



St John's Centre

Volunteer Policy

The Aim:

'To build for the future'

St John's Centre will provide a safe environment in which people from all groups within the local community can meet together for social, educational and recreational activities.

The objectives are to:

- encourage the development of the local community through outreach and the provision of space where people can meet in a safe and non-threatening environment
- provide studio space where individuals and groups can act, dance and play music to develop courses and training sessions for children and young people that can be accessed by local schools and colleges as well as local arts groups
- provide social activities for the elderly on a weekly basis, a midday drop in, a lunch club, a tea dance
- support the local preschool by providing space alongside a much needed after schools club
- encourage small businesses, providing low rent/office/ studio/ workshop space
- be open to providing whatever facilities/resources the local community expresses a need for, so maximising the potential of the building and the growth of the local community

All our efforts are focussed upon a central purpose of the management of The St John's Community Centre

'Effectively and efficiently; balancing the responsibility of creating policies to protect users, encourage access and to increase opportunities for enjoyment, education, entertainment and healthy recreation.'

In line with this mission St John's Centre seeks to involve volunteers in:

- supporting the delivery of projects, clubs and activities at the centre
- helping to make sure our services meet the needs of our clients
- providing new skills and perspectives
- increasing our contact with the local community we serve
- developing a meaningful and long lasting relationship with local people and the centre
- Ensuring the centre delivers a programme of engagement relevant to the local communities

Principles

This Volunteering Policy is underpinned by the following principles:

St John's Centre MG

- will ensure that volunteers are properly integrated into the organisational structure and that mechanisms are in place for them to contribute to the centres work
- does not aim to introduce volunteers to replace paid staff positions
- expects that staff at all levels, will work positively with volunteers and, where appropriate, will actively seek to involve them in their work



- 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.

Practice guidelines

The following guidelines deal with practical aspects of the involvement of volunteers. More detailed information, including copies of the various documents referred to, is provided in St John's Centre Volunteers Handbook.

Recruitment

All prospective volunteers will be interviewed to find out what they would like to do, identify what skills they will bring, their suitability for the volunteer roles and identify how best their potential might be realised.

Volunteer roles and agreements will be available for discussion

Each volunteer will have a volunteer agreement establishing what St John's Centre undertakes to provide them with and which will agree to a written outline of the specific work they will be undertaking. This documents is not a contract; St John's Centre has no intention of creating a binding legal contract with any volunteers but is looking to establish a good clear working practice for everyone.

Each volunteer will also receive a Volunteers Handbook.

Expenses

All volunteers will have their travel and other expenses reimbursed appropriately. Volunteers working for a minimum of five hours per day will be able to claim expenses for lunch if it is not made available at the project e.g. volunteers will be able to have lunch with participants at the over 60s lunch club activity.

Induction and training

All volunteers will receive an induction into St John's Centre and their own area of work. Training will be provided as appropriate. Where possible volunteers will be entitled to receive additional training on the same basis as paid staff and be expected to hold the appropriate certificate if required e.g. Hygiene certificate.

Support

All volunteers will have a named person as their main point of contact. They will be provided with regular supervision to feedback on progress, discuss future development and air any problems.

The centre manager will be the main staff member all volunteers will be reporting to in the first instance

Volunteer's voice

Volunteers are encouraged to express their views about matters concerning St John's Centre and its work. There will be a meeting once every three months for volunteers to air their success stories, to discuss any issue and be updated on progress of the centre. These quarterly meetings will be set annually and will be conducted by the Centre Manager and a member of the St John's Centre Management Group



Insurance

All volunteers are covered by St John's Centre liability insurance policy whilst they are on the premises or engaged in any work on St John's Centre behalf. All volunteers must ensure they comply with any Risk Assessment requirements deemed appropriate e.g. protective clothing, safe systems of work for use of knives and cooking utensils etc.

Health and safety

Volunteers are covered by St John's Centre Health and Safety Policy, a copy of which is in the Volunteers Handbook.

Equal opportunities

St John's Centre operates an equal opportunities policy in respect of both paid staff and volunteers. A copy is in the Volunteers Handbook. Volunteers will be expected to have an understanding of and commitment to the equal opportunities policy.

Problem solving

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.

Confidentiality

Volunteers will be bound by the same requirements for confidentiality as paid staff.

Excluding safe guarding issues, the volunteers will not share any confidential information given to them by members of the community which they are working with.