



*Trinity Safe Space*

working with



## **Trinity Safe Space Volunteer Policy (including volunteers in our work)**

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### **Introduction**

Trinity Safe Space is committed to the vision of a strong, creative, responsive, empowered voluntary, community and faith sector (VCF) that improves the quality of life for the people and communities locally and nationally.

Trinity Safe Space recognises the importance of a consistent approach to supporting the VCF sector and this policy aims to support the Trinity Safe Space 's work in this area.

### **Purpose of Document**

- To provide a foundation on which our involvement of volunteers will be based
- To offer staff a step-by-step guide for how to involve members of the local community in their work
- To give a cohesive and consistent set of guidelines to ensure that volunteers are fully supported during their volunteer work
- To help ensure fairness and consistency when involving a diverse group of people. Being able to refer to a written policy ensures that decisions are not made on an ad-hoc basis.

### **Definition**

A '**Volunteer**' is defined as someone who commits time and energy for the benefit of others, who does so freely, through personal choice and without expectation of financial reward, except for the payment of actual out of pocket expenses (*DOH*).

In Trinity Safe Space a volunteer is a person who makes a commitment to support the work of staff in order to enhance the provision of services. This typically includes people volunteering in local communities or individual projects of Trinity Safe Space, covering a wide range of duties according to the needs of the service. **It is vital that volunteers are not used to replace the employment of paid members of staff.**

### **Why Include Volunteers?**

There are many reasons to involve volunteers. These include:

- Volunteers can bring a different perspective to our work, often one that reflects the views of the local community
- They can bring credibility to an organisation – giving their time for free suggests that the work must be of value
- Volunteers can help to extend services we currently offer
- Volunteers can bring a fresh approach which includes diversity of knowledge, experience and skills

### **Opportunities**

A range of volunteering opportunities will become available within Trinity Safe Space. These will include:

- Befriending
- Administrating
- Delivering/helping with deliveries
- Supporting fundraising and fundraising events
- Promoting Trinity Safe Space
- Assisting with English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL)

### **Recruitment**

A variety of culturally sensitive approaches will be used to recruit volunteers to encourage a wide range of people from different backgrounds. We will:

- Raise awareness of volunteering opportunities through the local voluntary, community and faith sector
- Display the volunteer opportunities working directly in the local community in libraries and other public buildings locally
- Use word of mouth
- Enter our volunteering opportunities on the Trinity Safe Space website
- Establish links with schools, colleges, local companies, and places of worship
- Use existing Trinity Safe Space publications
- Promote volunteering opportunities through pro-active press releases to local community groups and borough-wide press e.g. The St Helens Star, The Widnes Weekly News
- Arrange events targeted at specific communities in partnership with community groups and display information in faith group venues

- Take opportunities to exhibit at community events and sites (e.g. community events and fayres, Community Forum meetings)
- Actively encourage diversity by targeting those from excluded groups by using interpreters, including BSL signers, use established links for contacting groups such as teenage parents, refugees, asylum seekers and homeless, travellers and adolescents

### **Selection and Screening of Volunteers**

It is essential that our system for recruiting volunteers is transparent and robust. From the perspective of the potential volunteer, it should be seamless. To ensure this happens, it is essential that there are good communication links between the Trustee Board and named people who would be responsible for the day – to – day supervision of the volunteer.

### **Criminal Convictions**

It is essential that all prospective volunteers who are likely to have contact with members of the public undergo a DBS (Disclosure Barring Service) check before beginning a volunteering role. Under the provision of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act (1974) Exemption Act volunteers are required to declare all previous convictions. This information will be treated in strict confidence and may not necessarily prejudice the prospective volunteers' application to be involved with our work.

### **Induction and Training of Volunteers**

Appropriate training and support for volunteers is vital to ensure the success of the placement.

The Trustee Board will provide a mandatory induction prior to the placement beginning. This will include:

- A brief overview of Trinity Safe Space
- Introduction to volunteering – expectations of the volunteer and Trinity Safe Space
- Confidentiality and Volunteer Agreement
- Safeguarding
- Equality and diversity
- How to complete an expenses claim
- Volunteers will be supplied with ID badges and will be expected to wear these whenever they are carrying out Trinity Safe Space duties
- Current list of contact names and phone numbers

As part of the induction, the Trustee Board will clarify individual training needs and will discuss with the named people how these will be met. The same training opportunities that are offered to any staff should be available for volunteers to enable them to carry out their specific role.

Their named person will provide all volunteers with an induction timetable in the area they will be volunteering. All volunteers will be expected to attend any mandatory training which applies to paid staff.

If the volunteer role will involve use of own transport, the named person must take a copy of the volunteer's driving licence and insurance document. It is the volunteer's responsibility to be insured for their duties and a letter from the insurance company addressed to the Trinity Safe Space should be submitted before duties begin. Any reasonable costs incurred should be reimbursed by Trinity Safe Space. The named person should carry out annual checks of licence and insurance cover.

### **Retention and On-Going Support**

It is essential that volunteers are made to feel welcome and that their contribution is recognised.

- In addition to the Trustee Board, the volunteer will have a named person in their area of work with whom they may discuss any issues relating to their voluntary work
- Every six months, the volunteer and their named person will meet to discuss progress and any other issues. This will be called a Joint Progress Review and, during that session, both parties will agree a statement for what their input will be over the coming six months, which will include any training needs. The statement will be signed and dated by both parties
- It is essential that the volunteer knows what is expected of them and works within the boundaries of their Volunteer Agreement at all times.

### **Guidelines for Trustee Board/Staff**

It is essential that volunteers, organisations and members of the public are treated with respect and made to feel like a member of the Trinity Safe Space family. To enable this to happen, the following guidelines are suggested for Trustee Board/staff members to consider:

They should read this policy prior to contacting the volunteer.

- The Trustee Board/staff member should contact the volunteer to introduce him or herself and discuss what their first few hours, as a volunteer will entail. You should also ask what support will be required for the volunteer to contribute e.g. interpreter, signer, a companion to accompany them, a fully accessible venue etc.
- The Trustee Board/staff member should ask what format the volunteer would like relevant documents and information (i.e. via e-mail, hard copy).
- The Trustee Board/staff member should then provide relevant information e.g. a map, agendas, minutes, terms of reference in plain English at least a week prior to the volunteer's initial involvement.

On the day:

- A Trustee Board/staff member should be there to greet the volunteer
- Volunteers should be offered refreshments
- Expenses for travel (45p per mile / reimbursement of bus fares / lunch costs) should be reimbursed in cash once the volunteer has completed and signed the expenses claim form (see 'Payment of Expenses' section)

At all times:

- Introductions to all members of the team should be made
- Jargon and acronyms should be avoided and should be explained if other people use them

At the end of each session:

- The volunteer should be thanked for their involvement and contribution

- The volunteer should be included in correspondence and feedback relating to their contribution e.g. minutes from meetings
- A verbal understanding between the volunteer and the Trustee Board/staff member regarding their future involvement should be agreed

### **Payment of Expenses**

It is essential that volunteers are not out-of-pocket because of their voluntary work with Trinity Safe Space and all reasonable expenses will be paid. This includes:

- An allowance for petrol (45p per mile) if using their own transport
- Public transport costs will be reimbursed with receipts
- Car parking fees to the value of the time required to complete the voluntary activity may be reimbursed with receipts
- In exceptional circumstances, if an individual is unable to travel by public transport and does not have their own means of transport, taxi fares may be reimbursed
- Reimbursement of reasonable lunch expenses, should their volunteering activity last a minimum of 4 hours daily or lunch may be provided
- Any other reasonable and necessary expenses to be considered
- All volunteers should be encouraged to claim expenses. This helps us to measure the cost of the service.

Receipts must accompany any expenses submitted, other than mileage. Volunteers are encouraged to submit an expenses claim form regularly, i.e. weekly or monthly (dependant on need), to their named Trustee Board/staff member who will process it. Receipts submitted more than three months after the voluntary work was completed will not be processed unless there have been exceptional circumstances e.g. long-term illness.

### **Risk Management**

Every person has the right to work in a safe environment. To enable this to happen, volunteers are covered in the following ways:

- Volunteers are covered in the Trinity Safe Space insurance policy (in the Public and Employees Liability Cover) for the role they have agreed to carry out
- Volunteers have the same responsibilities and guarantees as employees in terms of health and safety

### **Grievance Procedure**

Any unacceptable behaviour or manner, fraud or breach of confidentiality will be referred to the relevant Trustee Board member. Every option will be explored to resolve the situation but on occasions it may become necessary to discontinue the service of a volunteer.

If a volunteer has a grievance with a member of staff their first point of contact will be the Trustee Board

Emphasis is placed on resolving differences through informal discussion but if this is not possible an appeal can be made, in writing, to the Chair of the Trustee Board of Trinity Safe Space.

If a volunteering relationship is agreed to be exhausted or there has been a breakdown of trust, all efforts will be made to signpost the volunteer to other opportunities outside the Trinity Safe Space