



Old Mill Foundation

HOLISTIC CANCER SUPPORT CENTRE

Registered charity No: 1125120 Tel: 01792 851553

Volunteer Policy

Including Equal Opportunities Statement

Contents

Section number	Heading	Page number
1	Purpose of policy	1 & 2
2	Process and Procedures	2 & 3
3	Responsibility of Staff (paid and volunteers)	2
4	Responsibility of OMF	3 & 4
5	Recruitment and equal opportunities	4 & 5
6	Costs	5
7	Associated policies	6
8	Policy changes	6
9	Policy dates	6

1. Purpose

1.1 This policy sets out the broad principles for voluntary involvement in the Old Mill Foundation. It is of relevance to all within the organisation, including volunteers, staff, members, and those elected or appointed to positions of responsibility.

This policy is endorsed by the trustees of the Old Mill Foundation and will be reviewed every three years, to ensure that it remains appropriate to the needs of the Old Mill Foundation and its volunteers.

1.2 The Old Mill Foundation recognises the right that people have to participate in the life of their communities through volunteering. It also acknowledges that volunteers contribute in many ways, that their contribution is unique and that volunteering can benefit users of services, staff, local communities and the volunteers themselves. The Old Mill Foundation 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.

The Old Mill Foundation 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.

1.3 Volunteering is an important expression of citizenship as well as an important component of democracy. Volunteers are people who, unpaid and of their own free will, contribute their time, energy and skills to benefit the community.

1.4 Volunteering is a legitimate and crucial activity that is supported and encouraged by the Old Mill Foundation and is not intended to be a substitute for paid employment. The role of volunteers complements but does not replace the role of paid staff.

2. Process and procedures

2.1 Appropriate steps will be taken to ensure that paid staff are clear about the role of volunteers, and to foster good working relationships between paid staff and volunteers.

2.2 Volunteers will not be used during times of industrial action to do the work of paid staff.

2.3 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 work or payment or other benefit for any activity undertaken by the volunteer.

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

2.5 Volunteers, staff and receptionists have an implicit duty to keep attendances, all information, records and views formed about clients entirely confidential, except where it is appropriate to discuss information within the Old Mill Foundation team. No disclosure may be made to any third party, including any member of the client's own family, without the client's consent unless it is required by due process of the law, whether that be by Statute, Statutory instrument, order of any court of competent jurisdiction or howsoever otherwise. No third party, including assistants and members of the client's family, may be present during the course of a consultation with an adult without the client's express consent, which should be recorded.

3. Responsibility of staff (including volunteers)

3.1 All volunteers will have a nominated member of staff or volunteer to offer guidance and advice to help the volunteer carry out tasks effectively. Volunteers will be informed of who to contact to receive support and supervision.

'Volunteer co-ordination' will be explicitly referred to in all relevant job descriptions within the organisation.

3.2 The nominated post holder with overall responsibility for the development of voluntary activities within the organisation is Suzanne Aspland, Charity Manager. This person is responsible for the management and welfare of the organisation's volunteers.

4. Responsibility of OMF

4.1 The organisation aims to treat all volunteers fairly, objectively and consistently. The organisation seeks to ensure that volunteers' views are heard, noted and acted upon promptly and aim for a positive and amicable solution based on the organisation's guidelines for settling differences.

4.2 The designated officer is responsible for handling problems regarding volunteer complaints or conduct and these should be referred to her. In the event of a problem, all relevant facts should be obtained as quickly as possible. Support will be provided by the organisation to the volunteer while it endeavours to resolve the problem in an informal manner. If an informal resolution proves impossible, the organisation's wider disciplinary, grievance or complaints policies and procedures (which include volunteers) will be referred to.

4.2 All volunteers will be made aware of and have access to all the organisation's relevant policies, including those relating to volunteering, health & safety, child protection/Safeguarding and equal opportunities.

The development of training and support for volunteers is a high priority for the organisation in order to equip them with the necessary information and skills to carry out their tasks. It will be the responsibility of the designated person referred to above to see that this training is provided. It is the responsibility of the volunteer to attend relevant training.

Training in the management of volunteers will be provided for those staff with direct responsibility for same.

4.4 The organisation recognises the rights of volunteers to:

- know what is (and what is not) expected of them
- have adequate support in their volunteering
- receive appreciation
- have safe working conditions
- be insured
- know their rights and responsibilities if something goes wrong
- receive relevant out-of-pocket expenses
- receive appropriate training
- be free from discrimination
- be offered the opportunity for personal development

4.5 The organisation expects volunteers to:

- be reliable
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- be honest
- respect confidentiality
- make the most of training and support opportunities
- carry out tasks in a way that reflects the aims and values of the organisation
- work within agreed guidelines
- respect the work of the organisation and not bring it into disrepute
- comply with the organisation's policies and relevant legislation.

4.6 The organisation's liability insurance policies include the activities of volunteers and liability towards them. In the case of therapists, this exists as long as the therapist has current insurance cover for their therapies. The organisation does not insure the volunteer's personal possessions against loss or damage.

5. Recruitment & Selection and Equal Opportunities

- 5.1 The Old Mill Foundation is committed to equal opportunities and believes that volunteering should be open to all regardless of age, gender, ethnicity, ability, religion and political beliefs. 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 which is not relevant to the performance of the volunteering tasks concerned will be disregarded by the organisation in terms of recruitment and selection.
- 5.2 Volunteering opportunities will be widely promoted in ways that makes them accessible to all members of the community.
- 5.3 Volunteers who are considered unsuitable for a particular task will either be offered alternative voluntary involvement with the organisation or referred to the nearest Volunteer Centre.
- 5.4 All volunteers will be asked to produce two references and will be required to undertake either a DBS Enhanced check and/or to meet the requirements of registration with the Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA) Vetting and Barring Scheme if the position involves working with children or vulnerable adults as defined as regulated activity under the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act. They will also be invited to attend an informal interview.
- 5.5 Volunteers will have a clear and concise task description, which will be subsequently reviewed every year. The task description will be prepared in conjunction with the volunteer and the designated person referred to above.
- 5.6 New volunteers will be properly inducted into the organisation.
- 5.7 Volunteers will be properly briefed about the activities to be undertaken and given all the necessary information to enable them to perform with confidence.

6. Costs - Expenses

6.1 The Old Mill Foundation recognises that the reimbursement of expenses incurred in travelling to and from the place of volunteering or in the course of volunteering is important from an equal opportunities point of view. This is necessary to ensure that all individuals have access to voluntary opportunities.

6.2 The organisation's volunteers are able to claim reasonable out of pocket expenses, subject to the completion of relevant claim forms and the production of receipts as evidence of the expenditure. What can be reclaimed from the organisation and the calculation of expenses will be explained to the volunteer before they start any activity likely to give rise to expenses.

6.3 The organisation has a consistent approach to the reimbursement of expenses which are the same for volunteers, staff, etc. and are as approved by the Inland Revenue. It is the responsibility of the designated person referred to above to make volunteers aware of the procedure for the reimbursement of expenses.

6.4 The organisation will provide initial and ongoing training at no cost to the volunteer.

7. Associated policies

Data protection
Disclosure and Baring
Health and Safety
Lone and remote working
Equality, Diversity and Inclusion
Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults
Welsh Language
Financial

Adopted by The Old Mill Foundation Trustees

8. Policy Changes

Reason for change	Section changed	Date changed	New version number
Change in Manager	Section 3	4 th Jan 2025	V2

9. Policy Dates

Trustee approval	2 nd March 2021
Review date	1 st March 2024
Trustee approval	8 th Jan 2025
Review date	7 th Jan 2028

Signed by *ejeyes* Date 12/1/20

Joan Jeyes

Chair of Trustees

