

The Heather Club

VOLUNTEERING POLICY

The Heather Club Constitution

The Heather Club is a Charity. The objects of the Association shall be to promote the relief of frail, elderly and/or mentally confused people in any manner, which is now or hereafter may be deemed by law to be charitable within the Borough of Dacorum, in particular, by the provision of a day centre. (from here on the Heather Club/Association/Organisation will be referred to as the Club.)

The club provides a day centre for people with memory loss some of whom may be in the early stages of dementia. Providing a happy, friendly, caring environment is essential. Activities to stimulate memories, including music, exercise, table games, visiting entertainers and outings etc.

Aims of the Volunteering Policy

- To set out the principles and working practices for the involvement of volunteers in the club and ensure best practice is followed.
- To provide a reference document to cover all aspects of the Clubs relationship with volunteers for everyone concerned with recruiting, supporting, developing and managing volunteers and promoting voluntary activities.
- To ensure that the role of volunteers at the club is understood and accepted by staff and trustees and it is made clear why we involve volunteers.

Volunteering is the commitment of time and energy for the benefit of the community which can take many forms. It is undertaken by choice, without payment.

Core Values

- Everyone has the right to volunteer without experiencing discrimination and the club has a responsibility to treat volunteers fairly.
- Volunteering is a matter of free choice and there can be no compulsion to be a volunteer.
- Volunteering is a valuable and integral part of society and they must receive support and recognition.
- Volunteers help to effect social changes to improve the quality of life and play a vital role in alleviating the effects of poverty, ignorance, and putting an end to inequality, ignorance and injustice.

The Heather Club recognises the unique and special contribution that volunteers make to society, particularly to the work of the club. Their involvement in appropriate tasks and projects is welcomed as it has a positive effect to the work of the club. Volunteers bring a variety of skills and fresh ideas, which gives added value and support to the club's sustainability. There is a unique role, which differs from that of the paid staff. They can offer time and passion to a particular project cause or issue. Which means the Heather Club can build stronger links within the community. Volunteers can act as ambassadors by promoting the club's activities and services.

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- Does not introduce volunteers to directly replace paid staff
- Expects the staff at all levels will work positively with volunteers, and, where appropriate, will actively seek them out to help with the activity
- Recognises that volunteering is a two-way process, where volunteers give their time to help, and thus gain benefits for themselves.

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The Heather Club involvement with volunteers covers 6 areas

1. Planning for Volunteer Involvement

The Club recognises the importance of planning. Volunteer involvement requires the investment of time and resources, particularly for new volunteers.

- Volunteer tasks are developed imaginatively with short term and ongoing opportunities
- A description of the proposed project/activity is made available and volunteer tasks are thought out thoroughly before being advertised for help.
- When planning new projects, the volunteers' expenses are included in budgets so that volunteer activities can be appropriately supported.
- Policies which cover volunteer activities are regularly reviewed by the trustees.

• Recruitment and selection

The recruitment of volunteers follows good practice guidelines

- Volunteering is open to everyone and the Club is committed to equal opportunities in its services and in the recruitment of its volunteers.
- Volunteers are recruited using a variety of advertising methods
- Potential volunteers are contacted promptly by phone, letter or email and recruitment processes are fair, efficient and consistent.
- Volunteers are required to fill in a simple application form.
- All prospective volunteers are interviewed to find out what they would like to do, their skills, suitability and how best their potential might be realised.
- The Heather Club will endeavour to ensure that a volunteer is suitable for the role, where there is a choice of volunteers to complete the task. The Heather club will choose the candidate based on merit. This might be their relevant experience or knowledge, or previous commitment to the organisation.
- If the volunteer or the Club decides that the volunteer task is inappropriate/unsuitable for whatever the reason, feedback and discussions include the chance to explore other options.
- Volunteers will be selected and screened for suitability through the following methods, dependent on the role:
 - Informal or formal interview
 - References – all volunteers are required to give names of 2 people who can be approached for personal references. Referees from family members are not acceptable. They should have known the volunteer for at least 1 year.
 - Trial period of 4 months duration.
 - It is expected that volunteers will be able to attend regularly.
 - Volunteers who are unwell must stay home until they are completely recovered.

Where appropriate, Disclosure and Barring Service will be required.

2. Induction

The initial welcome and induction that new volunteers receive is key to their retention.

- An information pack is given to new volunteers

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All volunteers will receive an induction relative to their role so that they are prepared for the tasks allocated to them.

- All volunteers will be given a named person to contact.
- The Club will ensure that volunteers are properly integrated into the organisation and that the mechanisms are in place for them to contribute to our work through supervision provided by the Club Manager. Volunteers are bound by the same requirements for confidentiality as paid staff and are required to sign a confidentiality statement.

3. Support and safety

All volunteers will be supported and given the opportunity for feedback on progress and development as well as the chance to air any problems.

- Volunteers are covered by insurance and are included in health and safety policies.
- Out of pocket expenses are met wherever possible and practicalities of expense reimbursement are laid out in the Volunteers Guidelines.
- Volunteers not wishing to claim their expenses can donate them back to the club. Expenses, other than for travel/phone or tec may be met, providing approval is sought in advance. All volunteers are required to itemise and submit expense claims on a simple standard form.
- In some circumstances, expenses will be paid in advance with the approval of the Club Manager.
- Rates of reimbursement (eg for mileage) will be set and reviewed regularly by the treasurer.
- The Heather Club will aim to identify and solve problems at the earliest possible stage. A procedure covers complaints either by or about volunteers

4. Training and personal development

The Club recognises volunteers' motivation for volunteering may change what they want to do.

- Training relevant to volunteers' roles will be provided.
- Volunteers' motivations are met with appropriate tasks and those with extra support needs are enabled to help wherever possible.
- The Club 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 tasks effectively.
- Volunteer support/supervision sessions establish volunteers' satisfaction with their current role and identify training needs, suggested changes to the role etc.

5. Involving, rewarding and recognising volunteers

- Volunteers contribute to decision making and are fully involved in the club's activities.
- Team meetings are held which include paid staff and volunteers.
- Newsletters/email updates keep volunteers up to date with the Club activities.
- Volunteers receive appropriate recognition for their efforts. We don't forget the importance of a simple thank you!

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