

Introduction to Volunteering Onboarding Document



**DUNDEE VOLUNTEER
& VOLUNTARY ACTION**

Charity Number SC00487
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Introduction to volunteering in Children and Families services

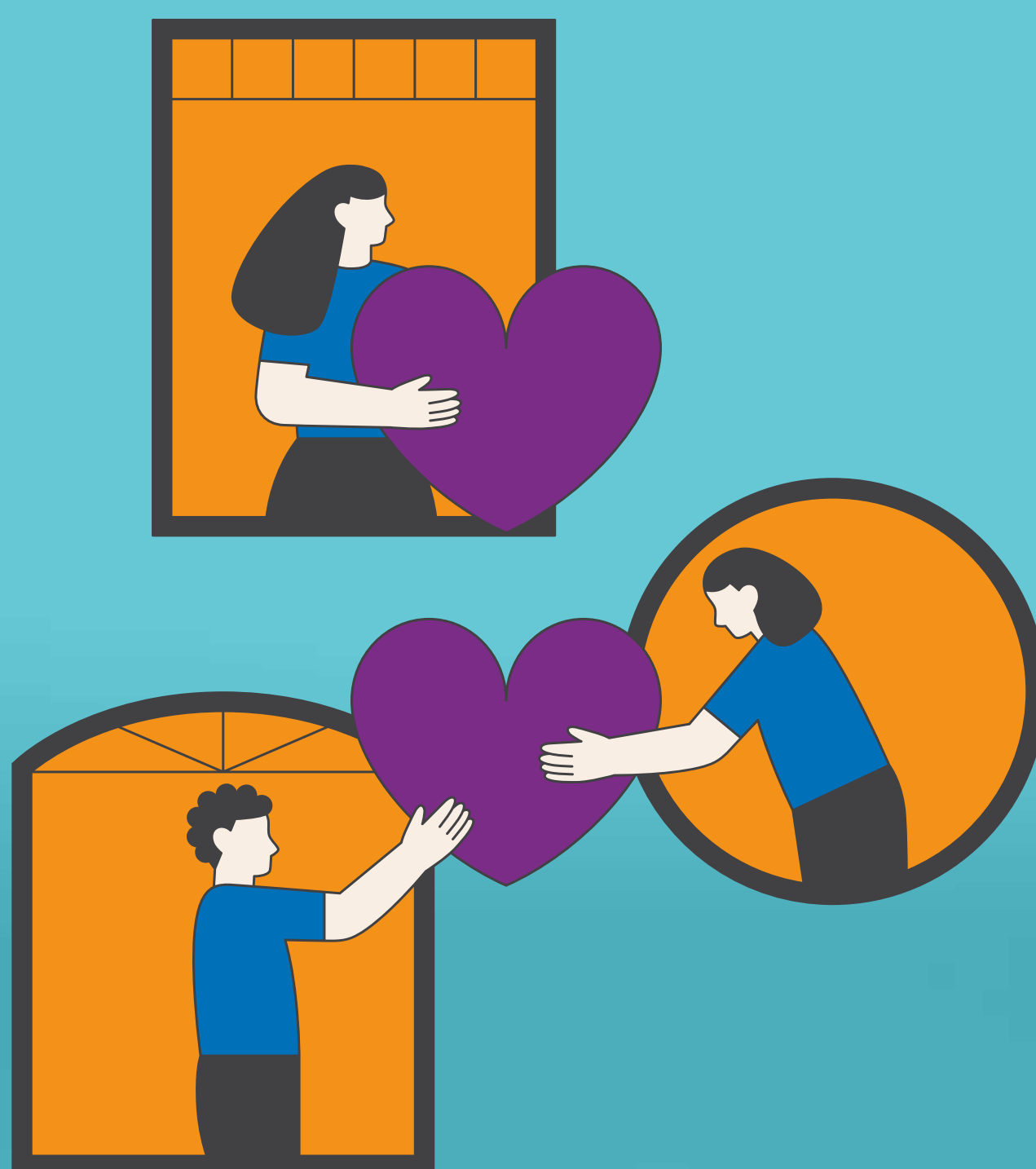
Welcome to this guide on what to expect with volunteering in Children and Families services. We have put together this introduction for your information. Please ensure you familiarise yourself with this, and then there are a few questions at the end.

Volunteering is the giving of time for no financial reward to benefit a third party, usually with agreed roles, responsibilities and management arrangements, but this is essentially formal volunteering. Many also volunteer on an informal basis, for example, walking a neighbour's dog, babysitting for the family or picking up shopping for someone.

In Children and Families services, we would not accomplish what we do without volunteers like yourself. We involve volunteers in our projects and value the contribution that they make to the delivery of our services. We recognise volunteers as part of our team and appreciate the diversity of skills, experience and fresh ideas that are brought with each person. We whole-heartedly support the principle of equal opportunities and strive to provide a non-discriminatory environment for all sections of the community.



We aim to provide volunteering opportunities that are enjoyable, rewarding and worthwhile and help you to fulfil your reasons to volunteer; be it building on and gaining new skills, offering your existing experience to the benefit of others, improving your employability prospects or expanding your horizons.



Thank you for getting involved in volunteering. By gifting your time, skills, energy and experience you will be helping children and families, the organisations that support them and the communities that they contribute to.



To help you fully understand all the benefits
we will start with a few -



As a volunteer;

- Gaining of new skills, new training and definitely new experiences
- Your learning from the experiences can help you identify skills that are transferable
- Volunteering and what you have done within your volunteer role should be included in a job application – many applications ask for experience in paid and unpaid roles
- Getting to try out an area that you may be considering studying and/or working in
- Sharing your knowledge and skills
- Being part of an environment with a diverse range of people
- Gaining a sense of wellbeing by helping others
- Giving back to a community or organisation you've been supported from



"I first got into volunteering after experiencing the impact of support services myself. As a teenager, I used a service that helped me through a difficult time in my life. That experience stayed with me, and when I was 16, I decided I wanted to give something back. Since then, volunteering has been a regular part of my life, and now, at 34, it is something I truly value."

Stories from volunteers

"Volunteering brings me a great sense of purpose. It allows me to help others and see people grow in confidence and strength. It is rewarding to be part of someone's journey and to know that I might have made a difference, even in the smallest way. I love helping people and being able to give back makes me feel happy and fulfilled."



For Children and Families;

- Ability to meet new people in a safe environment
- Have opportunities to chat to someone out with your immediate circle
- Improve your sense of wellbeing
- Have more confidence in attending groups in the community
- Become less anxious about going to appointments or new places
- Have opportunities to try out new things

"It was so nice having someone come and spend time with me, I didn't feel judged and she helped me through a lot of issues I was having with my daughter, she attended meetings at school with me and this kept me calm and comfortable."



"She understood the issues as she also had a child in a similar situation, she was a great support filling out forms too, she just knew what to write when I found it all so overwhelming. We are still in touch through text and she's offered to help me out if I ever need someone to talk to."

Having a befriender allowed me to try things I would have never done on my own which really helped to boost my confidence"



For the organisation;

- Can often expand their groups to more people
- Can put on more activities
- Volunteering can really help increase conversations and reduce social isolation
- Learn from everyone involved
- Increase their engagement in the community
- Have a more diverse range of activities

Quote from Dundee Women's Aid;

"It is so rewarding to see the difference in our service users as they progress on their journey and how they grow in confidence by being part of a group, or with just that little bit extra support from a befriender, but also how our volunteers can develop their skills and experience to enrich their own lives as well as that of the women in our service."



A layout of what Volunteering IS and what it IS NOT -



Volunteering IS ;

- Volunteering must be a **choice** freely made by each individual.
- Volunteering should welcome **diversity, be accessible** and be open to all.
- Volunteering should be **mutually beneficial** for both the volunteer and the organisation.

Volunteering IS NOT ;

- An internship
- Work Experience or a paid placement
- Mandatory Work Activity, as volunteers should have the freedom of choice to participate

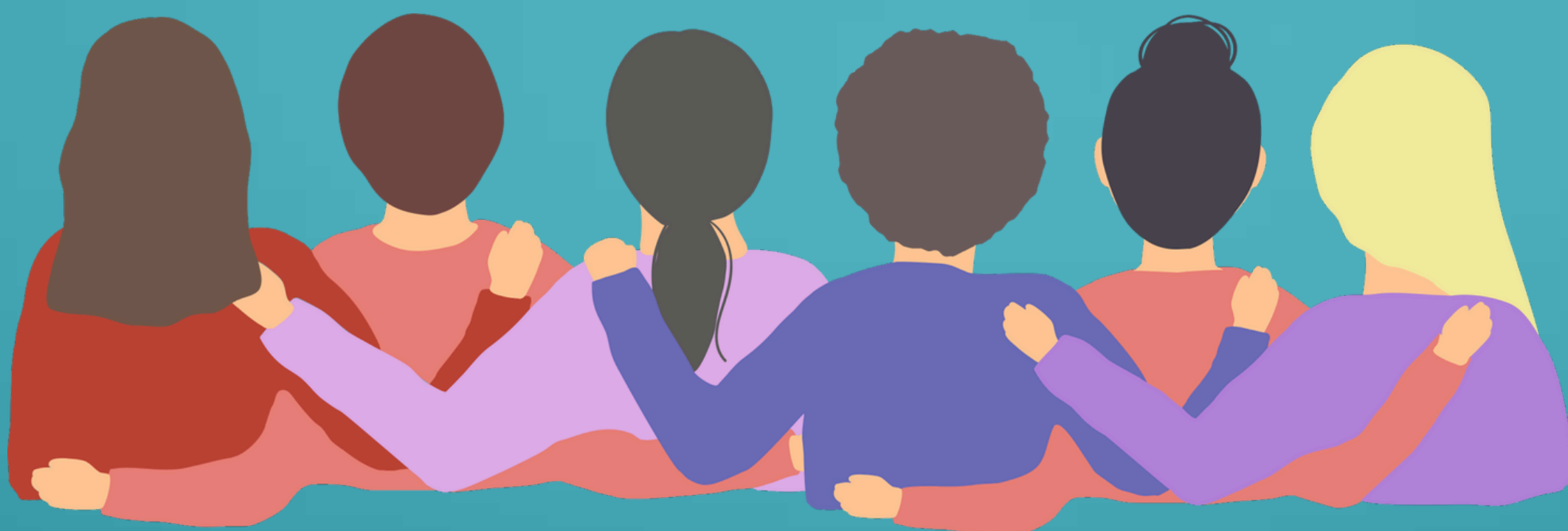
All the services will consider if what they are asking a volunteer to do is suitable within the context of a volunteer role. For example;

Volunteering IS ;

- Providing social and emotional support
- Engaging in fun activities
- Supporting staff in group activities
- Maintaining professional boundaries
- Providing practical support

Volunteering IS NOT ;

- Providing personal care
- Administering medication
- Managing money for a Supported Person
- Being 'on call' for a Supported Person
- Replacing a staff role



The Volunteer Charter

Some organisations have The Volunteer Charter, which sets out the ten key principles which help to underpin good relations within a volunteering environment. It is open to any individual, group or organisation from any sector who either involve volunteers, or influence decisions on how volunteering is resourced or reflected in policy. It was written by Volunteer Scotland and the Scottish Trades Union Congress (STUC).

We believe that this charter supports the foundations for a good volunteer experience and gives individuals, groups and organisations the opportunity to express their support for the spirit of volunteering while upholding the principles of good volunteer practice.

**VOLUNTEER
CHARTER**



Why do we need this Charter?

The key goal of this Charter is to ensure good relations between workers and volunteers, and to ensure that other stakeholders agree, and that volunteer roles are acceptable.

The values that underpin this charter are:

- Recognising people as assets – in having value and meaning
- Building on people's skills and experience
- Promoting actions that mutually benefit, and are respectful and trusting
- Building and supporting strong social networks



The principles of volunteering (see next page) are that volunteer activity of any kind is undertaken with free will, is not for payment, and seeks community benefits.



1st Principle

Any volunteer activity is a freely made choice of the individual. If there is any compulsion, threat of sanctions or force, then any such activity is not volunteering.

3rd Principle

Effective structures should be put in place to support, train and develop volunteers and their collaboration with paid workers.

5th Principle

Volunteers should not carry out duties formerly carried out by paid workers nor should they be used to disguise the effects of non-filled vacancies or cuts in services.

7th Principle

Volunteers should not be used to reduce contract costs nor be a replacement for paid workers in competitive tenders or procurement processes.

9th Principle

Volunteers and paid workers should be given the opportunity to contribute to the development and monitoring of volunteering policies and procedures, including the need for policies that resolve any issues or conflicts that may arise.

2nd Principle

Volunteers should receive no financial reward for their time however out of pocket expenses should be covered; no one should be prevented from volunteering due to their income.

4th Principle

Volunteers and paid workers should be able to carry out their duties in safe, secure and healthy environments that are free from harassment, intimidation, bullying, violence and discrimination.

6th Principle

Volunteers should not be used instead of paid workers or undercut their pay and conditions of service nor undertake the work of paid workers during industrial disputes.

8th Principle

Volunteers should not be used to bypass minimum wage legislation nor generate profit for owners.

10th Principle

Volunteer roles should be designed and negotiated around the needs and interests of volunteers, involving organisations and wider stakeholders. Finding legitimacy and avoiding exploitation through consensus depends on mutual trust and respect.

The Volunteer Charter





We will;-

- Always treat you with respect, consideration and appreciation.
- Ensure that you have a clear idea of your responsibilities and never expect you to complete a task you are not comfortable with.
- Recognise that volunteers require satisfying work and personal development and will seek to help you meet these needs, as well as providing you with an induction, training and ongoing support for you to do your role effectively.
- Update you on how your contribution has made a difference.
- Expect that staff at all levels, will work positively with volunteers and, where appropriate, will actively seek to involve them in their work.
- Recognise that the management of volunteers requires designated responsibilities within specific posts.
- Not introduce volunteers to replace paid staff

When will you start volunteering?

Reading through the onboarding documents is the first stage. You don't need to do them in a set order but you do need to answer the questions included at the end of each -

- Introduction to Volunteering (this document)
- Developing your Trauma Skilled Practice (this is online training developed by NHS)
- Child Protection
- Data Protection and Confidentiality
- Equality and Diversity
- Health and Safety

Whilst you read and learn about elements that keep volunteers and families safe and learn about the procedures that organisations have put in place, your organisations will be working on what comes next. This will include carrying out a PVG request if your role requires it. PVG stands for Protecting Vulnerable Groups and is run by Disclosure Scotland. It's a membership scheme that ensures people who are unsuitable can't work with children or protected adults.

You cannot start volunteering until the PVG process is completed, but you can read all the onboarding materials in preparation and watch the NHS training.



What happens next?

You will meet a Volunteer Coordinator for an informal chat about the organisation and about the role/s that are open for volunteering. This will be two-way so you'll have a chance to ask questions too; don't be worried about what you ask, we want you to feel relaxed and look forward to your volunteering experience.

When you start you will sign a volunteer agreement and be given a full induction, meet staff members, other volunteers and hear about key information that you will need to know about the building or external places that you will go when you are volunteering. You will be told about training that you can undertake. You will provide details such as contact information, emergency contact, and anything that you feel is important for others to know about you.

You can ask for this information in writing or a format that helps you understand.



Then it's all about your role, which will have a clear description of;

- what it involves
- who you are likely to meet
- how to claim expenses. A Volunteer Expenses form will be provided to you and your named contact will advise how and when to complete it. Please keep receipts to submit as proof to support your expense claims.
- training that's available
- who is your named person who will always be your first point of contact for everything associated with your volunteering.

You will also learn about the limits or boundaries of your role and how to manage expectations accordingly. After all, relationships can be complicated. Having a clear understanding of what is expected of you in your role and what is not, will ensure;

- the protection of yourself and safety of people you support
- a safe and consistent setting, in which relationships with others can positively develop
- relevant policy documents can be obtained from your named person



What if you are running late or can't attend?

You will be given a contact number to let people know. We understand that unexpected things come up and if you can give us plenty of notice, we can be prepared.

Informal and Supported Volunteering

Some of our volunteers may prefer to take part in group or one-off activities supported by a staff member. This type of activity will provide you with an opportunity to gain skills and confidence and can also be used as a progression to formal volunteering.

Your Opinion Counts

We will offer you fair, honest and timely feedback on your contribution. Similarly, the volunteering journey is important and hearing about your experience will help us and we will encourage feedback from you. We welcome and value involvement in helping make decisions on volunteering and identifying how we can improve the quality of our practice.

