



Volunteer Policy

Prepared By

Document Owner(s)	Project/Organisation Role
Claire Champlin	Health and Wellbeing Manager
Claire Champlin	Health and Wellbeing Coordinator

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Volunteer Policy and procedures

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1.0 Volunteering with Pickering and Ferens Homes

1.1 Pickering and Ferens Homes (PFH) is a registered Social Housing provider (A4020), a registered charity (No 1014862) and a member of the National Almshouse Association (No 981).

We own and manage over 1300 properties, located within Kingston Upon Hull and the East Riding of Yorkshire. In line with our charitable objectives we provide accommodation and accompanying services predominantly for residents aged 60 years and over.

Our origins lay with the philanthropic activities of 2 prominent Hull businessmen Christopher Pickering and Thomas Ferens.

The two Trusts formally merged on the 2nd September 1992 and became 'Pickering and Ferens Homes' Almshouse Charity. We are now also a Regulator for Social Housing Registered Provider, also known as a housing association.

1.2 All PFH volunteers will get the support from the leading housing association in Hull to enable the volunteer to put their skills into practice and learn new skills from others throughout the experience. The volunteer will also have the opportunity to access courses and training throughout which will help complement the volunteering role.

2.0 Policy Objectives

2.1 PFH is committed to promoting good practice in volunteering and recognises that each volunteer brings with them additional skills, experience and knowledge which can enhance our ability to deliver services and develop the organisation.

2.2 The volunteers' policy makes it clear what the responsibilities of volunteers are and what is expected of them. It also sets out volunteers' rights in respect of expenses, insurance provision, support and supervision.

2.3 We understand that people volunteer for many reasons and we value their contribution, commitment and participation. Their involvement complements the work our organisation undertakes, but does not replace the work of paid staff members.



2.4 The purpose of this policy is to provide a framework for all PFH staff across the organisation when considering involving volunteers in their work:

- To provide an example of good practice for staff working in the various neighbourhoods/ communities
- To give a cohesive and consistent approach to ensure that volunteers are fully supported during their volunteering role
- To ensure fairness and consistency when involving volunteers from diverse groups in line with PFH Equality & Diversity Policy.
- To provide a basis for staff to refer to when making decisions around creating opportunities to involve volunteers.

2.5 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. Under this policy, staff are not considered volunteers. Whilst staff may also volunteer time, this is not covered under this policy.

2.6 PFH may partner with other organisations who wish to support PFH through volunteering such as through their social responsibility agendas, or general partner working. In these cases, PFH may choose to bypass various elements of this policy, such as those in clause 5 of this policy. If this is the case, PFH will ensure appropriate due diligence is carried out with the partner to ensure adequate safeguards are in place.

2.7 Work experience placements are not included under this definition of volunteering. These short-term placements are supported by the HR Manager.

3.0 Our Vision and Mission for Volunteering

Volunteering is a great way for someone to share their enthusiasm, skills and ideas with like-minded people. Volunteers can make a positive contribution to community development and engaging with customers and staff within all areas where volunteers are vital to our work.

3.1 Types of volunteering

3.1.1 For volunteering to be a success the needs of the organisation, the service users and the volunteers must match. PFH therefore aims to ensure this match is successful through our recruitment and selection process and the monitoring and evaluation of the opportunities for volunteering.



3.1.2 It doesn't matter how much you already know, as there will be opportunities to learn and we have roles to suit every level of expertise.

3.2 We have a range of volunteer roles that range from

- One off volunteering such as supporting or leading on a mini project or assisting at one off events throughout the year.
- Supporting craft groups
- Supporting projects to improve physical and mental wellbeing
- Developing social events and activities
- Befriending
- Leading health walks
- Providing entertainment
- Gardening
- IT support for residents
- Assisting with the schools projects
- Being part of the resident forums and committees (Resident volunteers only)

3.2.1 Each of the volunteer opportunities will have a role description outlining clear roles and obligations, including a volunteer's right to receive appropriate support, supervision, training and development to fulfil the volunteer role and PFH's commitment to provide this.

4.0 Recruitment and Selection

4.1 Volunteers will be recruited and selected in accordance with our Equality and Diversity Policy.

4.2 The Association will accept requests from the general public, including recommendations by a Board Member, staff, partners or a resident, to take up voluntary work, if it is available.

4.3 Once a volunteer has been put forward, with the volunteer's consent, they will have to complete a Volunteer Application Form (**Appendix 1**), but help can be given with this, if necessary.

4.4 Volunteers are free to refuse to fulfil an opportunity and PFH is not bound to provide opportunities.

4.5 Any prospective volunteer will be expected to attend an informal interview.

4.6 All volunteers are also required in advance of any confirmed volunteer role to have completed:

- a) Application form (**Appendix 1**)
- b) Provided names of 2 referees and had a positive reference.
- c) Undergo a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check (where necessary) (**Appendix 3**)
- d) Health Questionnaire (**Form 4**)

4.7 If the informal meeting is successful subject to DBS check and references, the volunteer will then be given:

- a) A volunteer agreement to sign, (**Appendix 2**). Human Resources/ Volunteer Supervisor will issue this.
- b) Code of Good Practice (**Appendix 7**)
- c) Role description (**Appendix 4**)

4.7.1 Once all of the above checks are complete and PFH are satisfied with them, then a successful letter (**Letter 2**) will be sent to confirm start date and next steps which will outline the details of the volunteer role and who their volunteer supervisor and the team/department that they will be working alongside.

4.8 If the applicant is **unsuccessful** then a letter to confirm that the applicant was unsuccessful (**letter 3**) will be sent out.

4.9 This agreement is NOT a contract, but forms part of the process of managing volunteers effectively.

4.9 Volunteers can be in paid work or be on benefits. If a volunteer is receiving benefits then we must follow legal guidelines which can be found on the www.ncvo.org.uk/ncvo-volunteering/volunteering-and-benefits

4.10 All volunteer opportunities will be offered at no more than **16 hours per week** to ensure that there is no exploitative use of volunteers.

4.11 The terms of each individual volunteer's role are set out in the Volunteer Agreement. Each volunteer will have an agreement stating what PFH undertakes to provide them with and what is expected of the volunteer. Nothing that is written within this policy or any supplementary guidance or volunteer agreement is



intended to create a contract of employment and / or employment relationship between PFH and any volunteer or group of volunteers.

5.0 Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Checks. (Appendix 3)

5.1 A reference check must be carried out for all volunteers.

5.2 All volunteers will require a Disclosure Barring Service (DBS) check to inform PFH of any criminal convictions that a person wishing to volunteer may have. This will be carried out by PFH and cost paid for by PFH.

5.3 PFH may also consider that it is appropriate to arrange an enhanced level DBS check prior to any confirmed agreement.

6.0 Induction and Training

6.1 Human resources will give all volunteers an induction on the background of the Association (including its aims, objectives, working practices and structure), any background information required to do the job and detailed information about procedures for claiming expenses, reporting accidents and dealing with any emergencies.

6.2 The induction will be carried out by a responsible named member of staff (Human Resource manager or volunteer supervisor) and if requested, the volunteer will have access to the following information if needed:

- PFH our vision, mission and our future plans
- The Volunteer Handbook
- Training and learning opportunities
- Equality and Diversity Policy
- GDPR Policy and Procedure
- Safeguarding Adults Policy and Procedures
- Complaints Policy
- Health and Safety Policy and guidance
- I.T Policy
- Social Media Policy and guidelines

(This list is not exhaustive and will be reviewed and revised on an annual basis)

7.0 Support and Supervision



7.1 Volunteers will have a named person (Volunteer supervisor) within PFH as their main point of contact.

7.2 A volunteer supervisor will manage the day-to-day support and training of the volunteer.

7.3 The Supervisor will include regular meetings with the volunteer to facilitate open, two way communications to discuss how they are getting on. They will discuss training requirements and any issues or concerns.

7.4 Volunteers will be entitled to receive a reference from the Association if moving to other voluntary work or to paid employment.

8.0 Expenses

8.1 PFH values volunteers and we want to ensure that there are no barriers to volunteering; we therefore want to make sure that no individual is financially disadvantaged by the direct action of becoming a volunteer.

8.2 The level of expenses will be discussed and agreed with the volunteer during the interview process and supported with information supplied at induction stage.

8.3.1 Volunteers may claim reimbursement of expenses in the following categories:

- a) Travel expenses to and from the volunteer location and any journey undertaken in the course of representing PFH such as attending training sessions / meetings. This will be paid in line with PFH expenses at the time, currently this is £0.45p per mile.
- b) Where eligible lunch expenses to a maximum of £5 per day will be paid. The volunteer must have volunteered for a minimum of 5 hours for the day they are claiming for.
- c) Volunteers must produce receipts for all expenses and complete the appropriate claim forms which can be obtained from the volunteer supervisor.



- d) Any expense claims must be submitted to the volunteer supervisor within 4 weeks of the volunteer incurring the expenditure. The claims will be checked by the volunteer supervisor and passed to PFH Finance Team.
- e) Expenses will be reimbursed as soon as possible to minimise any inconvenience for the volunteer. Forms will be allocated and details taken as an when needed and forwarded on to PFH Finance Team

9.0 Resolving Problems

9.1 We hope that volunteers have a very enjoyable experience with PFH. However if the volunteer wishes to raise anything relating to conduct or behaviour of another volunteer staff member or other person then they should, where appropriate, try to resolve the matter informally with the person concerned. Similarly if a staff member or other person wishes to raise an issue about the conduct / behaviour of the volunteer then they should also where appropriate talk to the individual concerned to try to resolve the matter informally.

9.2 If this is not possible, the volunteer/ member of staff / other person should speak to the volunteer supervisor who will investigate the matter accordingly. Once it has been investigated the volunteer supervisor will write to the individual to inform them of the outcome

10.0 Insurance

10.1 PFH has a valid insurance policy so that volunteers are covered by public liability insurance and employer's liability.

11.0 Health and Safety

11.1 PFH recognises the valuable contribution volunteers can make to the work of the organisation and that it has a legal and moral duty under the *Health and Safety at Work Act 1974* and the *Management of Health, Safety and Welfare at Work Regulations 1999* to ensure that it provides opportunities without unacceptable risks to volunteers' individual health and safety.

11.2 Uniform can be provided by PFH (as and when needed).



This will consist of a name badge for identification. Also any Personal Protective equipment will be provided as and when needed. (*Personal Protective Equipment at Work Regulations 1992*) although this unlikely that it will be needed due to the volunteer's roles allocated.

12.0 Risk Assessments

12.1 The volunteer supervisor or appropriate Manager will ensure that the environment where the volunteers are engaged in is safe by carrying out a suitable and sufficient health and safety risk assessment of the tasks and the venues prior to the opportunity taking place. The assessment should be regularly reviewed to make sure that the activity or role hasn't changed and to note any significant changes.

12.2 All volunteers will be asked to do a dynamic risk assessment on arrival before their volunteering duties /tasks to ensure the area and activity is as safe as possible and document any findings on a risk assessment form provided and filed in the folder provided. This is to ensure the area and activity is safe and fit for purpose to ensure safety of all volunteers and participants during the session/activity. (Training will be given).

12.3 All volunteers will be asked to provide emergency contact details for staff to refer to in the event of an emergency.

12.4 A photo ID will also be provided to volunteers to ensure easy identification.

12.5 It is unlikely that PFH would ask volunteers to use their own private motor vehicle for conducting voluntary projects. However should the need arise this must be agreed in writing and it is the responsibility of the volunteer to inform their insurers that their vehicle is being used for voluntary purposes.

****A copy of volunteers driving licence and insurance certificate will be taken when volunteer signs up****

13.0 Equality and Diversity

13.1 PFH is committed to embracing diversity and promoting equality and inclusion. Volunteers will be provided and expected to comply with PFHs Equality and Diversity Policy. When representing PFH volunteers are expected to support our commitment to promoting equality.



13.2 If the Volunteer has disabilities or special requirements the volunteer supervisor should ensure that reasonable adjustments are planned in consultation with the volunteer to comply with the *Equalities Act (2010)* and to make volunteering accessible to people with disabilities or special needs where practicable.

14.0 Ending Volunteer Opportunities

14.1 Should PFH have to bring the volunteering opportunity to an end sooner than planned then we will try to give as much advance notice as possible.

14.2 Should a volunteer wish to end their involvement sooner than planned it is requested that the volunteer gives the supervisor as much notice as they can. PFH recognises however that volunteers can withdraw from any opportunity at any time and it is also PFHs right to cease opportunities should there be the need to do so.

14.3 PFH will where possible carry out an exit interview with the volunteer, this can be undertaken in several different ways such as via the telephone, face to face, in writing and will be conducted as appropriate. The interview will allow PFH to monitor the volunteer programme and evaluate the opportunities offered.

15.0 Confidentiality

15.1 Personal details of staff, volunteers and service users are treated in the strictest confidence. Information of a confidential nature must not be disclosed to anyone outside PFH unless there is a lawful basis for doing so and only with the prior permission of the Human Resources Manager

15.2 Volunteer's personal details will be held and processed in line with PFH obligations under the General Data Protection Regulation 2018 (GDPR 2018)

15.3 Volunteers must not speak to the media/ press or communicate with other third parties about issues which directly relate to matters affecting PFH or associated individuals. All topics relating to the press must be communicated through PFHs current public relations company.



15.4 Volunteers will have access to and be expected to comply with the GDPR and Social Media Policy and procedures.

16.0 Documents related to this Policy (Available form HR/Volunteer Supervisor)

- PFH our vision, mission and our future plans
- The Volunteer Handbook
- Training and learning opportunities
- Equality and Diversity Policy
- General Data Protection Regulation 2018
- Safeguarding Adults Policy and Procedures
- Complaints Policy
- Health and Safety Policy and guidance
- IT Policy
- Social Media Policy and guidelines.