

Volunteering Made Easy

Your Guide to Volunteering in Bury

(V1)



Produced by Bury VCFA
www.buryvcfa.org.uk

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Volunteering Guide



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What to expect of this guide...

Volunteering is a choice made freely by individuals who want to contribute to their community and make a positive impact. It can help you gain experience, learn new skills, meet new people, and develop new interests.

With hundreds of volunteer-involving organisations across the Borough of Bury, each has its own unique processes and procedures. This guide provides a general overview of volunteering, but it is important to note that organisations may have different ways of working.

While Bury VCFA supports organisations, we do not manage them directly or oversee their processes. If you have any questions about a specific organisation, please contact them directly. If you experience difficulties while joining an organisation or need guidance, contact us at:

Contact Us

www.buryvcfa.org.uk/volunteering

volunteering@buryvcfa.org.uk

0161 518 5550

Using the Bury Volunteer Bank



1

REGISTER

- Click '**I want to Volunteer**' followed by '**Register**'.
- Enter your details, complete your profile and click '**Submit**' to create your account.
- Our team will review and accept registrations.

2

LOGIN AND SEARCH ROLES

- Visit Bury VCFA Volunteering and click '**I want to Volunteer**'. Sign in with your e-mail and password.
- Click on '**Find a Volunteering Role**' to view current volunteer roles.



3

EXPRESS INTEREST

- For further information on a volunteer role, click '**Find out more**'.
- If you are interested click '**Express an interest in this role**' and write a few sentences about why you are applying. Make sure to add your email/phone number.



4

WAIT FOR A RESPONSE

The organisation may email you (if you type your email) or reply to you on the volunteer bank so make sure you login and check. You can do this by selecting '**Your Roles**'.



5

WHAT DO I DO IF I HAVEN'T HEARD ANYTHING?

If you don't hear from the organisation in 7 working days or if you have any issues during this process be sure to contact us directly on:

📞 0161 518 5550

✉️ volunteering@buryvcfa.org.uk



The Volunteering Process



MEETING THE ORGANISATION

Your first meeting will differ depending on the organisation, but it may include:

- a brief informal chat in person or on the phone
- a formal interview process.

This chance to talk about what you're good at, what you're interested in and the skills you might want to improve.



INDUCTION

When you start volunteering, you should have an induction to learn about the organisation and your role. Some smaller groups may not have a formal induction.

Let them know if anything (like a health condition) might affect your volunteering so they can support you.



ONGOING SUPPORT

Ongoing support will differ depending on organisations but here are some questions you could ask:

- Do you reimburse volunteers for out-of-pocket expenses such as travelling to volunteer?
- Will I have a volunteer manager/supervisor who is my main contact at the organisation?
- Are you able to provide me a reference for my volunteering work I have done? (these are usually done after a certain amount of time)



VOLUNTEER APPLICATION

You can apply to a volunteer organisation directly or via the Bury Volunteer Bank.

Application processes can vary from chatting on the phone to completing a paper or online form.



VOLUNTEER CHECKS

Some organisations will carry out some checks, not all groups do this but they could include:

- a reference
- a DBS check (if required)

Organisations will support with this.



TRAINING

When you start, be sure to ask your organisation what training they provide to volunteers. These will vary from organisation to organisation.

You can also access FREE volunteer training on the Bury VCFA website.

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Volunteering Expectations

As a volunteer, you have the right to work in a safe, respectful and supportive environment. In return, organisations expect you to adhere to the highest standards of conduct and perform your duties responsibly.

When you volunteer, you can expect the following:

- A welcoming environment
- Resources and tools needed to undertake your volunteering role
- **Training and support** – ask what training and support is available.
- **Flexibility** – check what days and hours you're expected to attend
- **Clear communication** – ask how the organisation will contact you and who your main point of contact is
- **Fair treatment** – organisations should treat you with respect and dignity, and they expect the same in return
- **Defined expectations** – check if there's a role description and how you can raise any concerns
- **Feeling valued** – some organisations may offer reward and recognition opportunities, ask about these when you begin.
- **Team involvement** – ask if you will participate in team meetings or social events

Expenses: Some organisations may reimburse expenses (e.g. travel and subsistence), but this is not guaranteed. Check with the organisation about their policy.

Providing Feedback and Raising a Concern

Providing Feedback

When you start volunteering, ask your organisation what their process is for providing feedback (feedback helps organisations improve). If you have a positive experience or notice something working well, share your thoughts with your supervisor or team. Similarly, if you have constructive feedback, share it openly and respectfully.

Raising a Concern

Most organisations have a process for addressing concerns. If you have any worries while volunteering, follow their process first. If you feel unable to speak to someone within the organisation, Bury VCFA can offer support and guidance:

- **Email:** volunteering@buryvcfa.org.uk
- **Call:** 0161 518 5550

For further guidance on providing feedback or raising a concern with the VCFA, please visit our website: <https://www.buryvcfa.org.uk/contact-us/>.

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DISCLAIMER: The following information is for awareness only. Please ensure to follow the processes and policies for the organisation you volunteer for. If you are unsure of their processes, then ask your manager for more information.

Safeguarding

Each organisation will have a safeguarding process which you should follow. The information below is an overview of what safeguarding is.

Safeguarding protects people from abuse and neglect. It is important to ensure the safety of children, young people, and vulnerable adults. The law covers:

- Children and young people under 18
- Adults requiring extra support due to age, disability, mental health, or other factors

Types of abuse include:

- **Physical abuse** – e.g. being hit, slapped, kicked, or inappropriately restrained
- **Sexual abuse** – being made to participate in sexual activities without consent
- **Emotional/psychological abuse** – being ridiculed, bullied, or pressured
- **Financial/material abuse** – misusing, withholding, or stealing money or belongings
- **Neglect** – failing to provide essential care
- **Discriminatory abuse** – mistreatment based on age, gender, sexuality, disability, race, or religion
- **Domestic abuse** – abusive behaviours in a relationship
- **Organisational abuse** – mistreatment within institutions (e.g. care homes)
- **Modern slavery** – including human trafficking and forced labour
- **Self-neglect** – failing to take care of oneself to a harmful degree

What are my duties as a volunteer?

Volunteers have two main duties around safeguarding:

- Be aware that abuse happens and look out for the signs
- Report any concerns you may have following your organisations processes

Boundaries

Setting clear boundaries helps maintain professionalism and prevents conflicts of interest. If you interact with service users personally (e.g. as friends, family, or colleagues), be mindful of potential conflicts.

To protect yourself and others:

- Avoid sharing personal contact details (phone numbers, emails, social media)
- Do not engage with service users on platforms like Facebook or Snapchat
- If you're unsure about a situation, consult your supervisor

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Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

Every volunteer should be treated fairly, with respect, and given equal opportunities. As a volunteer, you help create an inclusive and welcoming environment by:

- Treating everyone with kindness and respect
- Being open to different perspectives
- Challenging discrimination if you see it

By embracing diversity, you contribute to a positive volunteering experience for all.

Confidentiality & Data Protection

During your volunteering, you may have access to confidential information about individuals, families, or organisations. This can include names, addresses, health details, or other private matters. Organisations have a duty to protect this information. You must:

- Keep information secure and confidential
- Only share information when authorised and necessary
- Follow the organisation's data protection policies

If in doubt, ask your supervisor before sharing any information.

Health & Safety

Staying Safe

Your organisation is legally required to keep you safe. Every volunteer location is risk-assessed, and any hazards should be explained during your induction. If you are unsure or this isn't covered, you should ask the organisation for this information. You must:

- Perform your duties safely, protecting yourself, colleagues, and the public.
- Follow all safety instructions and procedures.
- Inform your supervisor of any health and safety needs.

Accidents and incidents

Different organisations will have different ways in which they report accidents and incidents. If an accident or incident occurs:

- Report it to your supervisor/organisation immediately
- In an emergency, dial **999** or **112**
- Avoid any risky activities that could compromise your safety

