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# Welcome

**A very warm welcome to you!**

Thank you for choosing to volunteer at Age UK Faversham and Sittingbourne. By volunteering with us you are helping to improve later life for people in our local community by providing life enhancing services and vital support.

Volunteering remains central to the ethos of the organisation and the delivery of many of our services. You help make huge difference to what we're able to do and the quality of services we are able to provide. Thank you for getting involved.

You are also our representatives in the local community; letting people know that we are here, what we can do for them and helping us raise essential funds.

We aim to make sure that those who give up their time to support our work feel valued, useful and proud to be part of Age UK Faversham and Sittingbourne. This Handbook contains important and useful information about volunteering with us. Please read it carefully and keep it somewhere safe to refer to when needed.

If you have any questions about the information in the Handbook or during your time volunteering with us, please speak to your volunteering coordinator. They will be more than happy to help.

Thank you once again for deciding to make a difference.



Clare Burgess  
Chief Executive Officer

**My Volunteer Coordinator is:**

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**Their working days are:**

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**Their contact details are:**

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**Tel:**

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**Email:**

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**My Volunteer Service Lead is:**

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**Their working days are:**

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**Tel:**

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**Email:**

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**My volunteer role is:**

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**The date I started was:**

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**The days and times I volunteer are (if regular):**

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**Notes and useful information**

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## YOUR VOLUNTEERING EXPERIENCE

### What we offer you

Because we know everyone is different, we are creative in offering a wide range of opportunities for people to come together in a way that works for them.

This could be anything from one-to-one befriending to specialist interest groups.

Whatever your role is, we value the time, support and commitment that you are giving to Age UK Faversham and Sittingbourne.

We are committed to offering all volunteers clear and structured guidance in their role. We also know how important it is, both for you and us, that you keep developing your skills and knowledge. That's why we have structures in place to ensure your time with us stays fulfilling and productive.

## WHEN YOU START VOLUNTEERING

### Induction

We might suggest a short trial period as sometimes people take a couple of attempts to find their perfect volunteer role.

Your volunteering coordinator is the person to whom you will be responsible to and who will support and guide you in your role. They will go through your induction with you before your role begins or on your first day. They will:

- describe the typical activities undertaken in your role
- introduce you to the staff, volunteers and clients involved
- highlight important health and safety measures and fire procedures
- show you where everything is (and where to make a cup of tea)
- ask you if you have any special requirements in order to carry out your role

### Ongoing support

Your Volunteer Service Lead will contact you approximately six weeks after you start to discuss with you how you feel your volunteering is going. In the mean time, please contact your Volunteer Coordinator if you have any questions, concerns or need any support with your volunteering.

Your Volunteer Coordinator will also meet with you yearly for an annual review to discuss how things are going.



## WHAT TRAINING WILL I RECEIVE?

### When you start

Your Volunteer Service Lead will talk you through the tasks specific to your role, how to carry out your role, and who to speak to if you're not sure about something. Please don't be afraid to ask; we want you to be comfortable and confident in your role. If you think you need more training in any particular area, please speak to your Volunteer Service Lead.

### Introduction to Age UK Faversham and Sittingbourne Workshop

As part of your induction you are required to attend an introduction to Age UK Faversham and Sittingbourne workshop. It is important to attend the session as soon as possible as it will help you understand the wider context of our work. They are informal and enjoyable sessions and are also chance to meet staff and other volunteers. **Please ensure you attend one of these sessions at the earliest opportunity.**

### Further Training

We offer several training sessions including manual handling and wheelchair training and food hygiene (for kitchen roles). Information about new training opportunities can be found in the volunteers voice newsletter. If you have specific training needs please speak to your Volunteer Service Lead.

### Volunteering Certificates for Under 26s

If you are under 26 you can achieve national V awards for volunteering through the youth volunteering charity, VInspired. You need to sign up for an account via the VInspired website: [vinspired.com](http://vinspired.com). Contact the Volunteer Coordinator for more information.

## MUTUAL EXPECTATIONS

At Age UK we believe that volunteering is a two way process. We are grateful for the time and support that you're offering to us but equally we want this to be a fulfilling and enjoyable experience for you. Like any good relationship it is important outline what each party can expect from the other so we can build a mutually rewarding partnership.

### What you can expect from us

- To be valued and respected, whoever you are and whatever your background.
- To have an identified Volunteer Service Lead who will provide guidance, support and be in regular contact.
- Clear direction from your Volunteer Service Lead on carrying out your role as well as information about relevant training opportunities.

- To have a full induction into your role and to Age UK Faversham and Sittingbourne with ongoing support including annual reviews.
- To be able to contact your Volunteer Service Lead or the Volunteer Coordinator if you have concerns or issues.
- A creative approach to your role to allow do the chance to use your skills, interests and hobbies.
- Recognition for your volunteering to include an annual volunteers afternoon tea party to celebrate your contribution.
- To receive agreed out of pocket expenses.
- To be able to change your mind or decline a volunteering activity without feeling pressured.
- To be able to discuss an alternative volunteer role if you feel the current one is not working out for you.

### **What we expect from you**

- To adhere to the fundamental principles and values of Age UK, in particular to treating older people with dignity and respect.
- To be reliable and let us know as soon as possible if you're not able to attend your volunteer shift or if any circumstances change that affect your volunteering.
- To let your Volunteer Coordinator or another manager know if you're concerned for the safety or welfare of a client.
- To be our representative in the local community, letting people know about our work, services and fundraising activities.
- To support and act in accordance with our policies and procedures (see the key policy section and refer to your policy booklet)
- Take part in training and update sessions relevant to your role.
- To understand we may sometimes need to offer constructive comments about your actions when volunteering.
- To give the best of your skills and abilities to meet the required standards relating to your volunteer role.
- To speak to your Volunteer Service Lead as soon as you have any concerns or issues - don't let them fester!
- To treat all clients, volunteers and staff with respect.
- To be aware of and report any hazards, spillages, obstacles, fire hazards etc as soon as possible to a member of staff.



## VOLUNTEERING FAQ'S

### **Who do I speak to if I don't know what to do or don't understand something?**

Ask your Volunteer Service Lead, who will help you and answer any questions you may have at anytime. You will also be invited to an annual review with your Volunteer Coordinator to discuss how you're getting on in your role.

### **What do I do if I am not happy in my role?**

Often some adjustments can be made which will help the situation for you. Talk to your Volunteer Service Lead.

### **What should I do if I am ill or can't come in for any reason?**

Please ring and let your Volunteer Service Lead know as soon as possible, so they can then begin finding someone else to cover. It is also helpful for us to know in advance when you're planning any holiday or a break from volunteering.

### **What expenses can I claim?**

You can claim expenses for travel by bus or by car usually within the Charity's geographical area. Childcare and other care responsibilities are considered individually.

If you are helping for more than four consecutive hours, meals and other extraneous costs are negotiated with your Volunteer Service Lead. You will need to keep relevant receipts and complete an expenses form. You will find an expenses form in your welcome pack or you can pick one up from your Volunteer Service Lead. You will need to give the completed form and receipts to your Volunteer Service Lead for authorising.

### **What do I do if I'm using my car as part of my volunteering role?**

if you haven't already done so, you will need to show us your driving licence, MoT and insurance documents. There is a separate information booklet explaining what is required. Please ask your Volunteer Service Lead if you have not received a copy.

### **How can I make comments or suggestions about the organisation?**

We welcome your thoughts and suggestions about Age UK Faversham and Sittingbourne and the way we do things. Do let us know through your Volunteer Service Lead.

### **Where can I find out more information?**

Find us on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/AgeUKFS/>

Find us on Twitter: [https://twitter.com/ageuk\\_fav\\_sitt](https://twitter.com/ageuk_fav_sitt)





## KEY POLICIES & GUIDANCE

As a volunteer, you need to be aware of, understand and comply with our policies. This is to ensure that volunteers, staff and service users are kept safe and treated in accordance with the law and our charities ethos. We have summarised some of the main points below.

**Please read the Volunteer Policy which you will find on the Age UK Faversham and Sittingbourne website.**

Make sure you sign the policy booklet slip that you will have received in your welcome pack to confirm that you have read the policy booklet and hand the slip to your Volunteer Service Lead on your first day. If there are any parts that you don't understand or you require a hard copy of the policy booklet, please speak to your Volunteer Service Lead. We will also cover the main points of the most important policies in the introduction to Age UK Faversham and Sittingbourne Session.

### Volunteering – a Code of Practice

We aim to ensure that our relationship with volunteers is one of mutual respect, responsibility and commitment. Policies and procedures to achieve this are outlined in the Volunteer Policy booklet.

The Volunteer Policy outlines age UK's responsibility and commitment to our team of volunteers. The policy includes information about:

- volunteer recruitment procedures
- support for volunteers
- our commitment to valuing and celebrating the contribution that volunteers make
- resolving problems and concerns

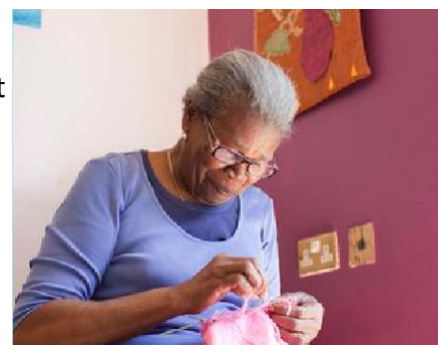
**Please read the Volunteer Policy and ask if you're unsure about any aspect of it.**

**The Health and Safety Policy** outlines how Age UK Faversham and Sittingbourne creates a safe working environment and what to do if you see something that may cause a fire or an accident.

it is everyone's responsibility to be alert to any potential hazards around the people they are involved with or the buildings and equipment they use.

If you see anything that you consider a risk to health and safety, it is very important you tell your Volunteer Service Lead, or whoever is in charge, immediately. Your Volunteer Service Lead will explain the emergency and fire procedures to you and go over the risk assessment for the area that you will be volunteering in you will also be invited to attend relevant training.

**Please read the Health and Safety Policy.**



**The Gifts, Legacies and Anti-Bribery Policy** outlines what to do if someone offers you a gift, a loan or wants to leave you money in their will. As we are a charity working with potentially vulnerable older people, it's really important that we have clear guidelines relating to gifts, donations, legacies and loans.

Please remember, you must not for any reason:

- except or seek a loan from a service user
- be involved in the making of wills on behalf of a service user
- accept money or any other gift or advantage, including a gift or legacy under a will (apart from a stated below) from a service user. However, a modest gift other than money, under the value of £25, may be accepted where refusal would cause needless offence to the service user and they are not seeking a favour, but merely wishing to express thanks.

Please ensure that should this happen you report it immediately to your Volunteer Service Lead so that it can be recorded on the service user's file.

Frequent offers of such gifts by service users should be discouraged. Gift vouchers are not considered to be cash and so can be accepted to a maximum value of £25. If someone tells you they are interested in making a donation to Age UK Faversham and Sittingbourne, or are interested in finding out more about making a legacy or any other such query, please ask them to get in contact with the Accounts Department.

**Please read the Gifts, Legacies and Anti-Bribery Policy.**

**The Confidentiality and Safeguarding Policies** outlines what to do if someone tells you personal information.

It is really important that anyone in contact with Age UK Faversham's and Sittingbourne feels confident that information about them will be stored properly and only shared appropriately.

Such information is to be treated confidentially and must not be discussed with anyone else without that person's permission. However, there are exceptions to this, especially if the person telling you is being harmed or is at risk of being harmed (see the Safeguarding Policy information below). Your Volunteer Service Lead will explain this in more detail.

**Please read the Confidentiality Policy.**

**The Safeguarding Policy** outlines what to do if someone is being treated unfairly or someone tells you that they are being hurt or threatened.

If someone discloses that they have been harmed or at risk of being harmed, you have a legal obligation to tell a senior member of staff.

If someone discloses information to you remember:

- do not promise to keep the information to yourself
- reassure them that they have done the right thing in telling someone but you will have to pass the information on to a senior member of staff for their own safety
- speak to your Volunteer Service Lead, Volunteer Coordinator or manager immediately
- you may also need to write down, as accurately as possible, what they told you. If you have any concerns at all about how someone is being treated speak to a senior member of staff. Your Volunteer Service Lead will explain this in more detail.

**Please read the Safeguarding Policy.**

**The Data Protection Policy** explains how Age UK Faversham and Sittingbourne treats personal data.

Age UK Faversham and Sittingbourne, like all organisations, is legally obliged to look after the personal data and sensitive data we hold on individuals, which includes their name and contact details. Sensitive data stored by Age UK Faversham and Sittingbourne is done so with explicit consent.

As a volunteer you may have access to or may be party to personal information. As outlined in the Charity's Confidentiality Policy, this data must not be shared with anyone else without that person's permission.

**Please read the Data Protection Policy.**

**The Bullying and Harassment Policy** outlines what to do if you feel you're being bullied, intimidated or harassed or if you witnessed someone being treated in this way.

Age UK Faversham and Sittingbourne will not accept harassment, bullying or intimidation from any staff member, service user or volunteer. Any accusation will be investigated and disciplinary action taken if the complaint is upheld. If you feel you're being harassed, bullied or intimidated or you witnessed someone else being subjected to this type of behaviour, please speak to your Volunteer Service Lead, Volunteer Coordinator or a senior manager immediately.

**Please read the Bullying and Harassment Policy.**

**The Equal Opportunities Policy** outlines Age UK Faversham and Sittingbourne approach to challenging discrimination and making our services accessible to all.

It is unlawful to discriminate, directly or indirectly, against someone because of age, disability, sex, gender reassignment, pregnancy, maternity, race, sexual orientation, religion or belief or because someone is married or in a civil partnership. Equally, it is unlawful to fail to make reasonable adjustments to overcome barriers to anyone wanting to use our services.

**Please read the Equal Opportunities Policy.**

## Expenses

Below outlines what expenses you can claim back when volunteering and how to put in a claim.

Age UK Faversham and Sittingbourne does not expect you to be out of pocket because of your volunteering activities. You can claim back expenses for:

- travel
- telephone calls

Other expenses that you may incur such as childcare costs, will be considered on an individual basis. Please discuss this with your Volunteer Service Lead. Expenses are claimed back by completing an expense form and attaching relevant receipts. Forms can be acquired from your Volunteer Service Lead.

**The Conflict of Interest Policy** outlines what to do if you encounter a situation in which your personal interests run counter to those of Age UK Faversham and Sittingbourne.

If you think you have a conflict of interest please speak to your Volunteer Service Lead. This doesn't necessarily mean you will not be able to continue your role. A decision will be made by Senior Management and discussed with you. **There is a lot more detail about this in the Conflict of Interest Policy.**

**The Lone Worker Policy** outlines what to do if you visit people on your own. The person you are visiting will need to have full knowledge of your visit and will have given permission for you to visit them. Please ensure you have spoken to your Volunteer Service Lead about the boundaries of your relationship with the person you are visiting. This is to ensure the safety of both parties and to be certain that the person you are visiting has access to any support they need.

Remember to put your own safety first. Your Volunteer Service Lead will give you all the contact details you need, in case of any concerns you have for yourself or the person you are visiting. These contact details are also detailed in the Lone Working Guidelines in the policy booklet.

**Please read the Lone Worker Policy if you undertake lone visits as part of your volunteering role.**

## The Whistleblowing Policy

Whistleblowing is when someone raises a can serious concern about an aspect of their organisation. Anyone raising a serious concern is able to do so without fear of reprisal. **The Whistleblowing Policy** outlines this process.

**Please read the Whistleblowing Policy.**



## SOME DO'S AND DON'TS FOR VOLUNTEERS

**Do** think about why you want to volunteer.

**Do** you make sure you know who you are responsible to and who you can go to for help and advice.

**Do** use this opportunity to find out as much as you can about Age UK Faversham and Sittingbourne; you are now one of our valued representatives.

**Do** feel that it is fine to accept reimbursement for any out of pocket expenses you have incurred while volunteering. We don't want you to be out of pocket because of your volunteering activities. If you really feel that you don't need or want to claim expenses, please speak to your Volunteer Coordinator about donating the money to Age UK Faversham and Sittingbourne.

**Do** keep any arrangements you have made. If you cannot keep an appointment, let your Volunteer Service Lead or the person you are visiting know in plenty of time.

**Do** tell us about any health problems that may affect your volunteering.

**Do** enjoy your time volunteering with us and tell us how to make it even better.

**Don't** over commit yourself.

**Don't** discuss personal details of any sort outside your volunteering role; confidentiality is important to all of us.

**Don't** keep worries or concerns yourself. Speak to your Volunteer Service Lead. We are here to help you!

**Don't** accept money as payment from someone you have helped while volunteering. Explain to them that they can make a donation to the organisation if they wish to do so.

**Don't** leave without telling anyone first. If you don't feel that your volunteering is providing the experience that you want, speak to your Volunteer Coordinator; they may be able to find a solution.



## MORE ABOUT AGE UK FAVERSHAM AND SITTINGBOURNE

Age UK Faversham & Sittingbourne became a registered independent Charity in 2014, following the merger of Age UK Faversham and Age UK Sittingbourne. We have our own locally elected board of Trustees, and are responsible for our own funding and governance. We are affiliated to Age UK nationally. Both charities have the same ethos, alongside a history of providing services and facilities to support older people living within towns, villages and hamlets of their constitutional boundaries.

We're a local charity working in the community to support people over the age of 50 , their families and carers. We want everyone to be able to love later life and enable them to be able to access services to make their lives as active as possible whilst also supporting their wellbeing.

We have grown a strong reputation for putting individual older persons at the heart of all we do, and now provide support and opportunities to nearly 600 older people each week. We achieve this through our 60 dedicated staff and our fantastic team of 75 volunteers who give their time, commitment, enthusiasm and skills so generously for the benefit of others.

**We offer a range of services including:**

**Giving advice -** Our information and advice service helps people across the area with a wide range of issues.

**Offer community support home help -** Our Hands 2 Help service provides help and support for you to stay independent in your own home including services such as gardening, cleaning and shopping.

**Befriending -** Our befriending service provides companionship for older people and helps reduce social isolation and loneliness.

**Providing activities & companionship -** Our hubs in Faversham & Sittingbourne provide social opportunities in these areas and our companionship services offer personalised activities on a 1-1 basis.

**Providing food –** Our community catering services offers a healthy nutritional delivered hot meal service with an option to include an additional snack box.

**Our history**

Here's a little more about the history of the centres that make up Age UK Faversham and Sittingbourne today:



In Faversham...

Age UK Faversham has been providing services for older people since 1958 and The Old Fire Station, Crescent Road premises have been our headquarters since 1963. We have seen many changes over the years and have expanded from two front rooms, to filling the whole Middle Row building and developing the adjacent old fire station in 1994.

In Sittingbourne...

Heather House Day Centre is the result of more than 50 years of effort by the people of Sittingbourne and Swale district. Age UK Sittingbourne was originally known as the Old People's Welfare Committee and there were years of fundraising before it was possible to have a day centre. The first day centre at London Road was recognised as an interim step, but it provided the necessary experience to set up a new centre in Roman Square in 1981. In November 1988 the Roman Square centre was demolished as part of the new leisure complex and Age UK Sittingbourne, then Age Concern Sittingbourne, moved to new premises in the Avenue of Remembrance and retained the same name, Heather House.

As a representative in the local community, you are ideally placed to let people who might need our services know about us. Please speak to your Volunteer Service Lead about the services we can offer.

## Events and Fundraising

Age UK Faversham and Sittingbourne is partly responsible for raising the funds needed to run our services but we also receive some public funding. We hold a number of fundraising events throughout the year. Events are promoted in our newsletters and on our website.



You can help us with our fundraising activities in the following ways:

- Help at our events i.e. marshalling or running a fete stall
- Sign up for a sponsored challenge
- Help us spread the word - tell your friends and families about our events and encourage them to support us
- Organise a fundraising event at your place of work
- Bake cakes or make other items to sell at our events
- Run your own fund raising event (contact us for advice and support)
- Follow us on Facebook and Twitter and share our posts with friends and family

We always need willing volunteers to help at our events. Please contact the Volunteer Coordinator or the Community Fundraising Manager for details or look out for appeals for support in our newsletters.

We hope you have found this Handbook useful.

There are blank pages at the end of this booklet for you to make your own notes.

Please consider sharing your thoughts and experiences with us. Feedback is a vital tool for growing and developing our services and can help us apply for funding as well as encouraging support from the local community.

We also welcome suggestions about this Handbook and if there is additional information that you feel would be useful. Please contact the Volunteer Coordinator with any comments or feedback about volunteering.

Thank you once again for all you do for us and for enhancing the lives of older people in Faversham and Sittingbourne.

## USEFUL CONTACTS

### Age UK Faversham and Sittingbourne

Faversham Office	The Old Fire Station, Crescent Road, Faversham, Kent ME13 7GU
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01795 532766

Sittingbourne Office	Avenue of Remembrance, Sittingbourne, Kent ME10 4NN
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01795 477520



## NOTES