



VOLUNTEER POLICY

Introduction

Bavs is an independent voluntary organisation supporting, informing, representing and providing services to organisations and groups in our communities.

- Bavs is committed to listening, respecting and understanding local communities;
- Bavs helps communities to recognise gaps and to solve the problems that they identify;
- Bavs facilitates groups and enhances the capacities of individuals to support their community.

In line with this mission Bavs seeks to involve volunteers to:

- provide support to our charity shops and community transport service,
- ensure our services meet the needs of our clients,
- provide new skills and perspectives,
- become active within Bavs, and
- increase our contact with the local communities we serve.

Purpose

Bavs recognises that volunteers are invaluable members of our organisation and that they can make a major contribution to the objectives of Bavs. This document sets out the principles, practices and procedures that Bavs will follow in the appointment and management of volunteers.

This policy is endorsed by the Board of Trustees and will be reviewed regularly to ensure that it remains appropriate to the needs of Bavs and our volunteers. To ensure fairness and consistency this policy should be followed when making decisions relating to volunteers.

Principles

Bavs

- recognises that voluntary work brings benefits to volunteers themselves, to service users and to paid staff.
- will ensure that volunteers are properly integrated into the organisational structure and that mechanisms are in place for them to contribute to the organisation's work.
- will not introduce volunteers to replace paid staff.
- expects that staff at all levels will work positively with volunteers and, where appropriate, will actively seek to involve them in their work.
- recognises that volunteers require satisfying work and personal development and will seek to help volunteers meet these needs, as well as providing the training for them to do their work effectively.
- will endeavour to identify and cover the costs of involving volunteers.
- recognises that the management of volunteers requires designated responsibilities within specific posts.

Recruitment

All prospective volunteers will be invited to an informal meeting to find out what they would like to do, their skills and how best their potential might be used. The available volunteer tasks will be described and explained to ensure they fit with the volunteers' aims for personal development.

Bavs is firmly committed to diversity in all areas of work. It will profit from diverse cultures and perspectives, and diversity will make the organisation more effective in meeting the needs of all its stakeholders.

In line with this, Bavs is committed to equal opportunities and believes that volunteering should be open to all regardless of age, gender, ethnicity, ability, religion and political beliefs.

All prospective volunteers will be asked to complete a registration form and provide the contact details of two referees.

If the volunteer position requires working with children or vulnerable adults the individual may be required to undertake a Protecting Vulnerable Groups (PVG) check or other checks to meet statutory requirements.

Induction and Training

All volunteers will be provided with an induction regarding their role, the site/locality and the organisation. This will include, where appropriate, a guided tour and specific reference to first aid, health and safety, security precautions, and emergency plans.

Volunteers will be properly briefed about the activities to be undertaken and given all the necessary information to enable them to perform with confidence.

Volunteers will be invited to all volunteer gathering days as well as New Volunteer Induction/Training Days held throughout the year.

All volunteers will be supported in their personal development and Bavs will look to provide training for volunteers wherever possible.

A process will be developed in order to give formal recognition of the contribution made by volunteers (e.g. articles in newspapers, on website, thank you letters). We welcome volunteer suggestions on this area of collective celebration.

The Volunteer's Voice

Volunteers are encouraged to express their views about matters concerning Bavs and its work. You are invited to share your views and ideas in team meetings, and also directly with the volunteer coordinator.

Problem Solving

Bavs aims to treat all volunteers fairly, objectively and consistently.

In our shops, the shop manager is responsible for handling any problems regarding volunteer complaints or conduct in the first instance. They will seek to ensure that the volunteer's views are heard, noted and acted upon promptly, and will aim for a positive and amicable solution.

Volunteers also have the right to discuss any concerns or complaints directly with the Bavs volunteer coordinator.

Any problems that are not resolved by the shop manager or volunteer coordinator will be referred to the chief officer.

Insurance

All volunteers are covered by Bavs's insurance policy whilst they are on the premises or engaged in any work on behalf of Bavs. A copy of the insurance certificate is displayed in the Bavs Charity shops and at the Bavs office in Duns.

Bavs does not insure the personal possessions of volunteers against loss or damage.

Health and Safety

Volunteers are covered by Bavs's Health and Safety Policy, a copy of which is given to volunteers during their induction.

Confidentiality

Volunteers will be bound by the same requirements for confidentiality as paid staff.

Volunteers will be advised of the need for confidentiality where they have access to sensitive Bavs information which is not public knowledge. A signed agreement may be required for particularly sensitive projects.

Responsibilities

The Volunteer Coordinator is responsible for overseeing the involvement of volunteers within Bavs.

With regard to volunteers, Bavs will:

- Respect your skills, dignity and individual needs;
- Provide adequate information, training and assistance for you to be able to meet your responsibilities and tasks, as agreed in the role description;
- Accept that you may be unable to attend occasionally at your agreed time and be willing to be flexible where possible;
- Accept that the circumstances of volunteers may change and be willing to discuss changing availability or the termination of a volunteer agreement;
- Ensure that you have satisfactory supervisory support and provide you with feedback on your performance;

Bavs asks that volunteers be willing to:

- Help Bavs achieve our Mission and objectives and share our charitable goals;

- Respect the standards of Bavs in terms of reliability, courtesy and behaviour;
- Abide by the policies and procedures adhered to by Bavs and as laid out in the Volunteer Handbook;
- Accept that Bavs requires reliable volunteers who are able and willing to work at specified times;
- Inform the relevant member of staff or contact person if you are unable to attend, giving as much notice as possible if you are unable to continue volunteering;
- Raise with either your supervisor/shop manager and/or the Volunteer Co-ordinator any concerns you have relating to the work being undertaken;
- Keep your supervisor/shop manager informed of all work you carry out on behalf of Bavs;
- Understand that volunteers and staff are considered to be partners working alongside each other in implementing Bavs's goals and the fulfilment of its purpose.

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