MANAGING VOLUNTEERS IN HOMELESSNESS SERVICES
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IN HOMELESSNESS SERVICES

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INTRODUCTION

Homelessness services have historically attracted volunteers from a large cross section of the population. Volunteers have played an integral role in initiating and building excellent homelessness services that have supported many vulnerable people. Some services would be unable to operate in the way they do without the commitment of their volunteers. There are an estimated 13,000 volunteers in homelessness projects – with Homeless Link’s SNAP research¹ indicating that on average day centres have around 28 volunteers and hostels 3. In the current economic climate, with reductions in funding for staff, the numbers are increasing.

Volunteers bring a varied set of skills and expertise as well as a high level of motivation and compassion to the roles they fill. They volunteer in a range of roles that included the provision of food, keyworking support, overnight cover in night shelters, advocacy, administration, mentoring and befriending and the running of specific activities such as sports, arts or education.

It true to say that ‘volunteers are free but they are not cheap’ and organisations that utilise volunteers must put adequate time into good recruitment, management and support for people who choose to give their time in any role. This guidance is intended to support organisations to recruit volunteers safely and effectively, ensuring that it is the best possible experience for service users, the volunteer and the organisation. This guidance cannot cover every area relating to volunteering and includes links to further resources.

IDENTIFYING ORGANISATIONAL VOLUNTEERING NEEDS

Before recruiting volunteers it is worth taking some time to think about the role that volunteering has, or that you would like it to have, within the project. This will involve thinking about what function or service you do not already have that you would like to provide (i.e. activities for service users) or what can be enhanced through the recruitment of volunteers (i.e. supporting the formal keyworking undertaken by staff). You may have a specific project that you would like volunteers to lead on running (i.e. a telephone or support line) or have a skills gap in the organisation that you could fill or partly fill through using volunteers (i.e. recruiting volunteers who speak a specific foreign language).

Recruitment of volunteers can be a time-consuming or even a costly process, so it’s important to have a clear idea of the exact requirements before you begin. Consider the following questions:

- What are the current gaps in areas, activity or skills you are looking to fill?
- Are you sure this is an area that needs volunteers, or should you look to meet this need with recruitment of paid staff, or a mixture of both staff and volunteers?
- Is the need long or short term, or for a particular project?
- What hours would you ideally require people for – is there a minimum time commitment (i.e. ‘for a minimum of 6 months’ or ‘at least 2 evenings a month’)?
- Who will induct, manage and support the new volunteer/s?
- How will you meet any costs attached to the volunteer/s, such as expenses or training?

¹ http://homeless.org.uk/snap2012
• What particular skills do you require (i.e. foreign language skills, administration, communication and empathy) and will you recruit to specific volunteer roles or have ‘general volunteers’ who undertake a range of tasks?

PLANNING AN EFFECTIVE VOLUNTEER RECRUITMENT CAMPAIGN

People have a range of motivations for volunteering: to gain new skills and experience; to put existing skills to use; to broaden their horizons or meet new people; to express their faith or particular values; personal experience of an issue, or of someone close to them; social justice and the wish to ‘give something back’ to the community; and in some cases to meet a requirement of an employment or other scheme. Volunteering in projects that support homeless people will often mean roles working with people who are socially excluded and have a range of support needs. You need to ensure you attract people with the right skills, motivation and aptitude for the work involved.

Volunteer role descriptions

Answering the questions set out in Section 2 will give you a clear idea of what roles you are looking to fill. The first step in the recruitment process is to develop clear volunteer role descriptions that set out the tasks a volunteer will undertake, the minimum time commitment and practical information about where the volunteering is likely to take place. It could include such tasks or responsibilities as mentoring homeless people, supporting the work of staff in meeting the needs of vulnerable people, running or supervising arts or sports activities or basic administration.

Volunteer Person Specification

You may also want to develop a volunteer person specification defining what skills and experience you are looking for. This could include general skills and attributes, such as good communication and empathy, or specific skills and experience, such as speaking Polish or Russian, experience of working in a catering environment or a teaching, counselling or coaching qualification.

Volunteer advertisements

Produce a short advert giving brief details of the aims of your organisation, to attract attention, and stating the volunteer roles you are looking for. Here is an example:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Help homeless people in your local area</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>[organisation name] supports homeless and vulnerable people in [area]. We aim to reduce exclusion and equip people with the skills to live more fulfilling lives, through providing pre-tenancy training and employment skills. We are looking for volunteers who are passionate about helping others who can commit to one evening a week:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• General support volunteer role: You do not need to have worked in this area before, as we are looking for people with a range of life experiences.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Activity volunteer roles: We are looking for people who have worked in education or training to help us develop specialist courses such as literacy, IT and sports or arts activities.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For both types of roles, look at the volunteer job descriptions on our website. Please send a summary of your skills and experience by [date] as a CV with a covering letter telling us why you are interested in volunteering at [organisation] and what skills you would bring to the role. Please provide two references.

We welcome applications from people who have a history of homelessness.
Advertising your role
There are a range of routes for recruiting volunteers, depending on the type of role you are looking to fill, many of which are free.

1. You can advertise through your local Volunteer Centre. Find contact details for local volunteer centres here: www.volunteering.org.uk/finder
2. You can advertise through existing staff, volunteers or trustees, by asking them to send a letter or email that you provide to friends or contacts.
3. Send the advert or a letter/email to all local partner agencies.
4. Use local press (this may have a cost) or community websites and forums.
5. Advertise in local places of worship, colleges, community centres or libraries. Some institutions have newsletters and will let you advertise for free.
6. You can advertise using national organisations including the following:
   - Volunteering England: www.volunteering.org.uk/
   - Do-it, the online database of volunteer opportunities: www.do-it.org.uk
   - Timebank online portal for volunteers to pledge time and skills: www.timebank.org.uk
   - CSV Volunteering and Learning Charity: www.csv.org.uk/volunteering

See Section 8 for guidance on the recruitment of specialist volunteers.

Partnerships with local businesses and industry forums
In recent years, many homelessness organisations have built up successful partnerships with local businesses that have resulted in specialist volunteers providing services for clients.

Most large employers have a commitment to Corporate Social Responsibility\(^2\). Companies are often keen to volunteer for single days as a team-building exercise and perform a single task such as decorating a project. Facilitating these days can develop a relationship that leads to other support in kind or more enduring volunteer opportunities. It is important to be able to present a range of opportunities to companies as often they are keen to support and need a clear ‘ask’ from homelessness services that matches their skills and expertise. This can include:

- Mock interviews for clients
- Coaching or mentoring
- Becoming trustees i.e. if employees have business, marketing or HR skills
- Supporting IT skills or providing technology (software/hardware)
- Supporting business planning or the development of social enterprise
- Helping with marketing or website development
- Let you take advantage of savings they make from bulk purchased goods or services

\(^2\) Information about the business benefits of Corporate Social Responsibility can be found here: http://www.businesslink.gov.uk/bdotg/action/detail?itemId=1075408491&type=RESOURCES
THE SELECTION PROCESS

The application process
When advertising volunteer roles you can either ask for a CV with a covering letter, asking people to explain why they want to volunteer and how their skills and experience match those set out in the person specification, or provide a simple application form asking similar things.

Think about what skills and experience you want from your volunteers and ensure that you will be able to test this against the information you ask for in their application so that you can decide who to shortlist. For example, if you need people to be able to demonstrate relevant skills or experience, then ensure you have asked for this in the CV and cover letter or form.

You can provide a closing date for submission or have an ongoing recruitment window, depending on turnover and whether you are recruiting volunteers for a specific time period. If there is a closing date, you may want to also advertise the date of the ongoing selection activities.

It is good practice for shortlisting (deciding who you see for volunteer interviews) to be done by more than one person. You don’t have to let people know if they were unsuccessful in the process but it is polite to do so if you have time.

Volunteer interviews
Whilst it may not be as comprehensive as that for staff, all volunteers should be interviewed. This is an opportunity to test for motivation and level of commitment, to find out more about their skills and experience and to check if their attitude and values are consistent with the ethos of the project (i.e. the project’s approach to challenging certain types of behaviour, or expectations around professional boundaries). It is good practice to involve current volunteers and service users in the interview process. If you are interviewing for a lot of volunteers at once, then you could carry out part or all of the interview as a group session.

If you have doubts about suitability, for any of the reasons tested, it is better to act on this than take people on who are not suitable as this could be a difficult experience for you and the volunteer. Unsuccessful volunteers should be informed and ideally offered feedback.

Verifying information
- 2 references should be requested for all successful volunteer candidates from a work, volunteering or academic supervisor or another professional (but be flexible enough about who provides references so that you don’t exclude people who have been unemployed).
- If volunteers have applied to fill a specific post based on a qualification (i.e. teaching, counselling or coaching) check certification and insurance cover.
- As a minimum, Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks should be carried out for all volunteers who will be lone working with vulnerable people. The DBS was established when the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) and Independent Safeguarding Authority ( ISA) merged in 2012. DBS checks can be undertaken by registering with the DBS or using an umbrella body, full details are on the DBS website: www.gov.uk/government/organisations/disclosure-and-barring-service
VOLUNTEER INDUCTION

Volunteer induction is vital: plan it, make it fun, interactive and hands on. Hold group induction sessions with a few volunteers if possible, as this can help people to feel part of a team from the beginning. An induction should mirror a staff induction and your organisation should provide an induction checklist (a template is provided at Appendix A), as it may go over more than one session. A good practice induction should include:

- An induction or welcome pack (which includes relevant contact details)
- Recording people’s personal contact details and an emergency contact
- Talking about the job description and setting out key tasks
- Going over your code of conduct, covering issues such as confidentiality and acceptable behaviour
- Aims, ethos and intended outcomes of the organisation and project
- Setting out a volunteer contract, signed by both parties
- A tour of the work place, with an introduction to clients, staff and volunteers
- Clear guidance on health and safety, including fire regulations and first aid
- The organisational structure – ensure they know who to talk to if an issue comes up and where to get support.

TRAINING AND MANAGING VOLUNTEERS

Successful volunteer retention comes from appropriate opportunities for volunteers to have a positive experience whilst meeting the needs of the service. Successful retention is not necessarily the same as people staying as a volunteer for years and years; rather it means having motivated volunteers for a period acceptable to the volunteer and the organisation. Depending on the project you may want to have people for a short period with a specific focus (i.e. to support provision over cold weather), provide pre-work volunteering opportunities or have a stable group of volunteers over a longer period. In some services familiar volunteers who can build trust are crucial in engaging rough sleepers.

Retaining volunteers and, most importantly, keeping them motivated in their role is important. These tips can help:

- Allow volunteers access to organisational development opportunities such as team meetings and planning sessions, so they feel included and valued in their work.
- Put in place supervision and support mechanisms so any concerns and new ideas can be heard and acted on.
- Ensure volunteers are never out of pocket by paying reasonable expenses. For more information on expenses visit Volunteering England: www.volunteering.org.uk/resources/goodpracticebank/Core+Themes/expenses/Expenses+and+state+benefits.htm
- Show that you value your volunteers through ‘thank you’ events or awards. This could be as simple as a summer BBQ or a Christmas meal.
- Make sure you let people know about progression opportunities, such as letting volunteers know about paid vacancies or ways to increase their responsibility or vary their role as a volunteer.

Volunteer management

When managing volunteers, organisations need to keep appropriate boundaries between their paid staff and volunteer roles, while ensuring both are valued. Volunteers do not have employment rights like staff, but must be treated fairly and consistently. The most important way to manage volunteers is to ensure they have a clear
induction around the expectations that you have of them, that they understand their role and that you are providing support and supervision regularly. It is also important that any issues that they raise or you need to raise are dealt with quickly and fairly.

If you don’t have a volunteer coordinator, establish a mentoring support structure in the staff team, making sure they are supported to carry out supervision.

• Plan weekly catch-ups at the beginning of someone’s role
• Plan monthly catch-ups thereafter
• Use a template supervision structure (similar to a staff supervision)
• Set targets and development roles
• Make sure you challenge inappropriate behaviour

If a volunteer does not follow organisational policies, it is important to bring this up, ensuring that you go back over the organisational code of conduct and induction information. However, sometimes organisations will need to ask a volunteer to stop giving their time, if there is a serious or continued breach of policy. Make sure that your volunteer policy has clear guidance if this happens, covering the steps that need to be taken. This should include ensuring that the volunteer has a chance to put their version of events forward, that meetings with the volunteer involve a third party and respect the volunteer’s confidentiality and that the reasons for the dismissal are clearly articulated verbally and followed up in writing.

Training volunteers
Providing formal and informal training is the best way to develop and to retain your volunteers. Access to the courses you provide to staff is a good way of enabling this. Most volunteers need access to similar training as frontline staff, depending on their role. However a lot of volunteer training can happen informally by setting up induction sessions or ongoing workshops, or shadowing opportunities with different members of staff and departments. It may also be valuable to facilitate visits to partner agencies.

Core training could include:
• Safeguarding of vulnerable adults (SOVA)
• Introduction to drugs and alcohol
• Introduction to mental health issues
• Introduction to offending behaviour
• Health and safety in the work / First Aid
• Maintaining appropriate boundaries and confidentiality
• Working with challenging behaviour

Communication and risk management with volunteers
Volunteers will be in a service less frequently than paid staff, and might not be present for handovers. It is important that procedures exist to inform volunteers of key issues that occur during their absence, so that communication and support is consistent across the team. This is particularly important after an incident in order to promote effective risk management and give the volunteer the chance to discuss concerns.

This can be achieved by:
• Attending a handover meeting at the start of their shift or activity
• Reading the day book or log book
• Checking an incidents/risk assessment file with details of incidents and risk management actions
Manager/duty worker updating volunteers by email/telephone following a significant incident or change
Manager debriefs volunteers following a serious incident.

LEGAL AND POLICY ISSUES
For people who are unable to seek paid work, volunteering can provide valuable social contact, reduce exclusion and be a genuinely meaningful activity. However, making use of volunteers can potentially raise issues of concern both for the volunteer and for the organisation using them. Agencies and volunteers are encouraged to seek specialist advice if they have doubts about any issues.

Developing policies
Organisations that recruit volunteers need have the right policies in place to protect themselves and volunteers. Policies you will need to develop include a volunteer policy and volunteer agreement and an induction pack. Other organisational policies such as health and safety and equal opportunities may need to be adapted to include volunteers or be referenced within the volunteer policy. Volunteering England has developed a range of useful policies around recruitment, equal opportunities and good practice in supporting volunteers and the work you do: www.volunteering.org.uk/goodpractice/core-themes

Legal issues for volunteers
In some circumstances, volunteering can affect an individual’s eligibility for benefits. Jobcentre Plus recognises that volunteering can be a useful way of acquiring relevant experience, skills, references and a recent work history, but people on Jobseekers’ Allowance need to ensure that they still meet the rules for claiming whilst volunteering. This includes being available for interview at 48 hours’ notice, that they are available to start work at 1 weeks’ notice and that they can continue to provide evidence that they are still actively seeking paid employment. They must continue to meet the terms of their job seekers’ agreement or claimant commitment or face a sanction. Claimants seeking to volunteer should speak to their Jobcentre adviser about whether it can become part of their JSA conditions.

There are strict guidelines on what a volunteer in receipt of some benefits can accept by way of expenses. In brief, expenses should only cover out of pocket expenditure and all receipts should be kept. Any expenses accrued through volunteering should be disclosed to Jobcentre Plus – the Department of Work and Pensions has produced a booklet ‘Volunteering While Getting Benefits’ that outlines this and other issues to be aware of.

For people on other types of benefits the position is generally more straightforward, although the advice is that any person in receipt of any type of benefit contacts their Jobcentre Plus or Work Programme adviser before starting to volunteer to inform them of what they are hoping to do, and to discuss the implications of any expenses or possible payment in kind they may receive.

Volunteering England has comprehensive information on its website about volunteering whilst in receipt of benefits and Jobcentre Plus provides information on how it can support people to volunteer as part of their Jobseeker’s Agreement.

3 www.volunteering.org.uk/component/gpb/statebenefits
4 www.volunteering.org.uk/component/gpb/statebenefits
5 www.direct.gov.uk/en/Employment/Jobseekers/LookingForWork/DG_10033053
Legal issues for agencies
Volunteering England has produced guidance about eligibility to volunteer, volunteer policies and agreements, insurance, guidelines around volunteering for young people, older people, vulnerable adults and ex-offenders and around protection and safeguarding. The rules around nationality and immigration status in particular can be complex; if there is any doubt about a person’s eligibility to volunteer in the UK, specialist advice should be sought, or agencies can contact the UK Border Agency for clarification.

The legal distinction between being a volunteer, being a voluntary worker and being an employee can be complex and problematic for agencies and volunteers as there is a risk that both parties may find themselves in a position that neither intended. Business Link and Volunteering England have produced guidance around this, although as the area is defined by common law, it is recommended that agencies keep up to date with the most recent developments in the area. Key points to consider are that volunteer agreements should not replicate or look like contracts of employment, that language more suitable to employment (e.g. rights and obligations) is avoided, and that terms that make it clear that the expectations are not those of an employee and employer (e.g. intentions and hopes) are used instead. The National Council of Voluntary Organisations has produced a sample volunteer agreement that agencies can use, although they do suggest seeking specialist legal advice.

Finally, Volunteering England has produced a comprehensive guide “Volunteers and the Law” which covers in some detail issues around expenses, training and other elements that an agency may offer its volunteers that may be found by an Employment Tribunal to constitute consideration and thus potentially lead to a contract of employment being formed. Training necessary to carry out a task, solely to improve the ability to do so or necessarily acquired through the performing of a task are all acceptable, although organisations offering (for example) accredited training as part of a volunteer incentive package are advised to seek current advice as this is a complex and evolving area of the law.

RECRUITING TO SPECIFIC VOLUNTEER ROLES
As an organisation, you may want to make develop both general and specialist roles depending on your needs. This section looks at a few types of specialist role that you may consider developing and how to recruit and manage these types of volunteers. It covers mentoring and befriending, sports activities volunteers, volunteer counsellors and hosting social work and occupational therapy placements. Volunteering England also maintains information on more specialist volunteering themes, including different types of roles, sector specific issues and volunteering as a means of valuing and encouraging diversity.

Befriending and mentoring schemes
Befriending and mentoring schemes are different to other volunteer opportunities, attracting and demanding different skills and aptitudes. A number of youth, refugee and offending charities have mentoring schemes. They can be very effective when working with people who are currently being resettled into the private rented sector and other move-on schemes. Suitable training and support is required to make sure the scheme runs safely and volunteers are supported in their roles. Housing Justice have produced a Mentoring and Befriending Toolkit: www.housingjustice.org.uk/pages/mm-booklet.html

6. www.volunteering.org.uk/goodpractice/core-themes
7. www.businesslink.gov.uk/bdotg/action/detail?itemId=1081674285&type=RESOURCES
10. www.volunteering.org.uk/goodpractice/specialist-themes
Recruiting volunteers for sport and physical activity

Homeless Link’s Aiming High: Sport for All project was developed to increase access to sport across the homelessness sector. On the project web page you can find research, recommendations, case studies, funding opportunities, project planning and management tools and other resources that can be helpful to your volunteer workforce: [www.homeless.org.uk/sport-for-all](http://www.homeless.org.uk/sport-for-all)

Created and funded by Sport England, Running Sports supports sports volunteers and the people who manage them. Whatever sport you’re involved in, whichever level you work at, they have a huge number of free resources that can help: [www.runningsports.org/](http://www.runningsports.org/)

The Football Association have put together a set of tools to support the over 400,000 strong volunteer workforce currently working in grassroots football. This includes support with recruitment, support, and assessment of volunteers. These tools are useful across all sports and activities and can be found here: [www.thefa.com/GetIntoFootball/parentsandvolunteers/CoachingVolunteering/ClubWorkforce/FootballWorkforce.aspx](http://www.thefa.com/GetIntoFootball/parentsandvolunteers/CoachingVolunteering/ClubWorkforce/FootballWorkforce.aspx)

You can recruit for sport and physical activity volunteers in the following ways:

- Your local authority sports development team will have a bank of qualified volunteers for various sports.
- Local higher education institutions such as colleges and universities that run sports courses requiring students to complete a placement towards their qualification. For example, many sports science courses will require each student to complete up to 50 hours of practical work (coaching, physiotherapy, sports development, community work) in their final course year.
- National governing bodies with local / regional offices (e.g. County Football Associations) may have contact details for individuals who are completing their coaching qualifications and require a requisite number of coaching hours to complete this. It is also helpful to register your organisation with these bodies as they may be able to refer suitable candidates to you.
- Local sports clubs/groups and teams will be run and facilitated primarily by a voluntary workforce. They may be willing to promote your volunteering opportunity to their own workforce or there may be a potential for working together to provide activity to your clients. Some groups (e.g. walking groups) may have participants who are willing to take a leadership role with your clients to gain experience.
- Your staff team will have individuals who have an interest, aptitude, or qualification in particular activities. It is a great way to motivate your staff team by offering them the opportunity to share their skills and passion in the workplace. Doing a quick ‘sport skill audit’ during a team meeting may be the best way to kick-start sports activity in your service.
- Your clients may have qualifications or experience in physical activity that you are unaware of. Similar to the staff audit above, asking at a residents meeting who may have an interest or some experience of leading activities can be a great way to enable client-led activity.
- If your staff and client audits do not reveal anyone with a qualification already but do identify individuals who would like to be qualified then consider identifying and providing them with training. This may be a generic qualification such as the Community Sports Leaders Award or something particular such as Walk Leader, Cycling Leader, FA Level 1, etc.

Counsellors & student placements

Services can benefit from having students on placement as part of their volunteer team. Counselling, social work and occupational therapy students often find placements in homelessness services. Fully trained
volunteer counsellors are also used in some services. These placements can bring committed, reliable volunteers with specific skills and learning goals into the service, and in some cases the service will be paid for the placement. However, care should be taken to research the suitability of a student placement, as there may be additional paperwork and supervision which require the allocation of management hours.

Counsellors require clinical supervision but should have their own arrangements in place. Most homelessness services are not involved in the supervision of counsellors, although where a number of counsellors are working in one service, funding and planning for additional group clinical supervision with an external supervisor may be advisable. Counsellors can be recruited through colleges, volunteer networks and professional associations, such as the British Association for Counselling & Psychotherapy (BACP). They should be accredited by a professional association.

The homelessness service should consider issues such as:
- Referral procedure for clients to counsellors, including risk assessment.
- How (or if) the service will be provided to clients presenting under the influence of drugs or alcohol.
- Duration of counselling.
- Clear information for clients about what to expect.
- The procedure for counsellors to raise serious concerns about risk.
- Safety measures for lone working.
- How to manage client/counsellor interactions if they are likely to meet in the centre outside of appointment times.
- The timing of sessions if the client is moving away from the lifestyle of other service users and may not want to interact with other parts of the service e.g. drop-in sessions.

**Social work, occupational therapy and other student placements**

These placements can be secured through partnerships with colleges or universities. Staff will be involved in the development of the volunteer, providing planning, supervision and evaluation to help them achieve their learning and development goals in the allotted time. In some cases the college will pay for the placement and offer training to the staff providing supervision. Some services choose to pay an external supervisor rather than using staff time. Due to the short term placement, students are often assigned a particular project, such as setting up a women’s group or completing a piece of research with service users.

A day centre manager describes her experience of occupational therapy and health and social care student placements:

“In order to take a student you have to be willing to invest some time in them. If successful the time you invest will be worth it. It is important that you get the right student. When I agreed to take a student I sat down with the placement allocations from the university and discussed what I needed from them. You do have to allow supervision time but this can work in both parties’ favour by keeping them focused and getting feedback on your service. The University want it to be a good experience as much as the service does. Project setting is a good way to ensure that competences are met. My health and social care student is doing a project around healthy eating. The University appears to be good at looking after placement educators and students, offering a free course to become APPLE accredited for occupational therapy student placements and a free distance learning mentoring module. The length of placements depends on the course. The University’s third year occupational therapy students are on placement for 12 weeks.”
Recruiting volunteers who speak particular languages

Homelessness organisations often provide a service to clients who do not speak English as their first language. In particular many services have worked with increasing numbers of homeless people from central and Eastern Europe in recent years and have benefitted from recruiting speakers of the languages of these countries. Volunteers can increase your access to translation and cultural information of the countries from which your clients originate.

To attract volunteers with language skills think about what training and development you are offering – this could include job shadowing or visited related services as well as more formal training. You could also highlight that it is an opportunity for them to improve their English language skills, to integrate more in to the UK, or to act as role models for their communities.

To advertise these opportunities find out which groups and services exist locally that you can target. These might include specific community groups such as churches, voluntary organisations, and readership of newspapers and magazines of those communities. It could also include general public services such as the police, or colleges and universities. If you use leaflets it can be advantageous to have these in different languages, but remember to be clear about the level of English that the volunteer will need for the job.

There is no legal barrier to asking for speakers of specific languages. However there is discrimination law preventing you from asking for people from specific countries. You must be clear about this in any advertisement you produce.

VOLUNTEERS WHO ARE EX-SERVICE USERS

People who have an experience of homelessness may be able to offer insight and empathy in a way that engages people who are currently experiencing homelessness, including those who may be reluctant to work with other staff or volunteers. These skill and experience should be utilised within services to improve delivery. Often people who have come through services want to ‘give something back’ to a sector that has helped them and it can be therapeutic and an aid to recovery. There can be concerns around confidentiality and making sure people are ready before they take on various roles. The GROW scheme, which was developed to help people with an experience of homeless gain employment within the field, offers insight and guidance on the implementation of a successful scheme:  [www.thamesreach.org.uk/what-we-do/user-employment/](http://www.thamesreach.org.uk/what-we-do/user-employment/)

An offending history can be a barrier to volunteering. Volunteering England has put some helpful guidance together:  [www.volunteering.org.uk/component/gpb/ex-offenders-and-prisoners](http://www.volunteering.org.uk/component/gpb/ex-offenders-and-prisoners)

FURTHER INFORMATION

- [www.volunteering.org.uk/resources/goodpracticebank](http://www.volunteering.org.uk/resources/goodpracticebank)
- [www.homeless.org.uk/volunteer](http://www.homeless.org.uk/volunteer)
- [www.homeless.org.uk/jobs-advertising](http://www.homeless.org.uk/jobs-advertising)
# VOLUNTEER INDUCTION CHECKLIST

**Name** _____________________________________  **Start date** _______________________________

**Induction Completed (Signature of New Volunteer)** ____________________________________________

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Carried out by:</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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</tbody>
</table>

## Induction Pack, containing:
- **Welcome letter**
- **Policies and procedures**
  - Volunteer Policy
  - Operational Procedure
  - Health and Safety
  - Confidentiality Policy
  - Volunteer Induction check list
  - List of All *(Insert organisation name)* Policies + Procedures
- **Fill out Volunteer Information Form**
- **Volunteer Information Form**

## Introduction to *(Insert organisation name)*
- Who’s who
- History
- Services
- Future/development plans

## Organisation rules
- Code of Conduct
- Lunch and breaks
- Cloakroom/toilets

## Operational Procedure
- Daily set up and plan
- Role of key staff on shift
- Location and purpose of Incident/Message Books
- Clients access to service
- Drugs + Alcohol Procedure

## Dealing with Potentially/Actual Volatile Situations
- Take through procedures

## Confidentiality
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Task</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Policy understood</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sign declaration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health and Safety</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recommend immunisation for TB and Hep A and B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduced to the role of the named competent person</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Awareness of hazards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Safety rules</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emergency procedures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Location of exits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reporting of accidents/book</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First Aid</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Kitchen Hygiene</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food Safety</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Policies and Procedures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Notified of other Policies and Procedures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shown where Policies and Procedures are kep</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The tasks and requirements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduced to manager</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Requirements of the role</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Standards expected</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trial period if applicable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date of midway review meeting (if applicable)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date of End of Trial period review meeting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training opportunities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First Set up Meeting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction to the team</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>After First Day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Debriefed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opportunity to ask questions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Additional Information (List)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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