

# POWYS CHALLENGE

Registered Charity No: 1091494 Company No: 4350654

## VOLUNTEER POLICY

**Powys Challenge believes that the involvement of people from the local community as volunteers can make a major contribution to crime reduction and the re-integration of offenders in the community.**

- Volunteers bring a wide range of skills and talents to this work, supported and encouraged by Powys Challenge.
- Volunteers who learn about, and become involved in the Criminal Justice system help to disseminate accurate information within their communities and contribute to a reduction in the fear of crime the challenging of stereotypes and prejudice and the development of understanding and concern
- In a sparsely populated area, volunteer involvement can extend and enhance the scope of the work achieved by the statutory agencies.
- Volunteers can actively assist clients to access resources which may then be used to enhance their personal development and potential.

**\*The Aim of Powys Challenge is to involve local communities in crime reduction, offender rehabilitation and community safety. It achieves this by recruiting, selecting and training volunteers who are then deployed to work with professional staff in traditional volunteering role and in specialist areas.**

### Commitment

Powys Challenge will invest resources into good quality management of volunteers. This investment is contingent upon a reasonable level of benefits from the volunteers to the work of Powys Challenge.

### Good Practice

- Volunteers must only carry out appropriate tasks (i.e. volunteers should not be used to replace paid staff)
- Volunteers provide practical support and assistance (but must not undertake tasks for which professional training is required)
- Selection of volunteers must be carried out under Powys Challenge's Equal Opportunities Policy – that is, no one should be excluded on grounds of race, creed, gender, ethnic background, sexuality, disability, social background, age\* or criminal convictions\*\*
- All volunteers must receive a high standard of introductory training to equip them for their tasks.
- All volunteers must receive regular support and supervision from Powys Challenge staff as well as appropriate staff from statutory agencies
- All volunteers must be offered proper support services – including expenses, on-going training, support groups, grievance procedures etc
- Staff in Agencies who work with volunteers must receive adequate training and support to enable them to use volunteers effectively
- Volunteer tasks should be specific and time limited and be aimed at promoting self-confidence and self-reliance in the client
- All offenders, defendants, those at risk of offending and their families should have equal access to a volunteer, subject to a risk assessment, in accordance with Powys Challenge's Equal Opportunities Policy
- The opportunity for a client to receive assistance from a volunteer should not be based on an individual staff member's commitment to using volunteers.

- \* Lower age limit for volunteering is currently 18
- \*\* A criminal record does not necessarily preclude a prospective volunteer. However, people with certain convictions are necessarily excluded (see Powys Challenge's Policy on Volunteers with Previous Criminal Convictions)

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## VOLUNTEER POLICY - METHODOLOGY

### Volunteer Recruitment

Recruitment will be undertaken by a variety of means in order to ensure that:

- volunteers are representative of the communities of Powys and
- that recruitment is in accordance with Powys Challenge's Equal Opportunities Policy.

All volunteers must provide two satisfactory references and undergo a Criminal Record Check (see Policy for Volunteers with Previous Criminal Convictions).

### Volunteer Training

Powys Challenge believes that all volunteers should receive basic training to a recognised standard. The current standard is that which enables volunteers to achieve 2 Credits at Level 2 through the Open College Network by undertaking the Volunteer Core Training programme. Volunteers will not be required to apply for these credits but must have achieved the standard before being accredited as volunteers.

Training for all volunteers will include

- instruction on Powys Challenge Policies: Confidentiality, Equal Opportunities, Health and Safety, Grievance and Code of Conduct and others as they are developed,
- and the aims and objectives of Powys Challenge.

Where volunteers work ONLY as drivers for group work, they are required only to be given training in Health and Safety, Confidentiality, Role Boundaries, Equal Opportunities, Project Administration and Policies.

Volunteers will be provided with job descriptions and person specifications.

### Volunteer placements and tasks

Powys Challenge believes that volunteer roles should be carefully defined; that they should never be exploited and that they should not be used as substitutes for paid, statutory agency staff. The roles of volunteers should be complementary to those of paid staff. Volunteers should be represented on the Advisory Committee of Powys Challenge and contribute to the direction of the work of the organisation.

Placements will match the volunteers' skills, talents and interests with the needs of the clients.

Where Probation Officers and Social Workers are managing the work done with offenders, defendants or those at risk of offending, then the work of volunteers should be directly managed and supervised by those case officers.

### Rights and Responsibilities

**Volunteers, Powys Challenge, partnership agencies and clients all have both rights and responsibilities – and these are reciprocal. These are listed below.**

**Powys Challenge, and partnership agencies have responsibilities to volunteers in the following areas:**

## **Training**

- Effective initial training.
- On-going training and support groups.
- Specialist training as appropriate.
- Information about available resources.

## **Support and supervision**

- Access to appropriate information about the client.
- Access to trained staff when required.
- Regular case supervision.
- Personal support.
- To be listened to.
- To have their opinions acknowledged and respected.
- Access to a complaints procedure.

## **Personal**

- Confidentiality within the organisation.
- Privacy at home.
- Anti-discriminatory practice.

## **Practical**

- Personal insurance.
- Public liability insurance.
- Travel expenses.
- Subsistence allowance when working for more than 4 hours continuously away from home base.

## **In addition, there is a responsibility to**

- Treat volunteers with respect and dignity in line with the Powys Challenge's Equal Opportunities Policy.
- To give clear instructions and boundaries for tasks.
- Ensure that volunteers know to whom they are responsible for each piece of work.
- Contribute to the personal development of volunteers.
- Do everything possible to make sure that volunteering is rewarding and enjoyable.

## **Volunteer Rights**

- Those listed above as the responsibilities of Powys Challenge and partnership agencies.
- In addition volunteers always have the right of refusal.
- To receive a Job Description and Person Specification.
- To receive appropriate references from the organisation on request

## **Volunteers have responsibilities to their clients in the following areas:**

- To be honest.
- To give time – availability, punctuality and reliability.
- To be prepared to listen to and respond to the client's point of view.
- To work to a plan agreed with client and case officer.
- To maintain confidentiality in accordance with Powys Challenge's Confidentiality Policy.
- To challenge anti-social behaviour.
- To be a good role model.
- To be interested in the client as a person.
- To lay down guidelines (with the case officer) about their role as a volunteer.
- Not to discriminate.

**Volunteers also have responsibilities to Powys Challenge and to the partnership agencies in the following areas.**

- To provide support to clients as agreed.
- To work within specified boundaries.
- To maintain confidentiality (see Confidentiality Policy).
- To be reliable and punctual and to inform Powys Challenge if unable to keep appointments.
- To report progress with clients as required.
- To maintain all records as required.
- To ensure that all vehicles used are appropriately taxed, insured and have a valid MOT certificate if over the appropriate age and to have a full UK driving licence.
- To attend support groups, supervision and training events.
- To feedback problems and concerns.
- To actively participate in the development of the work.
- To adhere to the Policies of Powys Challenge.
- To promote a positive image of Powys Challenge and its work.
- To carry her/his Identification Card.

**Monitoring and Evaluation**

Powys Challenge believes that on-going monitoring and evaluation is necessary in order to develop services. Volunteers are required to assist in this process by completion of reports regularly and participating in regular reviews and evaluation. Evaluation procedures will be developed to assess the performance of individual volunteers. The process will be carried out in collaboration with the volunteer.

**The Future**

When service developments are being planned, consideration will be given to creating new opportunities for volunteering, and contributions from volunteers to discussions will be actively sought.