

Age UK Kensington and Chelsea Policy - Volunteer

Our Policy

At Age UK Kensington and Chelsea (AUKC), we are committed to involving a diverse range of people in our work through both formal volunteering and community activities. We believe that volunteers offer experience and expertise that enhances our delivery of services.

Our policy is to work positively and cooperatively with volunteers and to respect the help and support that they provide for the organisation and for our clients.

We do this because we believe that:

- Volunteers bring a diversity of age, experience, cultural background, professional expertise and knowledge; and
- Through the involvement of volunteers, we can also involve communities in our work and contribute to our understanding of and response to older people's needs (for example, through our Board of Trustees); and
- With the help of volunteers, we are able to deliver a greater level of service to older people.

The range of volunteering opportunities within AUKC will be included in all publicity materials and on our website and advertised using a variety of means to ensure as wide a range of interest as possible. In line with our recruitment and induction procedures for all workers, volunteers are screened and subjected to proper checks and references prior to beginning voluntary work and given adequate health and safety guidance and training appropriate for the tasks that they fulfil.

We will ensure that the organisation has sufficient financial and personal resources necessary to support this policy. The level of support to be provided will be decided each year. In our relationships with other groups, organisations or partners, we will promote volunteering as an important means of contributing to the building and support of active and sustainable communities.

We will develop relationships with the local volunteering sector to address the need for a strategic approach to the development of volunteering locally and to support the work of local volunteering development agencies, (for example, volunteer centres) by providing leadership in developing awareness of and standards of practice in volunteering locally.

Principles

Our policy is based on the following principles:

1. We believe that our relationship with volunteers should be one of mutual responsibility and commitment within which AUKC and volunteers both have rights and responsibilities; and
2. The value of the contribution made by volunteers will be highlighted and acknowledged; and
3. Volunteer roles will complement, not replace, the work of paid staff; and
4. We will establish clear principles for the involvement of volunteers, clarify their roles and the relationships between them, those who involve them and those who receive their services or work alongside them; and
5. We will ensure the quality of both volunteering opportunities on offer and the work carried out by volunteers enabling them to develop their potential through training and supervision; and
6. Volunteers have the right to ask for support and supervision when needed to help develop their role as volunteers.

Application

This policy applies to all volunteers involved in any activity, service or project undertaken by, or on behalf of AUKC.

Standards

We will maintain the following standards:

1. Tasks and role descriptions will be clearly defined so that all concerned with volunteers' activities are sure of their respective roles and responsibilities; and
2. Records will be kept of work done by volunteers as a basis for monitoring and support and volunteers will have access to their records; and
3. The Volunteers' Handbook will be provided in the induction as a reference for the volunteers supporting them in their role; and
4. Recruitment to specific volunteer vacancies will be based on a formal application form (including two satisfactory references) and interview to ensure that the role is matched to the applicant's goals and expectations and that their skills match the requirements of the role; and
5. We will require a satisfactory criminal records check through the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) for volunteers working face-to-face with vulnerable older people, or in

other situations in which a relationship based on trust can be built (for example, telephone befriending). This may not be required for volunteers working in a group setting or in the office; and

6. Each volunteer will be supported by a named member of staff and will be given details of who to contact in case of emergency or in the absence of their named support; and
7. Any complaint about the actions or behaviours of a volunteer will be investigated in line with our policies (for example, Complaints, Grievance or Whistleblowing policies) and if necessary, in line with our Disciplinary policy and procedures.

Responsibilities

To support the Trustees, the Chief Executive and Executive team are responsible for:

1. An induction programme in the roles and responsibilities of Board members and AUKC's work; and
2. Providing opportunities for trustees to meet with staff and key volunteers of their choice; and
3. Providing written information and reports in good time on matters related to the governance of the organisation, AUKC's Memorandum and Articles of Association and other relevant legislation.

The Executive team and department leads are responsible for ensuring that volunteers know what is expected, have clearly specified lines of support, training, and supervision, are insured, and have safe working conditions and are shown recognition and appreciation. They are further responsible for ensuring that paid staff are clear about the role of volunteers and that good working relationships are fostered between them and the volunteers.

Volunteers are responsible for carrying out tasks in line with the aims and values of AUKC and working within agreed guidelines and remits. They are responsible for respecting confidentiality and for following this and other policies that relate to their role.

AUKC employees are responsible for providing appropriate training, support and resources when working alongside volunteers.

Legislation

This policy is based on UK legislation as follows:

1. The Equality Act 2014; and
2. The Data Protection Act 2018 and the General Data Protection Regulations 2016; and

3. The Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006; and
4. The Health and Safety at Work Act 1974; and
5. Guidance from the Charity Commission: *The Essential Trustee: what you need to know; what you need to do*

Definition

A volunteer is anyone who freely chooses to undertake work for AUKC through the giving of their time, skills, and experience without financial remuneration beyond the reimbursement of out-of-pocket expenses. It is work undertaken by choice and is unpaid.

Responsibility and review of this policy

Each policy will bear a front sheet summarising the date of approval, date(s) of any amendments and proposed date of review.

Responsibility for this policy rests with the Chief Executive (AUKC) and appointed Executive Lead. The policy was approved in November 2021. It is due for review in November 2024 or sooner if circumstances demand otherwise.

Chameleon People Solutions Ltd 11/21