason you do not feel comfortable in someone's home or if they have a visitor you are not comfortable with, make an excuse and leave, calling the office as soon as possible. You should also let a trusted person know of your whereabouts when going on a visit.

Always take a fully charged mobile phone on all home visits. It is advisable to keep this switched on, and on a silent setting.

It is the responsibility of all volunteers to inform their line manager any change of plan to their visit, and to always wear their Age UK Croydon ID badge.



ID Cards

All volunteers are issued with photographic identification badges. Whilst volunteering for Age UK Croydon, please wear your ID badge at all times. When you cease volunteering with us, we will ask that you return your badge.

Safeguarding Policy

Age UK Croydon recognises that a significant number of people in later life are at risk of abuse. Abuse should not be tolerated; people should be able to live in an environment which is safe from abuse. Everyone is entitled to:

- privacy
- be treated with dignity and respect
- lead an independent life and to be enabled to do so
- choose how they lead their lives
- the protection of the law
- have their rights upheld, regardless of ethnic origin, gender sexuality, impairment or disability, age, religious or cultural background

All Age UK Croydon staff and volunteers undertake Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults Training.

Never hesitate to speak with your line manager if you believe a safeguarding concern exists.

Boundaries

It is important that boundaries are in place for staff and volunteers at Age UK Croydon. This means making sure that your behaviour stays within the limits of your role. This allows us to maintain a consistent level of service delivery, whilst remaining professional. You will discuss the importance of boundaries at your induction.

Do:	Don't:
Recognise your own personal boundaries	Give out your personal telephone number or address, or take the other person to your own home
Avoid getting into situations which could be misunderstood	Become emotionally over-involved
Think before you say 'Yes'. If you are unsure how to answer, tell the client you will ask your line manager before agreeing	Accept any form of harassment or violence
For one-to-one volunteers, remember the main focus of the role is the goals and wishes of the client	Buy or accept gifts or cash for/from a client
Feel like you can say no	Lend or borrow money to/from the client
Remember to speak to your line manager	Hold client's money, bank cards, PIN numbers or any other personal items
	Lend or borrow a client's money or property



	Use your own bank cards to buy items for the client without express permission of your line manager
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Disclosure (Conflict of Interest Policy)

We ask all our volunteers to disclose to Age UK Croydon any direct or indirect interest held by you or a member of your immediate family or other close personal connection in;

- Current employment/ previous employment in which you still have an interest
- Trusteeships, directorships, Local Authority membership
- Any financial interests that are relevant to your position with Age UK Croydon
- Any Memberships/Affiliations that are relevant to or may impact on your position with Age UK Croydon
- Any contractual interests with Age UK Croydon

Dress Code

You are required to dress in a manner that is both appropriate and professional.

Age UK branded shirts may be available to volunteers. Please check with your line manager.

Use of car while volunteering

While you are working on behalf of Age UK Croydon you are covered by our public liability insurance for damage/accidents (providing that the work undertaken away from our premises/on home visits is in respect of the work outlined within our Business Description). But this does not include insurance covering your car. We cannot be responsible for maintaining and insuring your cars.

It is your responsibility is to make sure you have the correct level of insurance cover; you should also have your car regularly maintained and MOT to comply with the Road Traffic Act 1988.

Volunteer complaints and problem-solving procedure

For most people volunteering at Age UK Croydon is an enjoyable and positive experience and any issues that may occur are normally resolved quickly. On the rare occasion that a situation is more serious or would require further investigation, please discuss with your line manager who will follow our problem-solving procedure.

Expenses

Age UK Croydon volunteers will not be out of pocket as a result of their involvement. Approved out of pocket expenses will be reimbursed and should not affect benefits claims or have any other legal or tax implications.



Volunteers may claim out of pocket expenses when they are involved in any activities relating to their work with Age UK Croydon. All expenses claimed should be supported by valid receipts as evidence of expenditure and need to be submitted on a monthly basis, or risk being unable to be reimbursed.

Journeys should normally be by public transport or in your own vehicle. In rare instances, a taxi or Uber may be used, but you will first need approval from your line manager.

Cars and vans	45p per mile
Motorcycles	24p per mile
Bicycles	20p per mile

Volunteers using public transport must register their Oyster card online so that they can identify volunteer related journeys with their expenses claim form. If using a contactless card, a bank statement should be attached. The cheapest available transportation should be taken, and an Oyster ticket receipt attached to the Expense Claim form.

Travel reimbursements are capped at £4.65 (the cost of a one-day bus and tram pass).

Meal expenses

Meal expenses will be reimbursed to volunteers on business as approved by Age UK Croydon that fall over a usual mealtime or for periods of four hours or more and with prior approval from their line manager. The actual amount spent will be reimbursed up to a maximum as follows:

Lunch/Dinner	£4.50
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All expenses forms and accompanying receipts should be submitted electronically or in hard copy within the month they were incurred. Failure to do so may mean waiting for the next monthly cycle to receive reimbursement.

If you have any questions, please speak to your line manager or a member of the Volunteer Programme team. Please note these rates are subject to change.

Acknowledging your contribution

All of our volunteers are important to us. Age UK Croydon wouldn't be able to do what we do without you and we hope you feel valued by everyone in the organisation.

Award Nominations

We are always eager to nominate our volunteers for external awards and recognition, and regularly submit nominations.



Events

We organise local seasonal volunteer events to say thank you, and to keep you updated on news about the organisation. These are a fun and relaxed way to meet other volunteers. Details of upcoming events are advertised by email and newsletter.

References

We are happy to provide a standard reference to acknowledge your contribution to Age UK Croydon. This can be provided at any time, with sufficient prior notice given.

Volunteers Week

Volunteers Week is a national event that takes place from 1-7 June every year. We use this event to celebrate our wonderful volunteers and to say thank you. This is always an exciting week where we try to bring all our volunteers together, giving members of staff the opportunity to show our thanks and appreciation.

Keeping us informed

It is our policy to encourage feedback from our volunteers on the work of Age UK Croydon. If you have any feedback, ideas, or suggestions on how we can develop things, please get in touch.

Talk to us

If you have ideas to share or would like to discuss anything with us, then ask to meet with your line manager or a member of the Volunteer Programme team.

Volunteer surveys

You will receive invitations to participate in our regular surveys, where you can give feedback and help us improve our programme.

Keeping us updated

It is your responsibility to keep us updated with any changes to your contact details, address or if you have a new emergency contact. Please let us know any such changes by informing your line manager or the Volunteering Department.

Need a break?

If your personal circumstances change, or your other commitments mean you are finding it difficult to meet the requirements of your volunteering role, you may want to take a break. We would be happy to welcome you back when you are ready.

Ending your volunteering engagement

Whatever the reason for ending your volunteering, we would love to get your feedback on what went well and where we can improve. You'll be invited to attend an exit interview and complete an exit survey.



Welcome to the Age UK Croydon Volunteer Team!

volunteering@ageukcroydon.org.uk

