

# Bury VCFA

# Volunteering Policy

## Version Control

Version	Date of review	Date of issue	Updated by	Authorised by	Change Log
2.1		Nov 2018	Tony Foster		
3.0	April 2024	March 2025	Adam Fitton		Updated policy information/formatting and addition of "Youth Volunteering".

## Purpose and Scope

Bury VCFA supports voluntary, community, faith and social enterprise (VCSE) groups in their development and actively promotes voluntary and community action in Bury. As part of its role, Bury VCFA has set up "The Volunteering Bank" to promote and develop volunteering in Bury.

Bury VCFA recognises the value and importance of volunteering to engage with our community, support our vision, and make a positive impact. This Volunteering Policy specifically covers the work of volunteers within Bury VCFA volunteers to ensure a mutually beneficial and rewarding experience.

This policy will be reviewed annually to ensure it remains fit for purpose and reflects any changes in legislation or best practices. Volunteers and other stakeholders will be consulted as part of the review process.

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## 1 Introduction

1.1 Bury VCFA's Volunteering Support offers the following to VCF groups:

- 1.1.1 Raise awareness of the benefits of volunteering for individual volunteers and the local community.
- 1.1.2 Link volunteers with volunteering opportunities which are suited to their needs with local VCSE organisations/groups.
- 1.1.3 Publicise volunteering opportunities and vacancies that are available in the Bury Borough.
- 1.1.4 Promote best practice in volunteer management through training, development and support.

1.2 Bury VCFA also supports its own internal volunteers. These individuals can volunteer in three main areas:

- 1.2.1 Administration Support Volunteer
- 1.2.2 Volunteer Bank Support Volunteer
- 1.2.3 Emergency Response Volunteer

## 2 Principles

2.1 This Volunteering Policy is underpinned by the following principles:

- 2.1.1 Bury VCFA will ensure that volunteers are properly integrated into the organisational structure and that mechanisms are in place for them to contribute to Bury VCFA's work.
- 2.1.2 Bury VCFA does not aim to recruit volunteers to replace paid staff.
- 2.1.3 Bury VCFA expects that staff and trustees at all levels will work positively with volunteers and, where appropriate, will actively seek to involve them in their work.
- 2.1.4 Bury VCFA recognises that volunteers require satisfying work and personal development and will seek to help volunteers meet these needs, as well as providing the training for them to do their work effectively.

## 3 Roles and Responsibilities of Volunteers

3.1 Bury VCFA will ensure that they:

- 3.1.1 Provide clear descriptions of volunteer roles and expectations outlined in a role description.
- 3.1.2 Conduct background checks when necessary for specific volunteer roles.
- 3.1.3 Provide appropriate training, resources, and supervision to support volunteers in their role.
- 3.1.4 Maintain open communication channels for volunteers to express concerns, provide feedback, and seek assistance.

- 3.1.5** Recognise and appreciate the contributions of volunteers through various means, such as certificates, appreciation events, or public acknowledgments.
- 3.2** The volunteer is expected to:
  - 3.2.1** Comply with organisational policies, procedures, and guidelines.
  - 3.2.2** Fulfil agreed-upon commitments, including attendance at scheduled volunteer shifts or events unless there are extenuating circumstances.
  - 3.2.3** Complete any required training and follow safety protocols.
  - 3.2.4** Respect confidentiality and privacy of service users, staff and other volunteers.
  - 3.2.5** Communicate openly and honestly with staff regarding availability, concerns, or issues related to volunteering

## 4 Recruitment and Selection

- 4.1** Before recruiting volunteers, the Chief Officer (or designated person) will have considered the appropriateness of the role envisaged bearing in mind the following:
  - 4.1.1** The roles of volunteers and those of staff in Bury VCFA should be distinct. Staff should not be involved in working for Bury VCFA in a voluntary and a salaried capacity.
  - 4.1.2** Work carried out by volunteers should not be such that might jeopardise paid posts.
  - 4.1.3** The voluntary role must allow for job satisfaction on the part of the volunteer, as well as meeting a need.
  - 4.1.4** Existing staff and volunteers should be consulted on the creation of new roles for volunteers which are likely to affect them.
  - 4.1.5** 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. expenses, insurance) should be available in writing.
- 4.2** Nominated members of staff with the appropriate skills will be responsible for the selection of volunteers.
- 4.3** Volunteers will be recruited from the widest possible base and selected accordingly to their own individual ability to perform the required tasks.
- 4.4** Prospective volunteers will be interviewed to find out what they would like to do, their skills, suitability and how best their potential might be realised.
- 4.5** A clear description of the volunteer's role will be given.
- 4.6** A volunteer will be invited to begin volunteering for a trial period prior to an agreed longer-term arrangement.
- 4.7** If unable to involve a particular volunteer, the staff responsible for the selection must make the reasons clear in a sensitive manner if feedback is required.

## 5 Practice Guidelines

- 5.1** Each volunteer will be provided with the following from Bury VCFA:
  - 5.1.1** A volunteer agreement establishing what Bury VCFA undertakes to provide them and what is expected from the volunteer.
  - 5.1.2** A role description, a written outline of the specific work they will be undertaking.
  - 5.1.3** A Volunteers Handbook.
- 5.2** None of the documents above are intended to or constitute an employment contract. Bury VCFA has no intention of creating a contract with any volunteers.
- 5.3** All volunteers will have a named person as their main point of contact. Volunteers will be provided with regular supervision to receive feedback on progress, discuss future development and air any issues.
- 5.4** Staff needed to devote time to support volunteers and note should be made of individual support needs.

## 6 Induction and Training

- 6.1** All Volunteers will receive an induction into Bury VCFA and their area of work.
- 6.2** All volunteers will be provided with training appropriate to their role (such as IT, Safeguarding, Data Protection).
- 6.3** Where it is appropriate to their role, volunteers will receive additional training on the same basis as paid staff.

## 7 Youth Volunteering

- 7.1** Bury VCFA understands the importance of including young people in volunteering. As such, where appropriate, support can be offered to those under the age of 18.
- 7.2** Bury VCFA will provide brokerage support to those between the ages of 16 and 18 through the Volunteer Bank. These volunteers must ensure that an emergency contact of a parent or guardian is provided.
- 7.3** The Volunteer Bank is unable to accept applications from those under the age of 16. In cases such as this the individual should be provided signposting to relevant organisations who provide youth volunteering opportunities (e.g. Scouting/Girl Guiding/St John Ambulance/Duke of Edinburgh).
- 7.4** In cases where it is appropriate for a young person (16- to 18-year-old) to volunteer directly with Bury VCFA, the following must occur:
  - 7.4.1** The volunteer policy must be followed.
  - 7.4.2** Bury VCFA should obtain necessary parental/guardian consent for the youth volunteer.
  - 7.4.3** Bury VCFA will ensure one DBS holder and another member of staff are on site when the youth volunteer is working.

## 8 Safeguarding

- 8.1** Bury VCFA is committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all volunteers, staff, and those served by its activities.
- 8.2** Volunteers in roles involving children, young people, or vulnerable adults will undergo enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks where necessary.
- 8.3** Mandatory safeguarding training will be provided to all volunteers working in relevant roles.
- 8.4** Volunteers are required to familiarise themselves with and adhere to Bury VCFA's Safeguarding Policy, including the procedure for reporting safeguarding concerns.

## 9 Data Protection and GDPR

- 9.1** Bury VCFA ensures all volunteer personal data is handled in compliance with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).
- 9.2** Volunteer records will be securely stored, accessed only by authorised personnel, and retained for a specific period in accordance with legal requirements.
- 9.3** Volunteers have the right to access, rectify, or request deletion of their data. Queries regarding data use should be directed to Bury VCFA's Data Protection Officer.
- 9.4** Volunteers are required to familiarise themselves with and adhere to Bury VCFA's Data Protection and GDPR Policy.

## 10 Volunteer Wellbeing and Support

- 10.1** Bury VCFA is committed to supporting the wellbeing of its volunteers.
- 10.2** Volunteer mentors will monitor for signs of stress or burnout and will provide guidance or adjustments as appropriate.

## 11 The Volunteer's Voice and Problem-Solving

- 11.1** Volunteers are encouraged to express their views about matters concerning Bury VCFA and its work.
- 11.2** Volunteers will be consulted on any major policy or operational changes in Bury VCFA that will affect them.
- 11.3** Volunteers may be invited to attend and speak at volunteer, staff, trustee, or other service meetings if appropriate.
- 11.4** If a dispute or concern arises the Complaints Policy should be followed:
  - 11.4.1** Volunteers should initially raise issues with their designated volunteer manager.
  - 11.4.2** If unresolved, concerns may be escalated to the Chief Officer or a designated senior staff member.
  - 11.4.3** A formal meeting will be arranged if necessary, and outcomes will be communicated in writing within an agreed timeframe.
- 11.5** Volunteers may bring a representative or advocate to any grievance meeting.

## 12 Conditions

- 12.1** 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.
- 12.2** All volunteers are covered by Bury VCFA's insurance policy whilst they are on the premises or engaged in any work on Bury VCFA's behalf. Details of the nature and extent of cover should be readily available.
- 12.3** Volunteers should adhere to confidentiality guidelines which will be explained when beginning volunteering with Bury VCFA. This includes use of social media and contact with the press/other forms of media as specified in the Confidentiality Policy.
- 12.4** Volunteers will have their travel and other out of pocket expenses reimbursed in line with Bury VCFA's Subsistence and Travel Claims Policy. Details of current rates and how to claim should be readily available.
- 12.5** We aim to identify and solve problems at the earliest possible stage. A procedure has been drawn up for dealing with complaints either by or about volunteers. A copy of the procedure is included in the Volunteers Handbook.
- 12.6** All volunteers should be made aware of the above rights and conditions without having to ask.
- 12.7** Volunteers or Bury VCFA may terminate the volunteering agreement at any time, preferably with prior notice. Reasons for termination might include role redundancy, personal circumstances, or breaches of policy. An exit discussion may be offered to understand the volunteer's experience and improve practices.

## 13 Recognition

- 13.1** Bury VCFA values the contributions of its volunteers and will recognise their efforts through certificates, events, and public acknowledgements.

## 14 Equal Opportunities

- 14.1** Bury VCFA relies on volunteer involvement to keep it relevant to the community it serves and so encourages involvement from all sections of the community.
- 14.2** Bury VCFA operates an equal opportunities policy in respect of both paid staff and volunteers. Volunteers will be expected to have an understanding of and commitment to our equal opportunities policy.
- 14.3** Each volunteer job specification should make clear the requirement that volunteers adhere to Bury VCFA's Equality Policy.
- 14.4** If a volunteer has a special need/disability that makes their involvement difficult, every effort will be made to involve them. An explanation will be given if this is not possible.