



## The Volunteering Code of Practice

coming together is a beginning

staying together is progress

working together is **SUCCESS**



## What is Wolverhampton's Compact?

It is a commitment between the Statutory Sector and the Voluntary and Community Sector in Wolverhampton which aims to ensure we work better together.

The Wolverhampton Compact Partnership came together in 2004 to develop the Wolverhampton Compact it's Codes of Practice and steer their implementation. Local Compacts are based on the Compact between National Government and the Voluntary & Community Sector that was agreed in 1998.

The Wolverhampton Compact Partnership is made up of:



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### 1.0 Introduction

This Code of Practice sets out an agenda of undertakings for the Statutory and the Voluntary and Community sectors in Wolverhampton on good practice for volunteering. In common with the National Code, the undertakings aim to promote volunteering; value and celebrate the contribution of volunteers; enable and support more people to volunteer; encourage better practice in the management of volunteers; and tackle the barriers to volunteering.

The Volunteering Code of Practice is to be viewed in conjunction with the Wolverhampton Compact.

This Code is one of a number of Codes which describe how the Compact will work in practice and is based on the National Code. This Volunteering Code of Practice has been developed after a lengthy consultation process co-ordinated by Wolverhampton Volunteer Centre with input from local statutory agencies, a variety of voluntary and community organisations and individual volunteers.

### 2.0 Definitions

Community organisations are those entirely or almost entirely made up of volunteers.

Statutory Sector includes organisations which provide public services required by law (e.g. Wolverhampton City Council, the emergency services and health organisations).

Voluntary organisations may involve and manage volunteers, and may provide infrastructure support or funding to volunteers and volunteering groups.

Volunteering is the commitment of time 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.

### **3.0 Fundamental Principles to Volunteering**

There are four fundamental principles to volunteering:

#### **Choice**

Volunteering must be a choice freely made by each individual. Any encouragement to become involved in volunteering should not result in any form of coercion or compulsion. Freedom to volunteer implies freedom not to become involved.

#### **Diversity**

The people in Wolverhampton bring varying qualities and experience to the voluntary and community sector. Diversity is recognised, respected and valued. Volunteering should be open to all, no matter what their background, age, race, sexual orientation, faith...etc. It is recognised that social exclusion barriers can be overcome by skills, experience, confidence and contacts gained while helping others.

#### **Reciprocity**

Giving voluntary time and skills must be recognised as establishing a reciprocal relationship in which the volunteer also receives. Volunteers gain a sense of worthwhile achievement, useful skills, experience and contacts, sociability and fun, and inclusion in the life of the organisation and the wider community.

#### **Recognition**

The value of what volunteers contribute to the organisation, to the community, to the social economy and to wider social objectives, is fundamental to the relationship between volunteers, organisations and statutory policy and practice.

## 4.0 The Volunteering Code of Practice

### 4.1 Statutory Sector

In supporting this code, the Statutory Agencies commit to:

Maintain the volunteering code's good practice principles in its grants, service level agreements, contracts, funding arrangements and all other associated activities; striving to adopt policies which ensure realistic, sustainable and long-term resources to support the maintenance of an efficient and effective volunteering infrastructure in Wolverhampton.

Ensure transparency of the competitive bidding process for statutory sector tenders and contracts for volunteering schemes or with voluntary organisations; and encourage support and understanding between the sectors.

Recognise and support the key strategic role of volunteers on management committees and boards of trustees and promote volunteering as an economic activity which builds skills, experience, employability and social cohesion.

Commission impact assessments for relevant new policies and strategies to gauge their effect on volunteers and volunteering in Wolverhampton and seek to work collaboratively to share information about local and national volunteering issues.

Support media and communication strategies which ensure that volunteer contributions to the work of the public sector and to raising the quality of life are promoted, and support activities which motivate people to volunteer.

## 4.2 Voluntary & Community Sector

In supporting this code, the Voluntary and Community organisations commit to:

All organisations involving volunteers should develop policies and procedures in relation to recruitment, selection and induction of volunteers to ensure a transparent and consistent approach. They should provide volunteers with appropriate support, supervision, appraisal, training and guidance to enable them to perform their voluntary roles.

Value the important role volunteers play as trustees and committee members and recognise the need for appropriate training and support to enable them to carry out their tasks. Recognise that good volunteer management is important and requires the allocation of appropriate resources. Ensure that the work of all staff who recruit, induct, and manage volunteers is recognised and that they receive appropriate training and support.

Recognise that organisations have a duty of care towards volunteers and should conduct regular risk assessments and adopt policies which protect volunteers in respect of health and safety, equal opportunities and public liability insurance. Adopt clear and consistent principles regarding the reimbursement of volunteer expenses (i.e. reimburse actual out-of-pocket expenses against receipts) and maintain appropriate records.

Recognise that, as part of the reciprocal relationship, volunteers should be given thanks and recognition for their contribution. Ensure that the nature and extent of volunteering is acknowledged in annual reports.

## 4.3 Mutual Undertakings

All sectors agree to:

Work together to develop, implement, share and disseminate good practice in volunteering, recognising that effective volunteer management requires investment and commitment.

Seek to ensure that all relevant proposed legislation, regulations, guidance and practice are checked for impact on volunteering and community activity; and that volunteers are encouraged to contribute to relevant policy making processes, internal decision making and responses to Government legislation.

Comply with all relevant legislation.

Work together to identify and remove barriers to volunteering and community involvement and actively seek to enhance public perceptions of volunteering through greater publicity, particularly of volunteers' achievements.

Recognise that volunteering is of value to the community, and encourage partnership working between organisations to improve and expand the variety of volunteering activities offered, minimise duplication of services and maximise value for money.

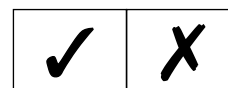
### Appendix 1: Management of Volunteers

The following is a good practice checklist from the National Volunteering Compact Code.

You should note that these are basic summary points, with further guidance available from other sources.

They apply to organisations where paid members of staff manage volunteers, not to community groups, however they can be adapted accordingly.

## Management of Volunteers



<b>A</b> Prior to recruitment, be clear about why you want/need a volunteer.		
<b>B</b> Provide the volunteer with a clear role/task description, identifying anticipated requirement(s) of the organisation.		
<b>C</b> Provide the volunteer with an initial induction and training programme.		
<b>D</b> Provide the volunteer with appropriate line management.		
<b>E</b> Add volunteers to organisation charts. Encourage volunteers to participate in the organisation's wider decision making process.		
<b>F</b> Monitor and acknowledge the contribution that volunteers make to the organisation, to the wider public, to funders and to other volunteers.		
<b>G</b> Ask the volunteer what they seek from their placement and share with the volunteer what you want. Remember any placement should be by mutual consent.		
<b>H</b> Always offer to reimburse out-of-pocket expenses. These normally include travel and lunch. Where a placement is away from home, this might also include accommodation and a subsistence allowance.		
<b>I</b> Ensure that Health and Safety standards are in place and applied equally to all employees (And volunteers). Insurance policies should be extended to cover volunteers.		
<b>J</b> Provide opportunities for volunteers to acquire or develop new or existing skills and assist volunteers who want to gain accreditation towards recognised qualifications.		
<b>K</b> Volunteers should not be recruited to fill in the place of paid staff. This could be perceived as exploitation of the volunteer and deprivation of someone's livelihood.		
<b>L</b> Ensure that the work and contribution of the volunteer adds quality and value to the organisations' aims and objectives.		
<b>M</b> Ensure that Equal Opportunities and/or diversity policies are in place and applied equally to volunteers. Examine the organisation's ways of working for anything that may pose a barrier for some members.		
<b>N</b> Encourage and promote a diverse range of employees at all levels. This will help volunteers of different ethnic groups, ages, disabilities...etc. feel welcome.		
<b>O</b> In order to attract volunteers from groups that the organisation has previously failed to reach, it may be helpful to approach those groups/people directly to establish what would make volunteering with the organisation more appealing to them.		

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[www.wolverhamptoncompact.co.uk](http://www.wolverhamptoncompact.co.uk)

Copies of the Wolverhampton Compact and Codes of Practice are available from:

**[www.wolverhamptoncompact.co.uk](http://www.wolverhamptoncompact.co.uk)**

If you require this document in any other format or community language, please contact Saffi Price at the above address / telephone.