

The Tendring Compact Volunteering Code of Good Practice

In 2003 the Tendring Compact, which is a guide to relations between the statutory sector and voluntary and community sector, was agreed.

Now the Tendring Compact Action Team is releasing guidance on specific issues that effect both sectors. Volunteering is the first of six code of practice.

This code has been developed by the Tendring Compact Action Team, consulted on by the voluntary and statutory sector and endorsed by the Tendring Local Strategic Partnership.



Volunteering is an important expression of citizenship and is the commitment of time and energy for the benefit of society and the community, and can take many forms.

It is undertaken freely and by choice, without concern for financial gain.

The Tendring Volunteering Code of Practice aims to...

- Set out an agenda of undertakings for both the statutory and voluntary and community sector in the Tendring District on good practice for volunteering.
- It also sets out a shared vision of how the statutory sector can support and promote voluntary action, while respecting volunteers' independence and free choice.

What is voluntary and community involvement?

Volunteering overseas.

Helping provide a service as an unpaid volunteer for a voluntary or community organisation or the public sector or a private sector body.

Taking part in running a voluntary or community organisation as a trustee, board or committee member.

A group activity providing a community service or campaigning for a public cause.

Gaining skills and experience through volunteering, which will be useful when

Leading a voluntary activity to improve the quality of life for people

Volunteering through involvement in a faith congregation or community.

Serving as a non-executive member of a public body or participating in civic governance.

Helping develop public policy through involvement in consultation processes and campaigning.

Employer-supported community activity.



The Four Principles of Volunteering


Choice Volunteering must be a choice freely made by each individual.


Reciprocity Volunteers offer their contribution unwaged but should benefit in other ways such as gaining a sense of worthwhile achievement, useful skills, experience and contacts and sociability and fun without being out of pocket.


Recognition Explicit recognition of the value of what volunteers contribute to the organisation, to the community and to the social economy.


Diversity Volunteering should be open to all, no matter what their background, age, race, sexual orientation, faith etc.


How to make an effective framework for volunteering

 Recognise the importance of high standards and effective management of volunteers, and that fulfilling this responsibility requires allocation of organisational resources.


 Assist potential volunteers to find volunteering opportunities that fit their needs, interests and abilities by working in partnership with other agencies;


 Identify a member of staff or trustee to be responsible for volunteer involvement, and for monitoring and reporting on it;


 Ensure proper records are kept of how funding supports volunteering, and the value this produces;


 Encourage and enable (but do not compel) accreditation of skills acquired through volunteering for recognised qualifications;


Voluntary and Community Sector undertakings


 Recognise as part of the reciprocal relationship, volunteers should be given thanks and recognition for their contribution at the very least. They should get fair treatment, training and support according to the resources of the organisation with which they are involved;


 Staff who recruit, induct and manage volunteers should have this work recognised as part of their job descriptions or work plans, and receive appropriate training and support;

 Develop systems for referring surplus volunteers, or those unsuited to their needs, to other organisations, to ensure no volunteers potential is wasted. Bodies that provide infrastructure support for voluntary groups should provide support for these systems.


 Seek to ensure that policies and decisions are checked for impact on volunteer and community activity, before being adopted;


 Aim to increase staff awareness of volunteers contributions to statutory sector objectives;


 Consider adopting policies, which ensure that volunteering infrastructure bodies can rely on realistic sustainable long-term funding;

 Seek to work with those voluntary organisations already active and organised, rather than setting up new structures;

Statutory Sector Undertakings

 Promote accessible information about volunteering opportunities at local, regional, national and international level. This includes Internet technology while not excluding those without access to this technology;

 Promote volunteering amongst those in schools, colleges, universities and those not in education, employment or training;

 Where the statutory sector organisation directly manages volunteers, it will act on relevant undertakings for the voluntary and community sector.

Partnerships and public bodies managing community participation

Partnership working is an important part of the future of public services and regenerating disadvantaged communities and this should include people in the community.

The statutory and voluntary sector agree to:

C Produce and publish policies for involving volunteers;

C Seek to identify the types of resource being put in to supporting community activity, and the level needed to achieve policy objectives;

C Examine the management of any volunteers directly involved in their work. Where appropriate volunteers should be included in internal communications and their interests should be taken into full account; and

C Establish whether management boards and committees, especially for partnership initiatives, have, or should have, a member specifically representing volunteers who contribute to the initiative.

C Where a board or other decision-making body of any organisation has significant volunteer involvement, it should be established that there is at least one member responsible for volunteer involvement and interests.

Both sectors should work together towards a set of consistent principles on:

C What level of commitment is fair to ask for on a voluntary basis and at what level the commitment required needs to be properly paid;

C Agreeing with individual volunteers in advance minimum levels of commitment and conduct; and

C The reimbursement of expenses where it is agreed that volunteers will be involved, this can be achieved by including this in future grant applications.



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