

ACTION HAMPSHIRE VOLUNTEER POLICY

Action Hampshire aims to assist in the creation of an environment where organisations, communities and individuals can flourish and achieve their goals.

We believe that all volunteers provide a valuable contribution, enabling us to govern the organisation; deliver a range of quality services; and promote Action Hampshire.

Action Hampshire is committed to developing the skills and addressing the training needs of its volunteers.

What does Action Hampshire do?

Action Hampshire is a local development charity providing information and guidance and practical assistance to support Not-for-Profit organisations and rural communities in Hampshire.

Volunteering benefits individuals by providing:

- opportunities for new challenges and to learn new skills
- a stepping stone into employment or training opportunities
- opportunities to give something to the community
- opportunities to meet like-minded people
- opportunities to be involved with something interesting and rewarding
- Volunteering can also benefit an individual's health and wellbeing!

Our commitment to you as a volunteer:

- We will respond within 21 working days to your initial contact with us
- We will help our volunteers to learn about and understand the work of Action Hampshire
- We will support all our volunteers to deliver their work
- We will strive to ensure our volunteers represent the community we serve and the people who use our services

Your commitment as a volunteer:

- To work within the organisation's policies and procedures
- To practise good time management and punctuality
- To maintain confidentiality
- To give as much notice as possible for holidays, and notify us if you are sick – we will worry about you!
- To dress appropriately for your role. Please ask if you are unsure.
- To inform the Director of Operations and Resources of any problems or concerns you have about any aspect of the role. Your feedback may help us improve your experience as a volunteer and the experience of others.

Diversity

Various abilities, backgrounds and needs are recognised and valued. We expect all our volunteers to subscribe to the principles and practices of Action Hampshire's Equal Opportunities Policy. You will be shown how to view a copy of this policy when you start.

Insurance

Action Hampshire has a valid insurance policy. You can obtain further information from the Director of Operations and Resources.

Becoming a Volunteer at Action Hampshire

Interviews

All prospective volunteers will have an interview with an appropriate staff member or another volunteer. For example, all intending trustees will have an interview with the Chairman and/or Chief Executive.

Action Hampshire will seek some basic information about the prospective volunteer to ensure that the volunteer's skills, interests and experience match the organisation's needs and requirements.

Selection

Placement will commence when two satisfactory references have been received. References do not need to be from an employer/former employer. If providing a reference is difficult for you, please seek advice from the Director of Operations and Resources.

Where the work is with children or other vulnerable groups, you will be advised that a check with the Disclosure & Barring Service will be carried out and will be asked for proof of identity and other relevant information.

Volunteers must also inform Action Hampshire if at any stage they receive a criminal conviction or are subject to child protection proceedings, or any other circumstances which could impinge on Action Hampshire's credibility, our policies or our insurance.

Action Hampshire does not preclude people who may have previous criminal convictions from volunteering with this organisation, but will look at each individual situation objectively and fairly without compromising our legal duty of care.

In certain areas of work, professional, technical or other qualifications may be needed and volunteers involved in such activity will need to have evidence of relevant qualifications or have confirmation of experience.

Action Hampshire will endeavour to provide, within our means, the equipment or support required to enable those with disabilities to become volunteers.

Problem solving procedures

Action Hampshire is committed to dealing appropriately with any problems that might arise from the volunteer's point of view. While many matters may be dealt with easily in an informal way, those that cannot be will be dealt with as set out in accompanying Complaints Procedure. In this way, issues raised by volunteers will be dealt with consistently, and volunteers will know where they stand at every stage.

Exit interview

Action Hampshire will invite all volunteers to an exit interview at the end of their volunteering placement. In this way we seek to improve the volunteering experience of all individuals.

Working as a Action Hampshire Volunteer

Induction

Before taking up the volunteer placement, in addition to receiving a copy of this Volunteer Policy and a Volunteer Information Pack, all volunteers will undergo a period of induction appropriate to their role.

This will include:

- A written description and explanation of their role as a volunteer
- An introduction to all staff members and volunteers wherever practicable
- A list of Board members
- Copies of relevant policies including this Volunteer policy and those, Confidentiality, Health and Safety, Equal Opportunities and Diversity, and Problem Solving Procedures.
- Essential procedures i.e. timekeeping, rota etc.

Support

All volunteers will be offered:

- Regular opportunities for meeting and discussion with their line manager or other appropriate staff member/volunteer. At these meetings the staff member and volunteer may discuss any matters of concern, review and monitor the current voluntary activity, plan future activity and make appropriate evaluation.
- The opportunity to shadow a more experienced volunteer or staff member
- The opportunity to discuss any training relevant to the volunteer's role.
- Re-imbursement of any out-of-pocket expenses (see later for more detail)
- Any appropriate tools/equipment to enable volunteers to carry out the tasks required.

Action Hampshire will ensure that there is a clear understanding of volunteers' time commitment and no unfair demands of time will be put on them. Action Hampshire recognises the right of a volunteer to say "no" without any embarrassment.

Trial period

There will be a trial period to give the organisation and the volunteer time to discover if they are suited to each other. Should the volunteer not be best suited to the needs of the organisation, an alternative voluntary role may be suggested and support will be given to find this. Likewise, should the volunteer consider that the organisation or the volunteer role does not fulfil his/her requirements, they are free to withdraw without embarrassment. Volunteers must be willing to accept direction by relevant paid staff of the organisation and to abide by Action Hampshire's policies and procedures during the trial period and throughout their entire involvement with the organisation as a Action Hampshire volunteer.

If you have any feedback regarding any element of the volunteer process or policies within the Handbook we would appreciate your feedback. Please contact your line manager in the first instance, if she/he are unavailable contact the Administrator on 01962 857351.