

# Volunteer Policy – 1st Upper Dearne Valley Navigators

## 1.0 Introduction

The following policy sets out 1<sup>st</sup> Upper Dearne Valley Navigators Group approach to working with volunteers.

## 2.0 Scope and purpose of this policy

This policy applies to all 1<sup>st</sup> Upper Dearne Valley Navigators volunteers (we have no staff we are 100% voluntary).

It provides a foundation for involving volunteers in the work of Navigators and will thus:

- Offer a step-by step guide to involving volunteers in the work of Scouting
- Give guidelines to ensure that volunteers are fully supported when carrying out their volunteer role.
- Help ensure fairness and consistency when involving a diverse group of people.

## 3.0 Definition of a volunteer

A volunteer is someone who offers their time and energy on an unpaid (expenses only) basis either to someone not related to them or to an organisation for the benefit of others and not to make profit.

Volunteers choose to give their time to organisations. Their time is a gift, so they are not legally bound to the organisation and cannot be compelled to do specific tasks.

In 1<sup>st</sup> Upper Dearne Valley Navigators a volunteer is a person who commits their time and energy to contribute to and enhance the work of the organisation.

## 4.0 Why involve volunteers?

There are many reasons to involve volunteers in the work of 1<sup>st</sup> Upper Dearne Valley Navigators.

Volunteers can help to enrich and extend the services 1<sup>st</sup> Upper Dearne Valley Navigators currently offer.

Involving volunteers can help to give the community that we serve a stake in what we do.

Volunteers can bring a different perspective to the work of 1<sup>st</sup> Upper Dearne Valley Navigators with fresh ideas, knowledge and experience:

- They can bring qualities, skills and expertise such as personal experiences, cultural understanding and language skills.
- Clients may engage differently with volunteers than with staff.
- Volunteers can help us to engage with hard to reach clients.
- Volunteers can bring diversity which enriches 1<sup>st</sup> Upper Dearne Valley Navigators as an organisation.

## **5.0 How can volunteers benefit from offering their time to 1<sup>st</sup> Upper Dearne Valley Navigators?**

- By experiencing new challenges and learning new skills.
- Volunteering can be a stepping stone into employment or training opportunities
- By meeting new people from a wide range of backgrounds.
- By becoming involved with something interesting, absorbing and rewarding.
- Research shows that volunteering can improve health and well being.

## **6.0 Values of 1<sup>st</sup> Upper Dearne Valley Navigators volunteer scheme**

1<sup>st</sup> Upper Dearne Valley Navigators is committed to the following:

- We will not introduce volunteers to replace paid staff
- Volunteers will have a defined place in the structure of the organisation.
- Volunteers will be integrated and treated equally as part our teams.
- Recognising the individual skills each volunteer brings to the organisation.
- Ensuring volunteers feel supported and valued in their role.
- Encouraging volunteers to develop and build on their existing skills and knowledge by sharing good practice with them and offering appropriate training.

7.0 Role Descriptions – Each different role within the organisation will have a separate role description.

### **Chairman**

The chair usually:

- helps plan and run trustee meetings (and in a membership charity, members' meetings)
- takes the lead on ensuring that meetings are properly run and recorded
- takes the lead on ensuring that trustees comply with their duties and the charity is well governed
- might have a second or casting vote if a vote on a trustees' decision is tied, but only if this is specified in the charity's governing document
- may act as a spokesperson for the charity
- acts as a link between trustees and staff
- line manages the chief executive on behalf of the trustees

### **Treasurer**

The treasurer usually takes the lead at board level on:

- making sure the charity keeps proper accounts
- reviewing the charity's financial performance
- drawing up or reviewing policies for finance and investment
- ensuring that the charity has robust and effective financial controls in place
- liaising with finance staff and with the charity's independent examiner or auditor
- reporting on financial matters to the members, in a membership charity

## **Secretary**

### **The Secretary will:**

- Arrange committee meetings
- Arrange the date for the AGM
- Arrange all documents for signing by the Trustees at the AGM
- Take minutes at committee meetings and the AGM

## **Trustees – (ALL) Advise reading CC3 from the Charity Commission**

### **Group Leader**

The Group leader will liaise with other members of the Committee, Leaders, Skills Helpers and Members to formulate an ongoing programme of activities and events.

The Group leader will ensure that there are suitable capable adults supervising young people for each activity.

### **Navigator Leader**

The Navigator leader will take on the supervisory role as an when it is appropriate. There is no structure or ranking, and all leaders are of equal position. In the event of a complaint or challenge, the issue should be referred to the Group Leader.

### **Skills Instructors – Role depends upon the Skill and Qualification**

Instructors may only instruct in adventurous activities where they hold the appropriate qualification, or where they have been deemed suitable on a restricted basis in a specified location.

## **8.0 Recruiting volunteers**

We will use creative and appropriate methods to recruit volunteers from a wide range of backgrounds. We aim to recruit volunteers who reflect the community that we serve and will thus put resources into targeting members of excluded and hard to reach groups.

Recruitment methods can include:

- Using established channels such as Volunteering Kirklees
- Displaying posters (shops, libraries, community centers etc)

- Leaflets
- Websites
- Social media
- Text messaging
- Local media coverage and advertising
- Information distributed by colleges, universities, local workplaces and places of worship
- Events and talks

It can be helpful to do things in stages so there is time to evaluate and make suitable changes.

When potential volunteers get in touch it is important that all staff respond positively to them and ensure their details are taken and appropriate information is sent promptly.

### **8.1 Application process**

Potential volunteers will be asked to complete a short application form (it is important that forms are straightforward and do not create unnecessary barriers for potential volunteers).

The next stage in the application process is a one to one informal discussion/interview after which references will be taken up and a DBS check initiated (if applicable).

## **9.0 Selecting volunteers**

The process of selection aims to answer whether:

1. Is the volunteer suitable for the scheme?
2. Is the scheme suitable for the volunteer and will it meet their expectations?

The criteria used to answer these questions....

Age – over 18

See appendix A offering guidance for:

- Volunteers from overseas
- Ex-offenders
- People with disabilities
- People claiming benefits

### **9.1 DBS check (if your organisation is entitled to ask)**

Volunteers will need a DBS check upon starting in a new role as a volunteer with 1<sup>st</sup> Upper Dearne Valley Navigators.

## **10.0 Induction and training**

Induction is the process of introducing new volunteers to the organisation and their role in it. It is the first stage of training that needs to be ongoing to enable volunteers to carry out their role.

Induction should include:

- Background and aims of 1<sup>st</sup> Upper Dearne Valley Navigators Group
- Information about/introduction to 1<sup>st</sup> Upper Dearne Valley Navigators members that the volunteer might work with.
- An overview of the volunteer role description and role agreement
- Information on how to claim expenses
- Health and safety information
- Information on who will help and supervise them
- Problem-solving procedures

### **10.1 Ongoing training**

***Training will be provided as requested. Face to face, or online.***

### **11.0 Support and supervision**

Every volunteer needs support and supervision. How much and how often will vary according to the role and the individual volunteer.

We will ensure that volunteers know:

- Who to take any problems to
- Who to talk to about their role and current tasks
- Who to talk to about their skills and understanding

***Supervision is ongoing. We work in teams.***

Support and supervision meetings are not about criticism or fault-finding. They are an opportunity to give clear feedback, praise and reassurance. We will make sure that volunteers know that it's a chance for them to talk about:

- What's gone well
- What hasn't
- Any questions they would like to ask
- Any changes they would like to suggest
- Any support or training needed

We will encourage our volunteers to let us know about any problems as soon as they can. Being positive about difficulties and sorting them out at an early stage is best for everyone.

Supervision is an opportunity to identify training needs

### **12.0 Problem solving procedures**

Volunteers are not covered by employment or equal opportunities legislation and 1<sup>st</sup> Upper Dearne Valley Navigators does not wish to

create a contractual relationship with them it is not appropriate to use grievance and disciplinary procedures that are used for employees when dealing with volunteers.

All problems will be resolved openly, fairly and quickly to:

- Protect our volunteers
- Minimise any disruption to other volunteers or clients (if applicable) and staff
- Demonstrate that our organisation respects volunteers
- Protect the reputation of 1<sup>st</sup> Upper Dearne Valley Navigators

### **12.1 Problems raised by volunteers - if a volunteer has a complaint about the organisation, a member of staff or another volunteer:**

### **12.2 Problems raised about volunteers**

If problems are raised about a volunteer's behaviour the aim will be to resolve them informally. Many 'problems' are simply due to training needs, a lack of support, inappropriate roles and so on. Where informal measures are not enough the volunteer co-ordinator will raise the issue in a formal meeting with the volunteer. The volunteer will be entitled to put their case forward. If it is felt necessary an informal warning may be issued, with steps agreed to improve conduct.

## **13.0 Record keeping**

Every adult member has a file held by the Group. This file is only accessible by the direct line manager.

It contains all details from the

- Application form
- Emergency contact details
- Training
- Activity Qualifications
- Role Record and Training Record
- References
- Any correspondence about or relevant to the volunteer

When volunteers leave the scheme an exit questionnaire should be requested and if completed placed in the file, which should be retained for two years.

## **14.0 Confidentiality**

Due to the nature of the volunteering roles within 1<sup>st</sup> Upper Dearne Valley Navigators it is important that confidentiality is maintained and

that all prospective volunteers are made aware of the confidentiality policy

## **15.0 Expenses**

It is essential that volunteers are not out-of-pocket because of their voluntary work with 1<sup>st</sup> Upper Dearne Valley Navigators and all reasonable expenses will be paid.

Volunteers are required to choose the most cost effective means available to them, while still meeting their needs in terms of travel or support costs.

### **15.1 What expenses can be claimed?**

The following are legitimate expenses:

- Travel undertaken in the course of volunteering ( but not to and from the location of volunteering)
- Stationery and communication costs used for voluntary work
- The cost of any necessary health and safety measures
- Materials purchased for the Group

All volunteers should be encouraged to claim expenses on a regular basis. This helps 1<sup>st</sup> Upper Dearne Valley Navigators to measure the cost of the service.

Volunteers are responsible for declaring any earnings to the tax and benefit offices as appropriate.

Receipts must accompany any expense claims submitted, other than mileage.

Claims should ordinarily be made within one month.

## **16.0 Car users**

If the volunteer role will involve the use of their own vehicle, the Volunteer Coordinator must ensure that the volunteer confirms that they have:

- a full driving license
- V5 log book,
- Insurance

Driving licences should be inspected when the volunteer is taken on and then on an annual basis, to check they are still valid and that the volunteer does not have any recent serious driving convictions.

### **16.1 Volunteer driver's insurance**

Legally, only third party insurance is required, however it is good practice for the driver to have comprehensive insurance.

It is not necessary to notify the insurer if a volunteer's own car is used only for journeys between the volunteer's home and the usual place of volunteering. However, the insurer must be notified in writing if the car

is used for the volunteering activity itself, otherwise the policy may be invalidated, which could result in the driver being personally liable for any damage or injuries sustained in an accident.

The same requirements apply if a volunteer uses someone else's car.

The volunteer should ask for volunteering activity to be included in their 'leisure use' premium and there shouldn't be any extra costs incurred with this. It is the volunteer's responsibility to be insured for their duties.

The Volunteer Coordinator must ensure that volunteers understand their responsibilities and liabilities in this area.

### **17.0 Insurance**

1<sup>st</sup> Upper Dearne Valley Navigators will ensure that all volunteers are covered by their insurance policy (1<sup>st</sup> Upper Dearne Valley Navigators needs to ensure that the policy has one sentence that states that it covers volunteers).

### **18.0 Health and safety**

1<sup>st</sup> Upper Dearne Valley Navigators is committed to the health and safety of our volunteers. Risk assessments must be undertaken and, where risks are identified 1<sup>st</sup> Upper Dearne Valley Navigators will act to eliminate/minimise those risks.

Volunteers will be provided with all appropriate information, training or equipment they need to remain safe.

Volunteers are expected to remember their duty of care towards the people around them, and not act in a way that might endanger anyone.

Volunteers must not work solo with young people. There must always be additional adult support, or a minimum of three young people being tutored in any one Group.

### **19.0 Data protection**

1<sup>st</sup> Upper Dearne Valley Navigators only asks for information that it really needs and will keep information securely, limit access to it and will not pass on personal details without consent unless legally obliged to do so.

The Volunteer Coordinator needs to ensure that the scheme operates within the 1<sup>st</sup> Upper Dearne Valley Navigators data protection policy.

1<sup>st</sup> Upper Dearne Valley Navigators complies with the DPA.

### **20.0 Equal opportunities and diversity**

1<sup>st</sup> Upper Dearne Valley Navigators is committed to equal opportunities and diversity. This commitment extends to our volunteers and 1<sup>st</sup> Upper



Dearne Valley Navigators welcomes everyone from our community as a volunteer.

We will not discriminate against volunteers on the grounds of gender, transgender, sexual orientation, disability, age, race, religion/belief, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, trade union activity, HIV or marital status, or similar bases.

Furthermore 1<sup>st</sup> Upper Dearne Valley Navigators recognises and values the different backgrounds, skills, outlooks and experiences which volunteers bring to the organisation.

1<sup>st</sup> Upper Dearne Valley Navigators will not tolerate behaviour that contradicts the letter or spirit of this or our full equal opportunities policy.

## **Appendix**

### **Guidance to enable people to volunteer**

#### **Volunteers from overseas**

There is no restriction on people from EU countries coming to the UK to volunteer. People from outside the EU who has a visa to work or study in the UK may volunteer, as long as they are still undertaking the activity that is stated on their visa. It is possible to get a visa to come to the UK to volunteer, but this must be arranged in advance and certain restrictions apply.

People on visitor visas are not permitted to volunteer.

More information on overseas volunteers can be obtained from Volunteering England.

#### **Ex-offenders**

Volunteer roles working with children may fall into the definition of regulated positions under the Criminal Justice and Court Services Act 2000. People with convictions for certain offences against children will have a disqualification order attached to their conviction. This makes it an offence for them to apply to work in a regulated position. The disqualification order will be revealed by a CRB disclosure check.

For other positions there are no guidelines other than inclusion in the Protections of Vulnerable Adults (POVA) and Protection of Children Act (POCA) lists of people considered unsuitable to work with those client groups.

If someone has a previous conviction or convictions, the following questions need to be considered:

- What was the nature of the offence(s)?
- Is it relevant to the role?
- How long ago was it?
- Is there a pattern of offending?
- Were there personal circumstances associated with the offence that have now changed?
- What is the person's attitude to their conviction?
- What support is available to the individual, such as a social worker or probation officer?

Further information and guidance are available from <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/use-the-dbs-website-to-answer-your-query>

Accepting a volunteer with a criminal record can greatly improve their quality of life when attempts to gain paid employment have failed. A substantial period of voluntary work that proves the commitment, capabilities and honesty of the volunteer can result in a reference that may be valued for future job applications.

### **People with disabilities**

1<sup>st</sup> Upper Dearne Valley Navigators equal opps guidance is available as a Policy element of the Constitution of the Group

### **People claiming benefits**

Benefits rules should not prevent claimants from volunteering. Up-to-date information on benefits regulations can be obtained from Volunteering England.

Volunteers in receipt of benefits should declare their voluntary activity to Jobcentre Plus. The Volunteer Coordinator should make them aware of this requirement, although the decision to inform is a matter for the volunteer.