



Volunteering Policy

Introduction

This policy sets out the broad principles for voluntary involvement in Chaffinch. This policy is endorsed by the trustees of Chaffinch and will be reviewed annually to ensure that it remains appropriate to the needs of Chaffinch and its volunteers.

Commitment

Chaffinch acknowledges that volunteers contribute in many ways, that their contribution is unique and that volunteering can benefit the charity and the volunteers themselves. Chaffinch values the contribution made by volunteers and is committed to involving volunteers in appropriate positions and in ways which are encouraging, supportive and which develop volunteering.

Chaffinch recognises its responsibility to arrange its volunteering efficiently and sensitively so that the valuable gift of the volunteer's time is best used to the mutual advantage of all concerned.

Definition

Volunteers are people who are unpaid and, of their own free will, contribute their time, energy and skills to benefit the community.

Statement of values and principles

Volunteering is a legitimate and crucial activity that is supported and encouraged by Chaffinch and is not intended to be a substitute for paid employment.

The volunteer role is a gift relationship, binding only in honour, trust and mutual understanding. No enforceable obligation, contractual or otherwise, can be imposed on volunteers to attend, give or be set a minimum amount of time to carry out the tasks involved in their voluntary activity. Likewise, the organisation cannot be compelled to provide either regular tasks, payment or other benefit for any activity undertaken by the volunteer.

Although volunteers offer time freely and willingly without binding obligation, there is a presumption of mutual support and reliability. Reciprocal expectations are acknowledged – both what Chaffinch expects of volunteers and what volunteers expect of Chaffinch.

Recruitment & Selection

Chaffinch is committed to equal opportunities and believes that volunteering should be open to all regardless of race, gender, religion, sexual orientation, political beliefs or offending background that does not create a risk to vulnerable groups including children.

The acceptance of volunteer assistance for a particular role is made on merit, the sole selection criterion being the individual's suitability to carry out agreed tasks.

Information about the volunteer not relevant to the performance of the volunteering tasks concerned will be disregarded by the organisation in terms of recruitment and selection.

Volunteering opportunities will be promoted in ways that make them accessible to all members of the community.

Volunteers who are considered unsuitable for a particular task will either be offered alternative voluntary involvement with Chaffinch or referred to the nearest Volunteer Centre.

All volunteers will be invited to attend an informal interview.

Volunteers will be provided with a clear and concise role description which will be subsequently reviewed every year. The description will be prepared in conjunction with the volunteer.

Grievance Procedure

The chairperson is responsible for handling problems regarding volunteer complaints or conduct and these should be referred to him/her. In the event of a problem all relevant facts should be obtained as quickly as possible.

Rights and Responsibilities

Chaffinch recognises the rights of volunteers to:

- know what is (and what is not) expected of them.
- have adequate support in their volunteering.
- receive appreciation.
- volunteer in a safe environment.
- know their rights and responsibilities if something goes wrong.
- receive relevant out-of-pocket expenses.
- be free from discrimination.

Chaffinch expects volunteers to:

- be reliable.
- be honest.
- respect confidentiality.
- carry out tasks in a way that reflects the aims and values of Chaffinch.
- carry out tasks within agreed guidelines.
- respect the work of Chaffinch and not bring it into disrepute.
- comply with the policies of Chaffinch.