

Shirley Neighbourhood Care Volunteer Policy

1. General

Shirley Neighbourhood Care Scheme (SNCS) recognises the significant and valuable role that volunteers have in implementing our services and that volunteering should also be a worthwhile and rewarding experience for volunteers.

- Volunteers, in their diversity of age, experience, cultural background and their involvement within communities, bring a value to our work which adds to our understanding of, and response to, older people's needs.
- The development and support of vibrant community networks and individuals within them is vital to the wellbeing of older people.
- People of all ages care about and want the opportunity to contribute to make later life a more fulfilling and enjoyable experience for everyone.
- Older people with whom we work value the involvement of volunteers.
- By involving volunteers, we can offer opportunities for genuine involvement, learning and development for individuals.
- Without the contribution of volunteers, we would not be able to have the reach of services we have for older people.

We will hold a copy of this document at our premises and will make it available to all volunteers. A copy is also available to download from our website www.shirleyneighbourhoodcare.co.uk

2. Definition

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

The role of volunteers is very different from that of employees, consultants, interns, students on work placements and secondees (staff doing a different job for a set amount of time).

Volunteers do not have to commit to a given number of hours, although many of our services will cover a specific time period. If we ask volunteers to work a given number of hours this will be at their discretion and we will not penalise them if they are unable to do so; however we ask volunteers to be clear about their availability so that we can plan the services we offer our clients.

3. Recruitment

We will apply our Equal Opportunity Policy to the recruitment and management of volunteers. Prospective volunteers will be required to complete an application form. We will provide descriptions for all volunteering activities outlining specific tasks, responsibilities and who the volunteer reports to.

We will invite all prospective volunteers to meet the SNCS Manager for a two-way discussion of the proposed role, its requirements and each other's expectations. This meeting is for both the Manager and prospective volunteer to see if the volunteering opportunity is suitable. We will provide suitable training and support for members of staff who manage volunteers.

We will let the prospective volunteer know whether we are happy for the volunteering to go ahead as soon as possible after the meeting. Any offer of volunteering is subject to the receipt of satisfactory references, a Disclosure and Barring Certificate and completion of relevant training. We would ask prospective volunteers to let SNCS know if they would like to go ahead within a reasonable period.

There is no Contract of Employment or services between SNCS and our volunteers, but we expect that they will adhere to our volunteer and confidentiality agreements (see Appendices 1 & 2) and other relevant policies which can be found on our website: www.shirleyneighbourhoodcare.co.uk

We have the right to refuse the offer of service of any volunteer.

4. Training

SNCS will provide e-learning training in safeguarding for all volunteers. This training must be repeated annually. Only volunteers who achieve a certificate in "Safeguarding for Adults Level 1" will be able to undertake volunteering with SNCS. If a volunteer does not renew their Safeguarding certificate before it expires, they will be released from volunteering duties until they have renewed their qualification.

SNCS will also provide food and hygiene level 2 e-learning training for all volunteers who help at lunch club. This training must be completed every two years. Only volunteers who achieve this certificate will be permitted to volunteer at lunch club. If a volunteer does not renew their food and hygiene certificate before the expiry date, they will be released from lunch club duties until they have renewed their qualification.

SNCS will ensure that employees hold current First Aid certificates. Volunteers may be offered informal first aid training from time to time. It is not compulsory to undertake this training, but we hope that volunteers will take advantage of this opportunity when it is offered if they are available.

Volunteer minibus drivers should hold a D1 class on their driving licence and must be prepared to undertake full MIDAS (Minibus Driver Awareness Scheme) theory and practical driving training and will be required to achieve a MIDAS certificate.

SNCS will cover all costs related to training.

5. Disclosure of Convictions

SNCS is an Equal Opportunities organisation and as such undertakes to treat all applicants for paid or voluntary positions within the organisation fairly and not to discriminate unfairly based on conviction or any other information revealed.

The nature of the work of SNCS means that staff and volunteers will have regular and ongoing contact with vulnerable adults. For this reason, it will be necessary to carry out Disclosure and Barring Services (DBS) check as part of the recruitment process for all voluntary positions within the organisation. Having a criminal record will not necessarily debar any individual from working or volunteering with us, and due consideration is given to the nature of the position together with the circumstances and background of any offences.

6. Conduct and Complaints

Volunteers will be given an opportunity to discuss any concerns that they may have about their volunteering and consult with us generally. They should raise any complaints or concerns with the Manager. If this is not appropriate or they are not happy with how this is dealt with, volunteers should take their complaint to the Chair of the Trustees of SNCS.

If there are concerns about the conduct or performance of a volunteer, the Manager should investigate to find out what is happening. This should include talking with the volunteer concerned. If conduct or performance is unsatisfactory, the volunteer should be informed that they will be offered 'special guidance' for a period. The object of the 'special guidance' will be to encourage improvement.

If a volunteer does not meet our standards of performance, and the steps we have taken to encourage them to improve do not work, the volunteer should be offered more suitable alternative voluntary activities, or, if none is available, leave with one week's notice of termination of the arrangement – or immediately if the volunteer prefers. If behaviour, which in our view is equivalent to gross misconduct, has occurred the volunteer activity will be terminated immediately.

7. Ending Involvement

Either SNCS or the volunteer can end the volunteering at any time and without any notice. However, unless there is an emergency or misconduct, we will usually try to give volunteers at least two weeks' notice and hope that they will offer the same to us. In all cases we will provide the volunteer with details of the reasons why their involvement is no longer needed.

8. References

During a volunteer's time with us or when it ends, we will supply a reference if requested, based on a volunteer's service with SNCS, indicating the skills and knowledge acquired as well as personal qualities observed.

9. Health & Safety

We have a duty to look after the safety and well-being of our volunteers as well as our clients. We will make volunteers aware of our Health & Safety Policy and any special safety arrangements relevant to their individual role.

Volunteers must take reasonable care for the Health and Safety of themselves and others who may be affected by what they do, or omit to do, at work. Volunteers must also co-operate with SNCS in performing any duty or complying with any requirement imposed by any relevant health and safety laws.

10. SNCS and Children

Volunteers should not bring children with them when undertaking any volunteering duties.

11. Repaying Volunteer Expenses

If a volunteer wishes to claim out of pocket expenses, they should complete an Expenses Claim Form and attach corresponding receipts and/or travel ticket or other evidence of expenditure.

12. Insurance

SNCS maintains insurance against risks including loss and damage to or destruction of its property, the injury or death of members of the public affected by its activities and its employees and volunteers undertaking authorised work for it.

The insurance does not, however, extend to unauthorized work or to authorized work carried on by people not authorised by SNCS. It is therefore most important that volunteers comply with the conditions of SNCS's insurance and do not do anything which might result in SNCS not being covered. Volunteers should not make direct arrangements with clients without keeping the SNCS office informed as they may not otherwise be covered by insurance.

Please note that Shirley Neighbourhood Care insurance does not cover personal accident for anyone over the age of 80 years old.

13. Asylum Seekers

Since April 2000, asylum seekers (people in the process of applying for refugee status) and family members can volunteer. This includes whilst they are appealing against a decision to refuse them asylum. However, it must be borne in mind that they may not be given the right to remain here. They should not be led to believe that voluntary activity is regarded as a step towards refugee status being granted.

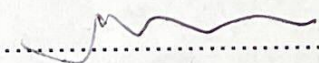
14. Travelling While Volunteering

The majority of SNCS volunteers cannot work from home due to the services they provide clients. Volunteers should therefore follow the Government's advice on guidance on safer travel.

Monitoring and Review

This policy will be monitored periodically and at least every two years to judge its effectiveness and it will be updated in accordance with changes in the law.

Approved by and on behalf of SNCS Trustees:

Signed.....

Print Name..... JONATHAN BAXTER CHAIRMAN

Date..... 30 May 2023

Volunteer Agreement – Appendix 1

Volunteers are an important part of SNCS. We hope that you enjoy volunteering with us and feel an important part of our team. This Agreement tells you what you can expect from us, and what we hope to receive from you. We aim to be flexible, so please let us know if you would like to make any changes and we will do our best to accommodate them.

We, SNCS, will do our best:

- To introduce volunteers to how the organisation works and their role in it and for volunteers to be given appropriate training.
- To respect volunteers' skills, dignity and individual wishes and do our best to meet them.
- To reimburse any reasonable expenses, submitted with appropriate receipts, incurred whilst carrying out duties on behalf of SNCS.
- To consult with volunteers and keep them informed of possible changes
- To provide a safe workplace.
- To apply our Equal Opportunities Policy
- To apply our complaints procedure if there is a problem.

A SNCS Volunteer will do their best:

- To work reliably to the best of their ability, and to give as much warning as possible whenever they cannot work when expected.
- To follow SNCS's rules and procedures, including safeguarding, health and safety, equal opportunities and confidentiality.
- To undertake the training as requested to enable them to carry out their role responsibly and legally.

Note: this Agreement is in honour only and is not intended to be a legally binding contract of employment.

SNCS Confidentiality Agreement – Appendix 2

You must always be aware of the Confidentiality of Information gained during the course of your volunteering duties, which in many cases includes access to personal information relating to clients and other staff. It is expected that you understand the importance of treating information in a discreet and confidential manner, and your attention is drawn to the following:

1. All documentary or other material containing Confidential Information must be kept secure at all times when not being used by a volunteer; and shall at the time of termination of your engagement with us, or at any other time upon demand, return to us any such material in your possession;
2. Information regarding the business and clients must not be disclosed either orally or in writing to unauthorised persons. It is particularly important that all volunteers should ensure the authenticity of telephone enquiries;
3. Conversations relating to Confidential matters affecting the business, members of staff, volunteers and Neighbourhood Care Groups should not take place in situations where they can be overheard (i.e. in corridors, reception areas, lifts, etc.);
4. Failure to comply with this Agreement may result in us refusing any further voluntary assistance from you.
5. You will be given a copy of SNC's privacy policies in relation to GDPR. Please read these and follow the guidelines in these documents.

The importance of Confidentiality should always be borne in mind.